

STAFF REPORT: 09/11/2024 REGULAR MEETING

PREPARED BY: D. RIEDEN

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2024-00425

ADDRESS: 1474 W. BOSTON

HISTORIC DISTRICT: BOSTON - EDISON

APPLICANT: GAMAL USMANOV (ALEXANDRIA HOME SOLUTIONS)

PROPERTY OWNERS: RAMON HINOJOSA

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 08/19/2024

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 08/22/2024

SCOPE: REPLACE WOOD WINDOWS WITH ALUMINUM-CLAD WOOD WINDOWS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Built in 1915, the property at 1474 W. Boston has a side-gabled asphalt-shingled roof which features three dormers with original wood casement windows featuring true divided-light mullions. This Colonial Revival-style house is clad in red brick with symmetrically placed ribbons of wood, 6/1 cottage windows on the first and second floors. Original wood double-hung 6/1 windows are also evident on the side elevations, publicly visible. A semi-circular roof overhangs the front porch which is supported by wood columns. The elevated front porch has a central staircase flanked by evergreen foundation plantings and a center walk through the front lawn to the public sidewalk.



Site Photo 1, by Staff Aug. 22, 2024: (South) front side showing original wood windows still in place.



Site Photo 2, designation photo 1974: (South) front side showing original wood, double-hung windows with true divided light.

Property files indicate the following former Historic District Commission (HDC) approvals on this property. There are no open violations on this property:

Oct 1998 COA: Reconstruction of front and rear porches, front wing-wall and stairs, replacement of railings, installation of white storm door, replacement of walkways, installation of new fascia and gutters to match existing.

May 1999 COA: Enclose rear two-story porches

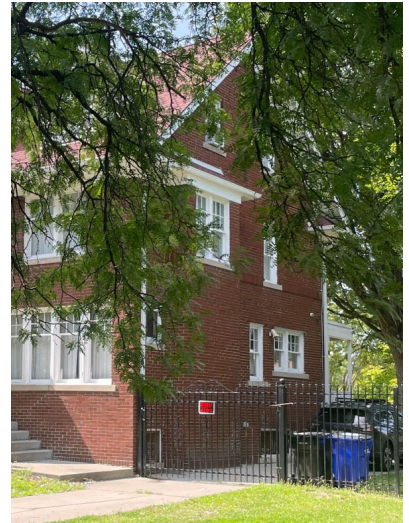
PROPOSAL

The current project is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of 7 original wood windows with aluminum clad wood windows.

WINDOW DETAIL

- Replace three (3) original casement windows at the front elevation dormers with Sierra Pacific double-hung, aluminum-clad wood windows per attached photos and window order.

- Replace four (4) original double-hung windows at the side elevations with Sierra Pacific double-hung, aluminum-clad wood windows per attached photos and window order.
- All new windows will be double-hung 6/1 SDL (simulated divided light), 5/8” grids.
- All brick mould/trim would be retained. No coil stock or aluminum covers will be used.
- All trim and windows painted white.



Site Photos 3&4, by Staff Aug 22, 2024: West and East sides, showing original wood windows.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Boston-Edison Historic District was established in 1974, and its Elements of Design offer the following:
 - *Proportion of openings within the façade.* “Windows openings are virtually always taller than wide; however, several windows are sometimes grouped into a combination that is wider than tall. Window openings are always subdivided. The most common window type is double-hung with sashes that are generally further subdivided by muntins or leaded glass. Façades have approximately 15 percent to 35 percent of their area glazed...”
 - *Relationship of materials* “...Wood is almost universally used for window frames and other functional trim and is used in many examples for all trim...”
- The front upper story and the east side windows are particularly visible from the public and are proposed for replacement with aluminum clad-wood windows. Except for the front dormer windows, which are 2/4 wood casements, the other front windows are 6/1 cottage windows. The side wall has 6/1 double-hung wood windows. All windows have true divided-light mullions. It is staff’s opinion that all of these true divided-light windows are distinctive, character-defining features. Their loss would substantially detract from and destroy the historic appearance of the building. (See photos 1-4)
- The applicant provided no repair estimate for the 7 windows (14 sashes). However, the new windows amount to an approximate total of \$18,604. The estimate from Alexandria is dated July 26, 2024.
- When staff requested a report that shows how the windows are beyond repair, the applicant stated that they have 5 years experience in the window industry. He states the reasons for the this conclusion are the following: windows are “incorrect sizes and style”, “inoperable windows”, “water leaks and rot” and “energy efficiency concerns”. Staff found no evidence that the windows were “incorrect” or “do not match appropriate sizes and styles”, because all



Figure 1, by Applicant: (South Interior 3rd Floor casements) front interior casement windows proposed to be replaced with double-hung, aluminum-clad wood windows.

windows are shown in previous photos, such as the designation photo (See site photo 2). Furthermore, the photos shown by the applicant, reveal that the windows are repairable.

- In addition to a material change from wood to aluminum-clad wood, the operation and configuration of the three front casement windows would



Figure 2, by Applicant: (east) side elevation showing proposed 2nd floor windows for replacement with aluminum clad wood windows.

change. to double-hung, 6/1 windows. All windows would also change from true divided light to simulated divided light grids.

- Staff received confirmation that the original brick mould would remain.

ISSUES

- Photo documentation establishes that the condition of the original wood windows is repairable and not beyond repair.
- No repair estimate was provided.
- It is staff's opinion that the removal of the original wood windows with true divided light and in 3 windows a change from casements to double-hung windows greatly alters the original *scale, design, and materiality* of the building's fenestration and the new windows are incompatible and inappropriate for this historic property. Therefore, this work item does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and does not conform to the district's Elements of Design.

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-78, Determination of Historic District Commission

Recommendation: Replace Original Wood Windows with Aluminum Clad Wood Windows

Staff finds that the replacement of the original wood windows with aluminum-clad wood windows, does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the following reasons:

- No documentation establishing that the original condition of the windows was beyond repair was submitted or available.
- A "full restoration" of the original windows may not be necessary to return to acceptable service, but no repair or restoration estimate was provided.
- The replacement of the original wood casements and double-hung windows with true divided light with uniform double-hung aluminum clad windows is not compatible with historic architecture in the house in that they:
 - destroy the distinctive, character-defining features of the original windows, particularly the true-divided lights detailing,

- introduce a new design, operation, and scale which is not historically appropriate and does not conform to the District's Elements of Design.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the above work items, as it do not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, specifically Standards:

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.