

STAFF REPORT: 9/11/2024 MEETING

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

ADDRESS: 1667 EDISON

APPLICATION NO: #HDC-2024-00493

HISTORIC DISTRICT: BOSTON-EDISON

APPLICANT/OWNER: MATIAS ALANIZ

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 8/30/2024

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 7/29/2024

SCOPE: REPLACE WINDOWS & REHABILITATE GARAGE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The property at 1667 Edison includes a detached, single-family, four-square plan dwelling that was erected ca. 1915. The building features a hipped roof which is topped with four, hipped-roof dormers and displays overhanging eaves with wood soffits. Scalloped wood siding appears at the front wall of the front and rear dormers. Asphalt shingles are at all four dormer sidewalls. Exterior walls are brick. All original wood windows have been recently replaced with 1/1 vinyl units, while the original wood brickmould remains. A partial-width wood porch has been recently installed at the building's rear façade.

The property's original/historic-age garage currently sits to the rear of the house. The building is rectangular in plan and is topped with a pyramidal, asphalt shingle roof with wood soffits. Exterior walls are clad with wood siding. The west/side wall doors and windows have been covered with plywood. The garage's primary façade displays a non-historic metal overhead door.



1667 Edison, current appearance. Photo taken by staff on 9/1/2024



1667 Edison, garage, current appearance. Photo provided by applicant

PROPOSAL

Per the submitted project documents, the applicant is seeking the Commission's approval to replace the existing 1/1 vinyl windows, which were installed by the applicant without HDC approval, with aluminum-clad wood units. The current application also proposes to repair the garage and add new siding to the rooftop dormers. Specifically, the application includes the following:

Windows

- At all walls and dormers, retain the existing wood brickmould/trim while removing the existing vinyl windows which were installed without HDC review/approval
- At front façade and three northernmost windows at the east side wall, install new double-hung aluminum-clad wood windows with 4/1 lite configuration (simulated divided lite/vertically oriented muntins at top sash of each window)
- At front roof dormer, install three aluminum-clad wood casement windows, each with a 4 lite configuration (simulated divided lite/vertically oriented muntins)
- At rear and side walls and dormers, install 1/1 double-hung, single-lite casement and single-lite awning aluminum-clad, wood-sash windows

Dormer Siding

- At front and rear roof dormers, replace existing wood siding at front walls and asphalt shingles at sidewalls with new composite (lapped) or fiber cement shingle siding (wavy or thatched style/pattern)

- At side dormers, replace existing asphalt shingles at sidewalls with new composite (lapped) or fiber cement shingle siding (wavy or thatched style)

Garage

- Repair existing wood siding. Where wood siding is missing, install new wood siding to match existing
- Install new person door at side/west wall in current opening. Door style/material not provided
- Cover existing side/west wall window opening with lapped wood siding to match existing cladding

Soffit/Fascia

- Retain all existing wood soffit and fascia at house and garage roofs. Replace in kind/with new wood to match existing where deteriorated

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Boston-Edison Historic District was designated as a local historic district in 1973
- On June 24, 2024, staff was made aware of work being undertaken at the property, to include the following work items:
 - Replacement of original/historic 4/1 wood windows with new 1/1 vinyl units, install aluminum colistock at window trim, and install aluminum coil stock at windows sills at front façade, second story windows.
 - Installation of vinyl siding at dormers
 - Installation of vinyl siding at garage walls
 - Installation of vinyl at soffits in the eaves at the main roof, dormers, front and rear porch roofs, and the garage roof
 - Installation of new white gutters and downspouts at house and garage
 - At rear porch, replacement existing wood skirting, columns, deck, steps, and railing per current condition

A review of records maintained by the HDC and the Detroit building department revealed that neither a COA nor a permit had been issued for the above-listed work items. Staff therefore reported the work to the building department for enforcement and a Stop Work order was issued. In an effort to address the violations/unapproved exterior work, the applicant submitted a proposal to the Commission for review at their 8/14/2024 regular meeting. See link to 8/14/2024 staff report [1667 EDISON FINAL STAFF REPORTREVISED.pdf \(detroitmi.gov\)](#) The Commission issued a denial for the aluminum cladding and vinyl windows, siding, soffits which were added without HDC approval and/or permit.

- Note that the applicant removed the following unapproved exterior elements from the house and garage following the 8/14/2024 HDC regular meeting:
 - Vinyl soffits at the house and garage
 - Vinyl siding at the house’s rooftop dormers and the garage’s exterior walls
 - Aluminum coil stock at the windows and front porch.

Staff supports the applicant’s removal of the above-listed inappropriate materials as they were denied by the Commission and their presence represented a violation of City Code. Currently, the only remaining exterior elements which were denied by the Commission at the 8/14/2024 meeting are the vinyl windows/sash. See the below photos of the house which show current conditions/conditions after the removal of the unapproved materials.

- To restate, the original wood window trim/brickmould does remain at all facades and at the rooftop dormers. The applicant has therefore submitted the current application in an attempt to resolve the outstanding window violation. As depicted in the photos below, the house's original windows were 4/1, wood-sash, double-hung units and 4-lite wood casement units. All window muntins were vertically oriented. It is staff's opinion that the original windows were distinctive, character-defining features of the house. Staff supports the proposed new window sash installation at the front façade as it will closely match the original windows which were removed in operation, material, and design and the original wood brickmould will be retained. However, because the new 1/1 and single lite sash proposed for installation at the side and rear walls do match the original character-defining units in design/lite configuration, it is staff's opinion that they do not meet the Standards.



1667 Edison, designation slide, taken by the HDAB in 1974



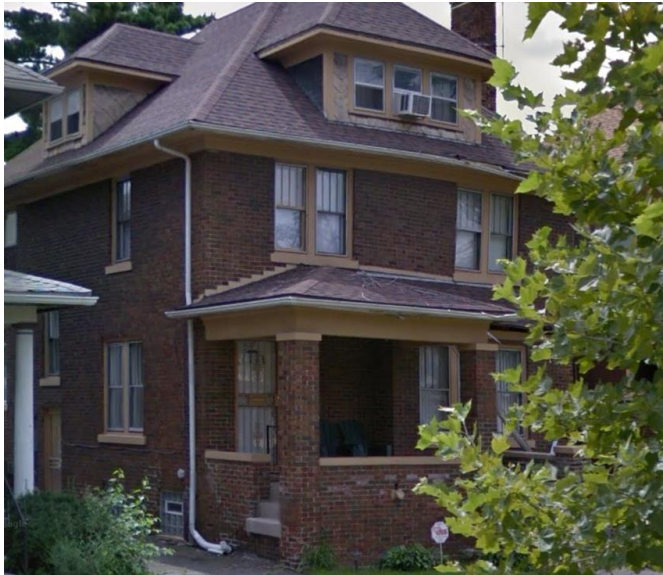
1667 Edison, designation slide taken by the HDAB in 1980. Note that the property has aluminum storm windows. However, all of the original/historic wood windows remained intact behind the storms

4/1, double-hung wood windows throughout prior to unapproved window sash replacement

4-lite wood casement windows



Front façade, photo taken in early 2024 by Realcomp (included in real estate listing) showing condition/appearance before the unapproved work



Google Streetview images, taken in 2016. Note that the attic/dormer 4-light wood windows are present but covered on the exterior by storm windows. Also, note that windows at the side elevation appear to be the same 4/1 type which were present at the front façade.



Rear wall, showing 4/1 double hung wood windows and 4-lite wood casement windows prior to current unapproved work. Note that the 1/1 vinyl windows at the second story and the small slider window at the first story are also recent unapproved alterations likely added prior to the current applicant's ownership. Photo provided by applicant.

- The wood siding found at front wall of the primary façade's dormer appears to be of historic age and was present at the time the district was designated. However, it is staff's opinion that the wood at the rear dormer's front wall appears to be of a more recent vintage as it appears to have been applied over asphalt shingles (see below photos). While staff does not recommend the application of new siding at the front walls of the primary elevation's dormer because it appears to be historic age, staff does support the replacement of the cladding the rear dormer because it is not historic and detracts from the house's character.



Front dormer. Note that front wall is clad with a scalloped wood siding while sidewalls are covered with asphalt shingles. Photos provided by applicant.



Rear dormer. Note that front wall is clad with wood siding while sidewalls are covered with painted asphalt shingles. Asphalt shingle is visible below wood siding at this location. Photos provided by applicant.



The two dormers at the side walls are clad with asphalt shingles. Photo provided by applicant.

ISSUES

- As noted above, the house's original windows were 4/1, wood-sash, double-hung units and 4-lite wood casement units. All window muntins were vertically oriented. It is staff's opinion that the original windows were distinctive, character-defining features of the house. Therefore, the Standard's require that these windows be replicated if replaced/ However, because the new 1/1 and single lite aluminum clad wood sash proposed for installation at the side and rear walls do match the original character-defining units in design/lite configuration, it is staff's opinion that they do not meet the Standards.
- The wood siding found at front wall of the primary façade's dormer appears to be of historic age and was present at the time the district was designated. It is staff's opinion that this siding is a distinctive, character-defining feature as the dormer is highly visible and the wood siding is of historic age. Therefore, the replacement of this siding does not meet the Standards in staff's opinion.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation #1 - Section 21-2-78 -Certificate of Appropriateness – Repair soffit/fascia in kind; install 4/1 double-hung aluminum-clad wood window sash at front façade; install three 4/1 double-hung aluminum-clad wood window sash at side/east wall; install 4-lite aluminum-clad wood casement windows at front façade dormer; rehabilitate garage; and install new siding at dormers

It is staff's opinion that above items are compatible with the subject property's historic character, are in keeping the district's Elements of Design, and meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work with following conditions:

- The existing wood brickmould should be retained and shall not be wrapped. The proposed new 4/1 and 4-lite casement window sash shall be sized to fit the current openings. No new casing/trim/brickmould and/or blocking/spacers shall be installed within the window openings as a result of the proposed window installation
- The existing siding at the front wall of the primary façade's dormer shall be retained. If any areas of the siding at this location is deteriorated, it shall be replaced in kind to match existing
- If new lapped composite siding is installed at the dormers, it shall display a smooth finish and must be painted a color which is compatible with that found at the house's trim. The applicant shall provide the final siding material choice and color to HDC staff for review and approval prior to the issuance of the project's permit
- HDC staff shall be afforded the opportunity to review and approve the person/pedestrian door which shall be installed at the garage's side wall prior to the issuance of the project's permit.

Recommendation #2 - Section 21-2-78 - Denial – Install 1/1 double-hung, single-lite casement and single- lite awning aluminum-clad, wood-sash windows at side walls, rear walls, and side and rear dormers

It is staff's opinion that above items are incompatible with the house's historic character for the following reasons:

- The house's original windows were 4/1, wood-sash, double-hung units and 4-lite wood casement units. All window muntins were vertically oriented. The original windows were distinctive, character-defining features of the house and therefore, the Standard's require that these windows be replicated if replaced. However, because the proposed new 1/1 and single lite aluminum clad wood sash proposed for installation at the side and rear walls do

match the original character-defining units in design/lite configuration, they do not meet the Standards.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the installation of 1/1 and /or single lite aluminum-clad wood windows as proposed because the work does not conform to the district's Elements of Design, nor does it meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular Standards number:

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 historic 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.*