

STAFF REPORT: 9/11/2024 MEETING

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

ADDRESS: 1815 SEMINOLE

APPLICATION NO: #HDC-2024-00473

HISTORIC DISTRICT: INDIAN VILLAGE

APPLICANT: TIMOTHY FLINTOFF (4545 ARCHITECTURE)

OWNER: 1815 SEMINOLE LLC

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 8/30/2024

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 7/15/2024

SCOPE: ERECT ADDITION, ALTER CHURCH BUILDING

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The building located at 1815 Seminole is a Norman-Gothic style church that was erected at the southwest corner of Seminole St. and Kercheval Avenue in 1949. Known originally as the St. Luke Evangelical Luther Church, the building houses approximately 5,000 square feet and features a cruciform plan, with a projecting gabled-roof central mass with lower, intersecting gabled and flat-roof wings to the rear. Exterior walls are red brick with buff-colored stone detailing around windows and doors. Stone accents are also present at the end and side buttresses. Windows are the original steel casement units and feature both decorative lead coming and multicolored-glass panes. One glass block window is located in the rear southwest side of the building. The front/west façade retains the building's original vertical wood plan doors.



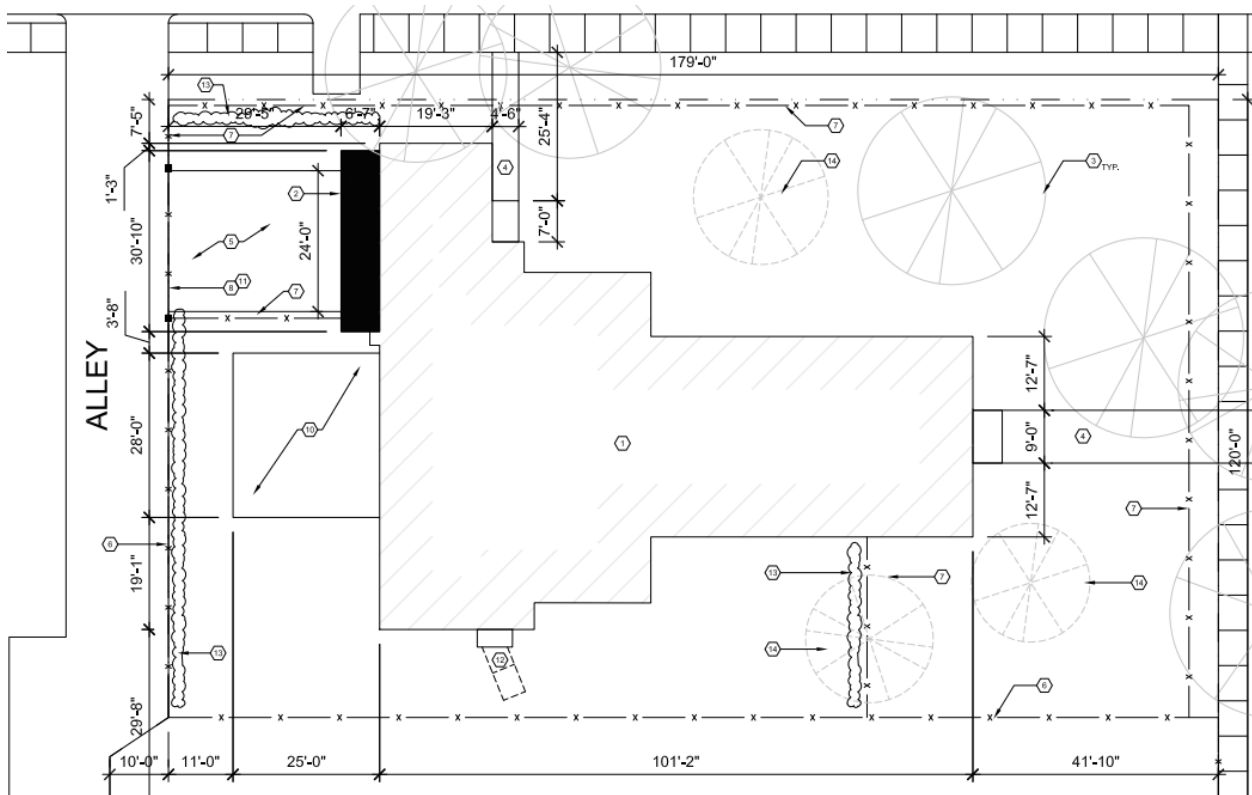
1815 Seminole, current conditions. Photo by HDC staff, 8/31/2024

PROPOSAL

The applicant is seeking the Commission's approval to undertake a rehabilitation of the building in order to accommodate a proposed new use as a single-family dwelling. Per the submission, the application includes the following work items:

Sitework/Landscaping

- Remove plant overgrowth on building walls/roof
- Remove three diseased Colorado Spruce trees (see the letter from arborist specifying diseased condition of trees)
- Plant new privacy hedge at west side of property (species not specified)
- Install new 28' x 25' brick paver patio at rear (Tecno Block *Blu*)
- Replace existing concrete walkways with brick paver walkway (Tecno Block *Victorien*, 4'-6" and 9'-0" wide)
- Add a new asphalt driveway at rear, to lead from patio to garage (dimension not specified)
- Erect a new 6'-0" high aluminum picket fence at perimeter of property. Note that new fencing will not be added where separation fencing currently exists



1815 Seminole, proposed site plan

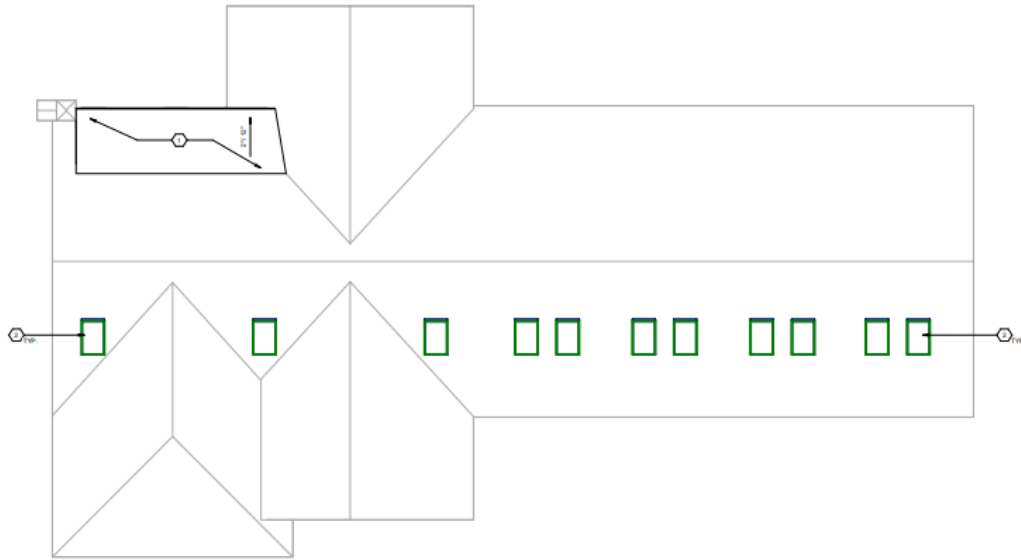
General Repair

- Repair, tuckpoint existing brick as required
- Repair damaged windows as required in kind to match existing

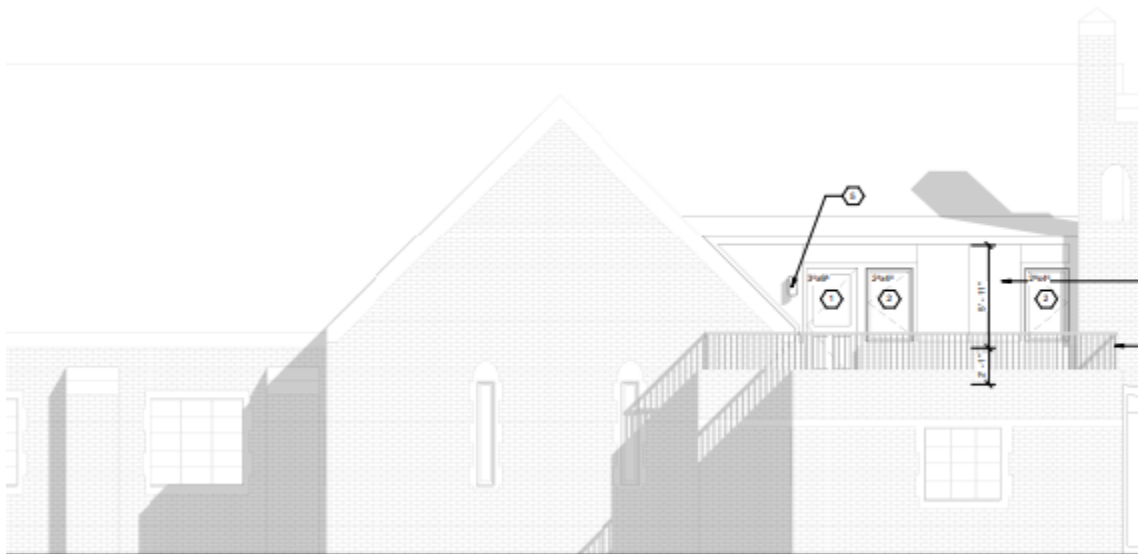
Roof

- Install 11 new 30" x 60", fixed aluminum skylights at main roof surface, on the south side
- At rear, flat roof wing roof, establish a rooftop patio to include installation of composite decking and guard railing (minimum of 36" in height)

- At the rear/northwestern edge of the roof, above the flat roof wing, install a 5’-11” high, shed-roof dormer which shall be clad with lapped composite siding. A single wood door and two aluminum-clad wood casement windows will be located at the dormer’s north wall.



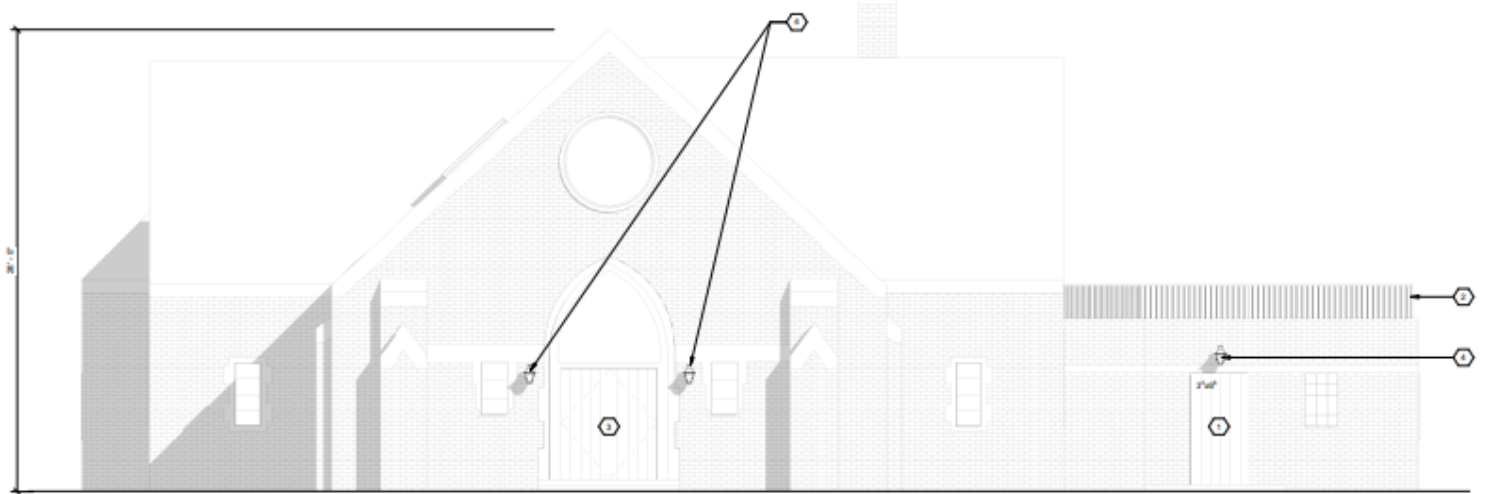
1815 Seminole, proposed roof plan



Proposed north elevation, showing new dormer which will be added to the roof, at the building’s rear/northwestern corner

East Elevation

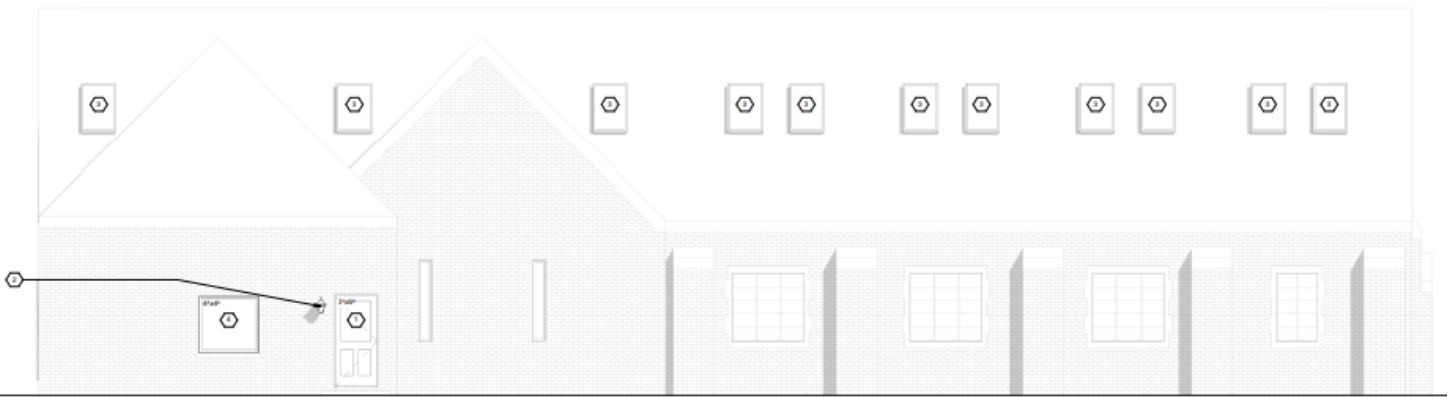
- At front gabled wing, replace two light fixtures with new “traditional style” sconces (cutsheet depicting specific style of sconce not provided)
- At rear flat-roof wing, replace one damaged light fixture with new “traditional style” sconce (cutsheet depicting specific style of sconce not provided)
- Where door is missing at rear flat-roof wing, install an historic, wood plank door found on site



Proposed east elevation

South Elevation

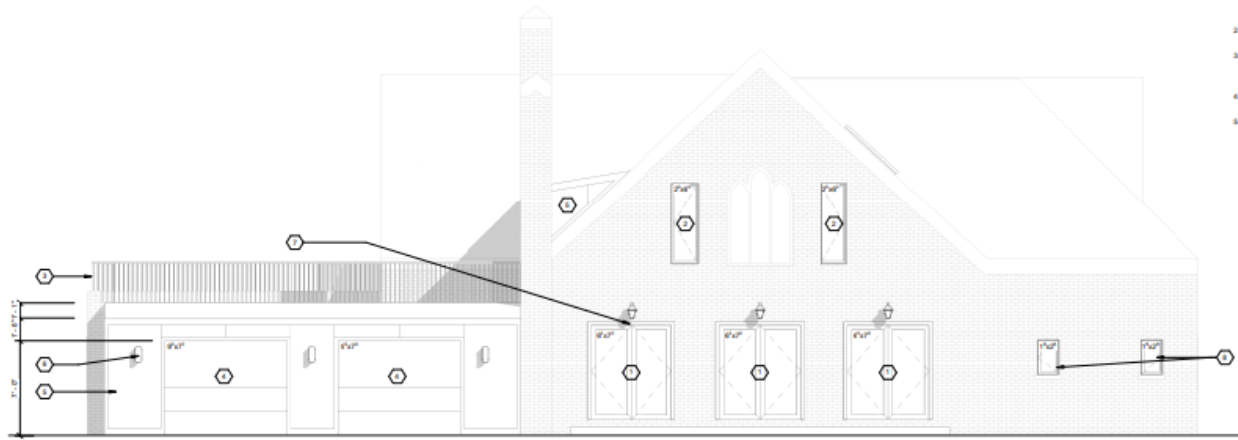
- Replace one original steel casement window which includes milt-colored glass panes with a single fixed aluminum clad wood unit
- Where door is missing, install a new wood door
- Install a new “traditional style” sconce to the side of the doorway (specific style not provided)



Proposed south elevation

Rear/West Elevation

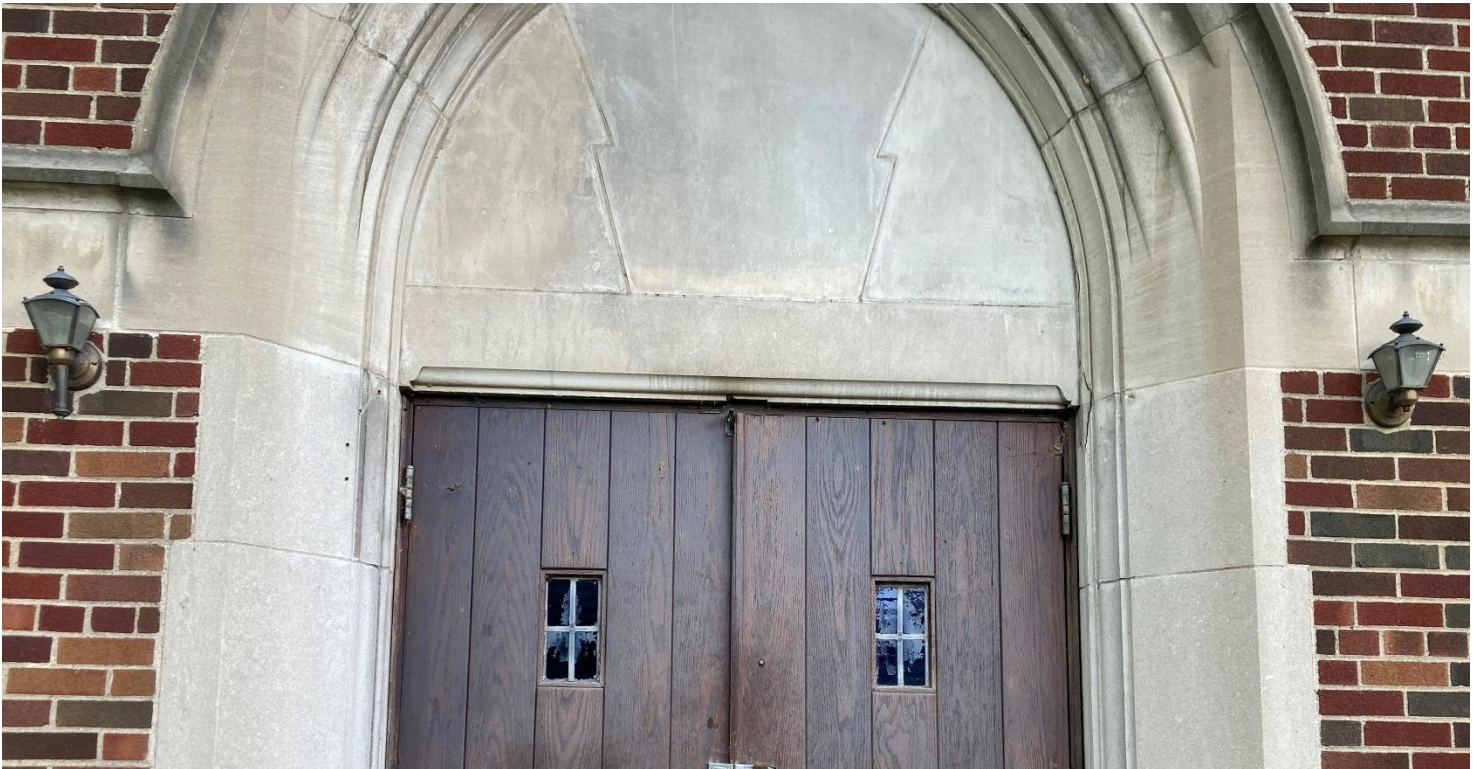
- Demolish rear/west wall of flat-roof, one story wing (which includes three historic steel casement windows with non-historic, multi-colored glass panes) and install new 9’-9 high, 6’-7” deep, shed roof extension/addition to rear wall of flat roof wing. Exterior walls of the new addition will be clad with composite lapped siding. Two flush panel steel overhead garage doors and contemporary sconces (cutsheets which depict specific style not provided) will be located at the addition’s west wall
- Replace two original 3-lite steel casement windows with colored glass panes with single lite aluminum clad wood casement windows
- At second story, in gable end, add two new 2’x6’ window openings to accommodate new single lite aluminum clad wood casement windows
- At first story, add three new 6’x7’ door openings to accommodate three sets of paired aluminum-clad wood French doors
- Install a new “traditional style” light sconce over each of the three sets of French doors (cutsheets which depict specific style of sconces not provided)



Proposed rear/west elevation

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Indian Village Historic District was designated in 1970
- The application is seeking to replace three light fixtures with new sconces (see below). While possibly historic in age (ie., over 50 years old), it is staff’s opinion that they are not distinctive character-defining elements of this church building as their design is utilitarian in appearance and does not reflect the Norman Gothic detailing which distinguishes the resource. Staff therefore supports their removal/replacement.



1818 Seminole. Facing front/east facade and two light fixtures proposed for replacement. Staff photo taken on 9/6/2024



1818 Seminole. Facing light at east wall of the rear flat roof wing which is proposed for replacement. Staff photo taken on 9/6/2024

- A review of the property’s designation photos and files maintained by the Historic District Commission indicated that the colored glass panes which are present at the building’s original steel casement windows were added sometime after 1970/after the district’s designation without HDC approval. Although the steel casement windows themselves are original to the building’s construction, the multi-colored glass panes are not significant as they were installed relatively recently.
- Note that a steel casement window at the rear, flat-roof wing’s east wall was replaced without HDC approval with glass block in 2023. However, the window opening size, stone sill, and decorative stone surrounds remains intact.
- At the 10/11/2024 regular HDC meeting, staff engaged the Commission in a discussion regarding the potential adaptive reuse of 1815 Seminole in an effort to identify the exterior features which would need to be retained if such a rehabilitation was undertaken. Although the Commission did not issue a resolution or formal guidelines, the Commissioners who were present at the meeting did make the following general observations/statements regarding any future exterior work which might need to be undertaken at the property:
 - The primary, street-facing Seminole and Kercheval elevations should be restored and preserved (including rooflines, stone detailing, leaded ornamental (stained) glass, and the steel casement windows. The plain colored panes may be replaced with clear glass.
 - The current open lawns along Seminole and Kercheval should remain unenclosed, excepting modest fencing along the south side of the building.
 - The flat-roofed block at the northwest corner of the parcel may be considered for more substantial alteration (e.g., a residential garage accessed from the rear alley).
 - Skylights to introduce additional interior daylighting may be acceptable, but only if they are minimally visible from the public right-of-way and do not extend past the ridgeline
 - The less prominent and publicly visible portions on the southside of the building offer the best opportunity for design flexibility.

Taking the above comments into consideration, staff notes the following regarding the current proposal:

- The application is proposing to install new 6’-0” high aluminum picket fencing at the perimeter of the parcel. Although the above commentary states that the lawns should remain unenclosed, it is staff’s opinion that the placement of the fencing as

proposed in the current application is appropriate because five other properties within the 1800 block of Seminole, to include the adjacent parcel/the parcel to the south of 1815 Seminole, have similarly placed aluminum picket fencing. Perimeter fencing heights which exist at nearby properties are typically 6'-0" in height, although one lower/4'-0" perimeter fence is present within the 1800 block of Seminole.

- The application does propose to restore the primary, street-facing Seminole and Kercheval elevations, including rooflines, stone detailing, leaded ornamental (stained) glass, and the steel casement windows. The only new work proposed for these elevations is the new dormer, which will be inconspicuously located in the roof's northwest/rear corner, above the flat-roof, one-story wing.
- The application does propose to utilize the less significant, flat-roof former administrative wing of the building for a new garage with the integration of a small, shed-roof addition to its rear/west wall, facing the alley. It is staff's opinion that the extension will be minimally visible from the public right of way and generally is compatible with the property's historic character due to its placement and scale. However, note that the addition of the extension will result in the removal of three steel casement windows (with non-historic multi-colored glass panes) at the wing's west wall (see the below photos). While the windows are historic age, they are located at the rear wall of the less significant administrative wing of the building. Also, the window openings at the wing's rear wall do not display the same decorative stone surrounds as those found at its more publicly visible front and side walls. Finally, note that the decorative stone course which appears above the window and door openings on the wing's front and side walls is not present at its rear wall. As this wing's rear wall does not reflect the overall design features which distinguish this building in regards to detailing and instead presents a more utilitarian appearance, and its demolition is necessary to accommodate the location of a garage extension, it is staff's opinion that the demolition the wall, to include the removal of the three casement windows is appropriate within the context of the proposed rehabilitation.



Front and side wall of rear, flat roof wing. Note decorative stone surrounds and stone course above door and window openings. Staff photo taken 9/6/2024



Rear wall of flat-roof wing proposed for removal in order to accommodate new garage extension. Note lack of detailing at window surrounds and wall.

- The new doors and windows proposed for location at the rear/west wall and south wall/ the lower hipped-roof southwest wing of the building will result in the removal of three original steel casement windows with non-historic, multi-colored glass panes (see the below). As is the case with the windows at the flat-roof wing, these windows lack the decorative leaded glass detailing and stone surrounds of the more prominent, significant windows as they are located in a wing that are off the sanctuary, to the rear of the church. It is staff’s opinion that their replacement is appropriate because windows do not reflect the overall design features which distinguish this building in regard to detailing and instead present a more utilitarian appearance than the character-defining windows which are present the building’s sanctuary walls.



These 2 windows at the rear/southwest corner of the building’s sanctuary are proposed for replacement with aluminum-clad wood casement units. Staff photo taken 9/6/2024



This window at the rear of the sanctuary’s south wall is proposed to be replaced with a fixed aluminum clad unit.

- The application does propose to install new skylights at the south roof surface while retaining most of the building’s original windows. Per the submitted roof plan, the skylights will not extend past the roofline. The product cutsheet indicates that the skylights will be fixed and each will include a flat, clear glass vision panel. Although the skylights each measure 30”x60”, the applicant is seeking to install a row of 11 skylights, which will extend the full length of the south roof surface. When viewed from the public right-of-way facing west/northwest, the proposed grouping of 11 skylights will present as a highly-visible modern intrusion that is not compatible with the building’s historic character. Staff recommends that the number of skylights be reduced/the row of skylights be pushed back to the west so that the element will be less conspicuous from the street/sidewalk.
- The application is proposing to remove Colorado Spruce trees because they have a fungal disease called Rhizophæra Needlecast per a letter supplied by a landscape designer. Staff’s Landscape Architect did confirm that the diseased trees should be removed because the fungus could spread to other trees on the property. The applicant has also noted that the sick/dying trees could fall on the building and/or neighboring properties. Staff therefore supports the proposed tree removal with the condition that three new replacement trees be planted at the property.



These two trees proposed for removal, facing northwest towards front yard. Staff photo taken on 9/6/2024



Tree proposed for removal. Facing southwest. Staff photo taken on 9/6/2024

ISSUES

- The application does not specify the finish of the new composite siding which will clad the garage extension and new rooftop dormer addition. Composite siding with a faux woodgrain finish is not appropriate for historic districts because they do not adequately approximate the look of a historic painted wood clapboard siding. Staff therefore recommends that the siding display a smooth finish.
- The new skylights will be highly visible from the public right-of-way as they will extend nearly the full length of the south roof's surface. Staff recommends therefore recommends that the number of skylights proposed for installation at the roof's east end be reduced so that the element will be less conspicuous from the street/sidewalk.

Recommendation - Section 21-2-78 – COA: Rehabilitate dwelling and erect a new garage

It is staff's opinion that the project is generally appropriate to the property's and district's historic character, conforms to the district's Elements of Design and meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work with the following conditions:

- Three new trees shall be plated within the property boundaries to replace the three diseased Colorado Spruce trees which are proposed for removal
- Staff shall be afforded the opportunity to review the final landscape and hardscape plan prior to the issuance of the project's permit
- Staff shall be afforded the opportunity to review and approve the final design of the new light fixtures/sconces prior to the issuance of the project permits
- The siding which shall be installed at the garage extension and new dormer shall display a smooth finish/shall not have a faux wood grain finish. The permit drawings shall be revised to note that the garage siding will be smooth.
- The new railing proposed for installation at the roof of the flat-roof side wing shall not rise higher than 36"
- The number of skylights proposed for installation at the roof's east end shall be reduced so that the element will be less conspicuous from the street/sidewalk. The applicant shall provide a revised roof plan to staff for review and approval prior to the issuance of the project's permit.