

STAFF REPORT: NOVEMBER 13, 2024 REGULAR MEETING

PREPARED BY: T. BOSCARINO

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2024-00458

ADDRESS: 4815 FULLERTON

HISTORIC DISTRICT: RUSSELL WOODS-SULLIVAN

APPLICANT: RONALD N. BENNETT

PROPERTY OWNER: RONALD N. BENNETT

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: AUGUST 12, 2024

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: NOVEMBER 1, 2024

SCOPE: REPLACE WOOD WINDOWS AND VINYL WINDOWS WITH VINYL WINDOWS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

4815 Fullerton is a two-story, Tudor Revival house clad in dark brown brick. It was built in 1926. Character-defining features include its overall massing with nested, front-facing gables, a broad wall chimney on the front façade, and entry pavilion with tabbed stone surrounding a Tudor arch. Prior to the 1999 designation of the Russell Woods-Sullivan Historic District, a few non-historic alterations diminished the building's historic character. Many windows have been replaced with vinyl, especially on the front (north); windows on the sides and rear are mostly wood. A wide opening on the second floor, front façade, that likely once contained wider steel casement windows or mullioned wood windows, was reduced by the installation of narrower, vinyl windows. Vinyl soffit panels were also added.



November 2024 photo by staff.

PROPOSAL

The proposal is to replace 11 windows with vinyl windows. The windows proposed for replacement are a mix of wood windows and vinyl windows.

The proposed replacements are 1-800-HANSONS vinyl windows. Some would be one-over-one, double-hung

wood windows; others would be slider windows or non-subdivided picture windows.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Russell Woods-Sullivan Historic District was established by City Council Ordinance 33-99 in 1999.
- The Elements of Design (Sec. 21-2-168) make the following observations:
 - “Typical openings are taller than wide. It is not uncommon for several windows, which are taller than wide, to fill a single opening, which is wider than tall.”
 - “Windows are commonly either metal casements or wooden sash.”



1999 photo by the Historic Designation Advisory Board.

- Although the application provides clear photos of all four elevations of the house, there is no window schedule provided. Based on photos from the applicant emailed to staff on November 10, 2024, it appears that the following windows are proposed for replacement:
 - Three windows on the third floor, west side (appear to be wood)
 - Three windows on the second floor, west side (appear to be wood)
 - One window on the first floor, north/front (appears to be vinyl)
 - One window on the second floor, south/rear (appears to be wood)
 - One window on the second floor, north/front (appears to be vinyl)
 - One window on the second floor, east side (material not visible)(Note: this is a total of 10 windows, a discrepancy from the 11 mentioned in the application.)
- The application states “some of the windows [proposed for replacement] are the original windows from when the home was built, and under a very distressed condition. Some windows were installed were installed prior to when the property was designated as a historical district.” Also, “Most windows are located on the side or rear of the home.”
- The application describes the windows as deteriorated: “windows are in need of replacement and maybe one or two can be repaired. The wooden frame is practically disintegrating and breaking loose ... one window is missing completely.”
- The standard of review for determining whether replacement windows are appropriate differs depending on whether the existing windows are original wood windows or newer vinyl windows:

Original Windows

- Original or historic windows may only be replaced if they are shown to be deteriorated beyond repair.
- Beyond general description (quoted above), the photos from the applicant do not show noticeable deterioration to the historic primary windows. Most problems commonly found in historic wood sash windows can be repaired (John H. Myers, “The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows,” Preservation Brief 9, (National Park Service Technical Preservation Services), <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/9-wooden-windows.htm>).
- If the original windows are shown to be beyond repair, their replacement is appropriate. However, the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards (namely Standard #6, quoted in full below) directs that the replacement windows must “match the old in design, color, texture, and where possible, materials.”

Non-historic Windows

- Non-historic windows are not required to be preserved. National Park Service guidelines on “replacement windows where no historic windows remain” would apply to the vinyl windows on this building (See Replacement Windows that Meet the Standards, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/taxincentives/windows-replacement-meet-standards.htm>.) An appropriate replacement window would be “compatible with the overall historic character of the building” and be “consistent with the general characteristics of a historic window of the type and period,” among other concerns. In staff opinion, this would be a wood or metal sash or casement window.
- Resolution 97-01 allows this replacement to be approved administratively by staff without the requirement of review by the Historic District Commission.

ISSUES

- Some of the windows proposed for replacement consist of historic wood windows. The Secretary of the Interior’ Standards for Rehabilitation, particularly Standard #2 (quoted below) direct that they be retained. If deteriorated beyond feasible repair, Standard #6 (also quoted in full below) directs that they be replaced with closely matching new windows.
- The applicant has not shown that the historic windows have deteriorated beyond feasible repair.

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-78: Determinations of Historic District Commission

Staff concludes that the proposed window replacement does not meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the following reasons:

- The wood windows proposed for removal are historic and materials that contribute to the character of the property.
- The wood windows proposed for removal have not been shown to be deteriorated beyond repair.

- The proposed new windows are not compatible as they are not “consistent with the general characteristics of a historic window of the type and period” due to the fact that vinyl replacement windows have a noticeably thinner and flatter appearance and different sheen than historic windows than and they are made of a noticeably non-historic material.

Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission issue a Denial as the proposed work fails to meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular:

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.*
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 where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be documented by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*