

**STAFF REPORT: SEPTEMBER 11, 2024 MEETING**

**PREPARED BY: A. DYE**

**APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2024-00369**

**ADDRESS: 372 W. GRAND BLVD**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT: HUBBARD FARMS**

**APPLICANT: NATHANIEL ZORACH**

**PROPERTY OWNER: NATHANIEL ZORACH**

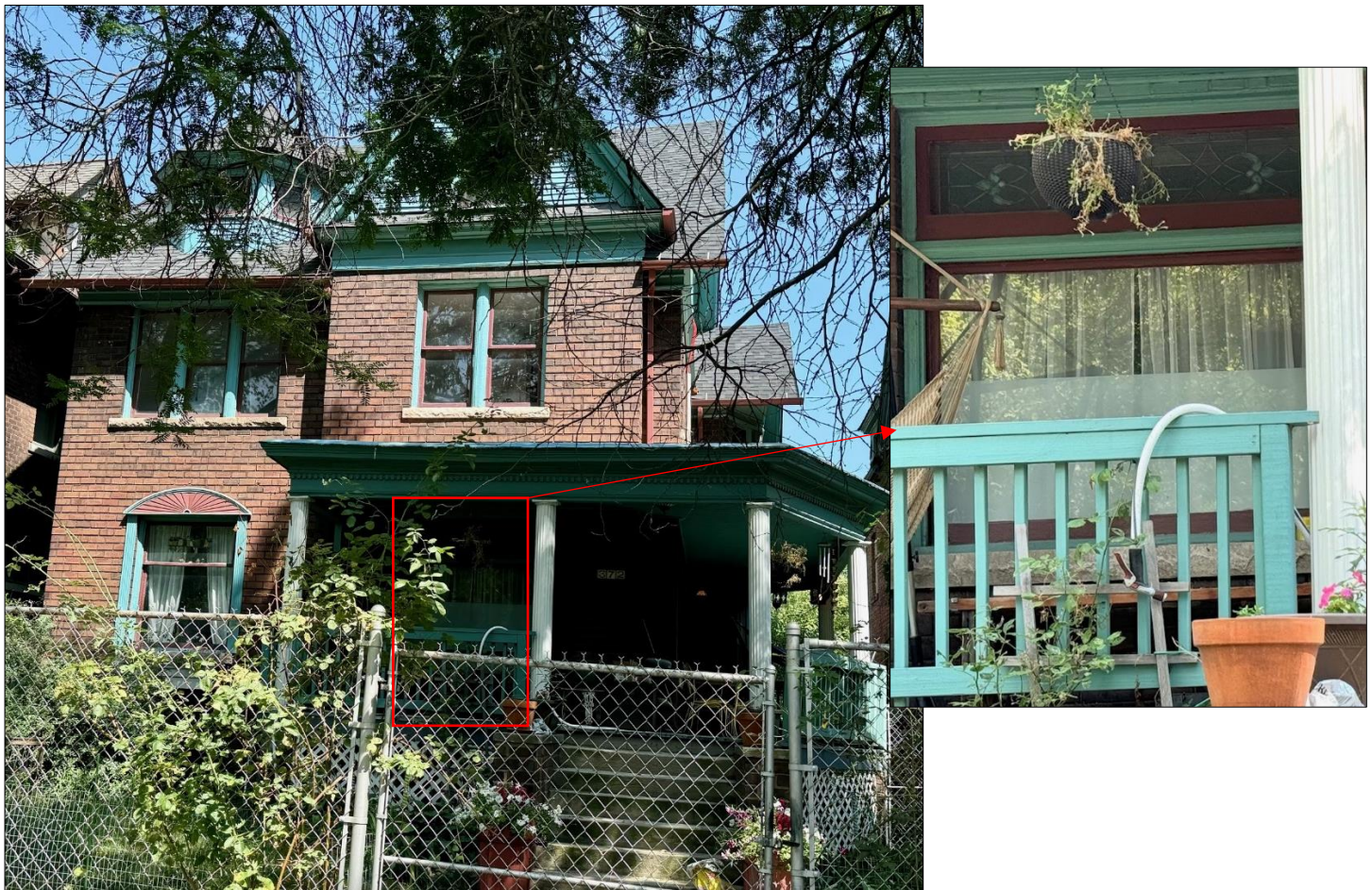
**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: AUGUST 19, 2024**

**DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: AUGUST 27, 2024**

**SCOPE: REPLACE WOOD WINDOWS WITH ALUMINUM-CLAD WINDOWS**

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The 2-1/2 story dwelling at 372 W. Grand Boulevard was erected ca. 1900. The walls of the house are clad with reddish-brown mottled brick set with narrow raked grout lines with colored (reddish) mortar. The pedimented gables, dormer and bay windows (on the north and south side walls) create different wall surfaces and patterns for each side of the dwelling. The raised front porch wraps around the southwest corner of the house and is covered with a flat roof. Historic porch details include dentil trim at the fascia and Doric wood columns; a non-historic railing spans the space between the columns. Brick wing walls, capped with stone, enclose the porch stairs. The majority of windows on the house are wood 1-over-1 double-hung units, however, the two large window openings on the façade at the first floor include a 1-over-1 cottage window and a mulled opening with a large, fixed window below a leaded glass transom.



*Façade, west-facing wall. Staff photos, August 27, 2024.*



**PROPOSAL**

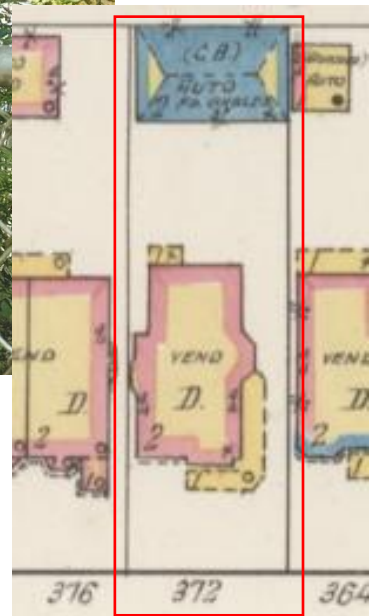
- Replace existing wood windows on the house.

**STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH**

- The Hubbard Farms Historic District was enacted on January 29, 1993.
- It is staff’s opinion the style of this house, per Virginia and Lee McAlester’s A Field Guide to American Houses, is “Free Classic Queen Anne”: *About 35 percent of Queen Anne houses use classical columns...other classical details are frequent...this subtype became common after 1890...*



Above: Porch details and south side elevation. Staff photo, August 2024.  
Right: 1921 Sanborn map.







*Staff photos, August 2024.*

- The window openings have thick stone sills, highly profiled wood brickmould, and are deeply recessed within the masonry walls. The grouped windows are separated by mullions that have a stepped back, angled design that creates an illusion of a rounded shape. All of these details further contribute to the architectural complexity of the house's design and help identify its era of construction.





- In 2018, the house was owned by the current applicant and an application was submitted to replace nine wood windows with aluminum-clad windows. During this period, HDC staff had authority to approve replacement windows with the condition that the wood brickmould be retained. Staff located a paper copy of this application, which is listed below.

August 1, 2018

Proposal for Historic Review  
**372 W. Grand Blvd.**

Detroit, MI 48224  
 Hubbard Farms Historic District

**Applicants:** Adrienne M. Kolano and Nat M. Zorach, proud residents of the city of Detroit since 2017 and 2014, respectively.

**Background:** We purchased the property at 372 W. Grand in July 2018 and have been living in it since mid-July. The property had been partially renovated to repair fire damage and install a new kitchen, new bathrooms, new flooring, new mechanical, electric, and plumbing, and to partially renovate the attic. Of the windows in the home, all appear to be original except for the second floor bathroom window, which was replaced with vinyl some time 2013-2017. Original windows on the first and second floor have been painted shut and have suffered a substantial amount of deterioration but may be able to be restored. Eight third floor windows are **severely deteriorated** from years of water damage that accrued prior to roof replacement some time 2013-2017.

**Scope of work:** Our scope is limited at this point but will immediately include complete window replacement for the third floor.

**Rationale for replacement versus restoration:** None of the existing windows are operable and would require extensive rehabilitation to replace sash weights, repair dry rot and water damage, replace muntins, reglaze, clean, and repaint. The lone repair estimate we got was about \$13,500, which would include the cost of replacing the missing rear window, which was accidentally damaged beyond repair during cleanup (NB: "opened the window and the bottom sash completely fell apart"). This was substantially higher than the price of replacing all of the existing damaged windows with entirely operable and much more energy-efficient windows.

Unit	Type	Location	Elevation	TECHNICAL DATA			Notes
				SHGC	u=	VLT	
1	Double-hung	Rear Area	East	0.30	0.30	0.50	
2	Casement	Turret (Left)	West	0.29	0.27	0.51	
3	Fixed	Turret (Center)	West	0.31	0.28	0.58	
4	Casement	Turret (Right)	West	0.29	0.27	0.51	
5	Double-hung	Dormer (South)	West	0.27	0.30	0.50	9L True Divided Lite
6	Double-hung	Stairs (W)	North	0.27	0.30	0.50	
7	Double-hung	Stairs (E)	North	0.27	0.30	0.50	
8	Double-hung	Opposite (W)	South	0.70*	0.30	0.50	
9	Double-hung	Opposite (E)	South	0.70*	0.30	0.50	

\* - These two numbers are adjusted to improve energy parameters and are not reflected in the quote.

2 WOODWARD, SUITE 808  
 DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48226  
 PHONE 313-224-6536  
 FAX 313-224-1310

CITY OF DETROIT  
 HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

8/10/2018

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**

Nathan Zorach  
 372 W. Grand  
 Detroit, MI

**RE: Application Number 18-5812; 372 W. Grand; Hubbard Farms Historic District**

Dear Mr. Zorach:

Pursuant to Section 5(10) of the Michigan Local Historic District Act, as amended, being MCL 399.205(10), MSA 5-3407(5)(10); Section 25-2-57(b) of the 1984 Detroit City Code; Detroit Historic District Commission Resolution 97-01 (adopted August 13, 1997); Detroit Historic District Commission Resolution 97-02 (adopted October 8, 1997); and Detroit Historic District Commission Resolution 98-01 (adopted February 11, 1998), the staff of the Detroit Historic District Commission has reviewed the above-referenced application for building permit and hereby issues a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA), which is effective as of August 10, 2018.

This COA has been issued because the replacement of 9 wood window sash (**while retaining existing wood trim/brickmould**) with new wood, aluminum-clad units (color brick red to match remaining wood windows sash, divided light windows are simulated divided light/grids to be applied to exterior of glass surface) as per the attached signed/annotated scope/proposal meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, Standard # (10) New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Please retain this Certificate of Appropriateness for your files. You should now proceed to the City of Detroit Buildings Safety and Engineering Department to obtain a building permit. The Detroit Historic District Commission's approval and issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness does not waive the applicant's responsibility to comply with any other applicable ordinances or statutes. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at (313) 224-6543.

For the Commission:

  
 Jennifer Ross  
 Staff  
 Detroit Historic District Commission

HDC files, Application 18-5812.



Using the 2018 window schedule, staff identified the locations of the approved replacement windows. Staff has also identified the locations of the windows within the current application, based on the applicant's descriptions and photos.



Front – west wall



Rear – east wall



Side – North wall



Side – South wall

Window openings identified by yellow boxes were part of the HDC staff approved 2018 window replacement application. Staff photos, August 2024.

Windows identified with red boxes are the openings staff has identified for the current application.

It appears that two additional window openings in the current application (listed as dining room and kitchen) can't be seen in these photographs, and are likely on the north wall near the rear, and behind the bay window. ★



Compiled on the next two pages are a selection of photos and comments submitted by the applicant.

**Window detail.** First floor living room south (left); dining room left (center), dining room center (right); substantially damaged and inoperable



It is staff's opinion that extensive deterioration, worthy of removing and replacing a window, isn't evident within these photos. The paint on the frames is intact, and only the lower sash of one window is flaking. There doesn't appear to be missing/crumbling wood. Even if there was, wood filler can be used where there are areas of wood rot.

Below: Living room (north). On this window, we see separation on the stops on the top of the frame, and serious damage to the rail-and-stile joints on the bottom from decades of unmanaged moisture from the non-insulated glass (condensation on the interior from dewpoint). Various other deterioration is evident.



As stated on the previous page, this window shows signs of deterioration, but the frames are intact and can be repaired.

## ISSUES

- The applicant states the windows are painted and caulked shut rendering them inoperable. Removing the caulk and cutting through the paint are straightforward repairs that can be completed with standard tools. The historic early 20<sup>th</sup> century windows were made from individual components, so they can be repaired by replacing specific parts. If weights and sash cord are missing, these items can be purchased and installed, allowing for the full operability of double-hung windows to be regained. Extensive moisture damage for some windows was noted by the applicant, but the photos don't show rotted, missing wood. The paint is intact, with the exception of some flaking paint.
- It is staff's opinion the photos and descriptions submitted do not give evidence that the historic windows are deteriorated beyond repair. Therefore, it is too soon for the Commission to consider the adequacy of the proposed replacement window, as Standard Six states "*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.*"

## RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposal for the replacement of the wood windows on the home does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the following reasons:

- The applicant states the windows are painted and caulked shut rendering them inoperable. Removing the caulk and cutting through the paint are straightforward repairs that can be completed with standard tools. The historic early 20<sup>th</sup> century windows were made from individual components, so they can be repaired by replacing specific parts. If weights and sash cord are missing, these items can be purchased and installed, allowing for the full operability of double-hung windows to be regained. Extensive moisture damage for some windows was noted by the applicant, but the photos don't show rotted, missing wood. The paint is intact, with the exception of some flaking paint.
- It is staff's opinion the photos and descriptions submitted do not give evidence that the historic windows are deteriorated beyond repair. Therefore, it is too soon for the Commission to consider the adequacy of the proposed replacement window, as Standard Six states "*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.*"

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the work as proposed, as it does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, specifically Standards 2, 5, and 6:

- 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.*