

STAFF REPORT: 12/11/2024 MEETING

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

ADDRESS: 2044 CHICAGO

APPLICATION NO: HDC2024-00265

HISTORIC DISTRICT: BOSTON-EDISON

APPLICANT: TARIK NAJIB/PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING AND CONTRACTING INC.

OWNER: VIVEK CIAL

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 11/25/2024

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 11/18/2024

SCOPE: REPLACE WINDOWS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The building located at 2044 Chicago is a 2 ½ -story, Tudor-revival style single-family dwelling that was erected ca. 1915. The building is topped with a hipped-roof central/main mass with a projecting front-gabled wing and a rear, two-story, hipped roof wing. Exterior walls are clad with brick and stucco with half timber detailing. The building's front façade features two entry doors and a monumental end wall chimney. Most windows and associated casing/brickmould have been removed and the opening have been covered with plywood. The only remaining windows are five wood leaded glass casement windows which are located at the west/side wall, first story.



Current appearance. Photo taken by staff, 11/25/2024

PROPOSAL

Per the submitted materials, the applicant is seeking the Commission's approval for the following:

- Remove five wood casement windows with leaded glass and associated trim/casing to rough opening at east wall, first story
- Remove remaining windows and associated trim/casing to rough opening (work completed)
- Install new aluminum-clad wood windows and composite and wood windows, to include double-hung, fixed, sliding, and casement units
- At rear, first story door opening, install two composite and wood sidelites

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Boston-Edison Historic District was designated in 1974
- See the below photos of the building which indicates its condition in 1974, at the time of the district's designation and in 1980



Designation slide, 1974. Source, HDAB



Designation slide, 1980. Source, HDAB

- Staff notes that the front door had been removed without HDC approval sometime between 2013 and 2015 per the below Google Streetview images:



Google Streetview, 2013. Note that historic wood door with leaded glass sidelites are present



Google Streetview, 2015. Note that sidelites are extant, but the historic door has been removed

- A review of files maintained by the Historic District Commission indicated that the following approvals were issued by the Commission:
 - 1985 – Install 8 new vinyl windows
 - 2018 - Replace asphalt roof at house and garage and install new composite siding at garage
- Staff notes that the building suffered a fire in 2018. Following that fire, the following exterior work was undertaken without HDC approval:
 - Rebuild a portion of the second story and the attic/uppermost story to include the installation of new stucco and half timbering at the exterior walls
 - Replace wood shake siding at second story of rear, two-story hipped-roof wing and east façade dormer front wall
 - Infill one window opening at the west wall, second story with brick
 - Remove all windows and associated casing/trim to the rough opening with the exception of the five windows at the east elevation, first story.
 - Remove front door sidelites. Infill sidelite openings with plywood and install new metal door.

As noted, the current application scope only includes the installation of new windows and sidelites at the rear entry. Staff did meet with the applicant virtually and let them know that they could add the remaining unapproved exterior work items to the current application. However, they elected not to do so. See the below photos which illustrate the exterior changes which have been undertaken at the building without HDC review/approval after the above-noted 2018 fire.



ARCHED
OPENING

LEADED GLASS
CASEMENT
WINDOWS AT
FRONT FACADE

Photo taken in early 2018, prior to the fire. Note that all windows at the front are wood casement windows with leaded glass. The windows at the second story are covered by aluminum windows. Source, HDC files

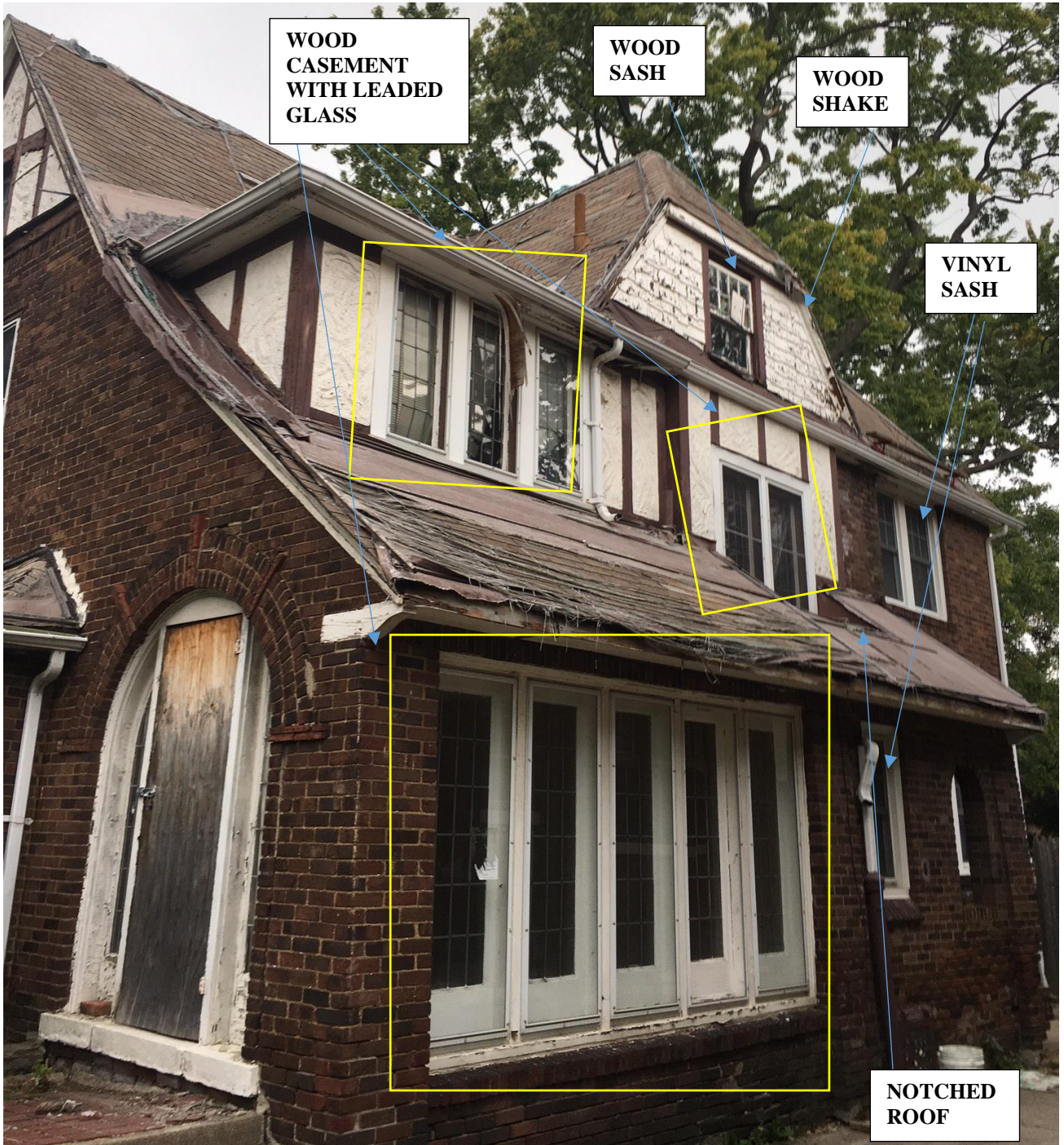


Photo taken in early 2018, prior to the fire. Note that all windows outlined in yellow are wood casement windows with leaded glass. The dormer has wood sash and the remaining visible windows at the second story are vinyl units. Also note the wood shake at the dormer and the notched roof. Source, HDC files.



Photo taken in early 2018, prior to the fire. Note that all windows outlined in yellow are wood casement windows with leaded glass and those outlined in red are wood, double hung units. Source, HDC files.



Photo taken in early 2018, prior to the fire. Wood sash casement windows outlined in red. Remaining windows are vinyl. Source, HDC files



Photo taken in early 2018, prior to the fire. Per the above, the Commission approved the installation of new composite siding at the garage in August 2018.



Rear wall, after the 2018 fire. Note that these windows are noncompatible, non-historic vinyl units. Photo from applicant



This window appears intact but heavily damaged

These two windows appear to be destroyed

August 2018, after the fire. Note that the windows and associated casing/trim at the side wall and the front door sidelites appear to be intact. Two of the three casement window sash at the front façade, second story (outlined in orange) appear to be completely destroyed although the casing/trim remained. Source, Google Streetview



August 2018, after the fire. Note that most of the fire damage appears to be localized at the attic story and second story, west side. Windows sash and trim/casing at attic story outlined in orange appear completely destroyed. Two of the three casement window sash at the front façade, second story (outlined in orange) appear to be completely destroyed although the casing/trim remained. The rest appear to remain. The garage also appears not to have been fire damaged. Source. Google Streetview



August 2018, after the fire. Detail of fire damage at rooftop dormer, east side. Photo by applicant.



August 2018, after the fire. Window sash outlined in orange appear completely destroyed. The rest appear to remain. Source, Google Streetview



August 2018, after the fire. Window sash outlined in orange appear completely destroyed while their associated trim/casing/ remains. The rest of the windows also remain. Source, Google Streetview



Late 2018, after the fire. Note that the rebuilding of the attic story is underway and all windows and associated casing/trim have been removed at the second story without HDC approval. Source, HDC files



Late 2018, after the fire. Note that the attic story has been rebuilt without HDC approval. Source, HDC files



After the fire, 2019. Note that the second and attic story have been rebuilt, most windows and associated casing/brickmould have been removed to the rough opening, and front door sidelites have been removed. Garage siding has also been replaced per the 2018 COA. Source, Google Streetview



Current conditions. Note that the second and attic story have been rebuilt, most windows and associated casing/brickmould have been removed to the rough opening, and front door sidelites have been removed. Staff photo taken 11/25/2024



Current conditions. East wall showing only remaining original windows (wood casement with leaded glass), located at first story. Staff photo taken 11/25/2024

- Per the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, Standard #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.

Furthermore, National Park Service guidance [Replacement Windows that Meet the Standards - Historic Preservation Tax Incentives \(U.S. National Park Service\)](#) regarding the installation of new windows where no historic units are extant states the following:

Replacement windows for missing or non-historic windows must be compatible with the historic appearance and character of the building. Although replacement windows may be based on physical or pictorial documentation, if available, recreation of the missing historic windows is not required to meet the Standards. Replacement of missing or non-historic windows must, however, always fill the original window openings and must be compatible with the overall historic character of the building...The appearance of the replacement windows must be consistent with the general characteristics of a historic window of the type and period, but need not replicate the missing historic window. In many cases, this may be accomplished using substitute materials. There may be some additional flexibility with regard to the details of windows on secondary elevations that are not highly visible, consistent with the approach outlined for replacing existing historic windows. Replacing existing incompatible, non-historic windows with similarly incompatible new windows does not meet the Standards.”

It is staff's contention that the Standards require that any damaged historic character-defining window sash and associated casing/trim which remained after the fire should have been retained and repaired where possible. If remaining but deteriorated beyond repair due to fire damage, they should be replicated in kind/to match existing. If the fire itself resulted in the **complete destruction** of any historic, character-defining window or if a non-historic window is proposed for removal, the new window need only to be compatible with the house's historic character/need not to be a faithful reproduction. As most of the fire damaged sash, brickmould and mullions were removed without HDC review/approval in 2018/2019, staff must rely on the above photographic images to discern the level of damage to the windows caused by the fire. Also, staff must rely on the image to discern the material, operation, age and design of the windows prior to the fire.

- After a review of available images and photos (see above annotated photos), it is staff's opinion that the fire completely destroyed the following historic, character defining window sash:
 - One wood, leaded glass casement window and wood brickmould at the front façade attic story in the gable end
 - One, double-hung, 8/1 wood window and wood brickmould in the east elevation attic story dormer
 - Two, wood casement windows with leaded glass at the second story, front façade. Note that the historic **trim/casing remained intact**
 - Three wood casement windows with leaded glass at the west wall, second story. Note that the historic **trim/casing remained intact**

Also, staff determined that the following non-historic, incompatible windows were extant prior to the fire:

- A pair of vinyl double hung windows at the east wall, second story
- A single vinyl double hung windows at the east wall, first story
- A pair of vinyl double hung windows at the rear, second story
- A vinyl slider window at the first story, rear wall
- A 1/1, single hung vinyl window at the first story, rear wall

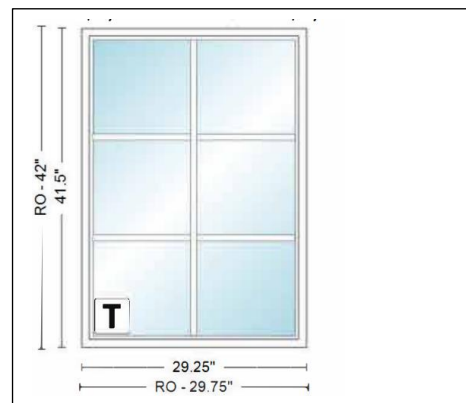
Per the above cited National Park Service guidance, new windows proposed to replace any of the above referenced windows (historic window sash and trim that were completely destroyed by the fire or non-historic windows) do not need to replicate the originals. Rather, they need only to be compatible to the property's historic character. Per the Standards, all other window sash that was removed without HDC approval in 2018/2019 must be replicated to match the originals that were damaged by the fire. Note that any historic window brickmould casing and mullions which remained after the fire must also be replicated. Also, per the Standards, the five remaining wood casement windows with leaded glass at the first floor, east wall should be retained and repaired. If it is demonstrated that they are deteriorated beyond repair, they must be replicated to include the sash and associated brickmould and mullions.

ISSUES

- It does not appear that the current application proposes to replicate the historic window trim/casing that remained after the fire and was removed without HDC approval. This does not meet the Standards. It is staff's opinion that any window replication must include both the sash and the accompanying trim/casing. Also, the application must include an adequate level of documentation of the historic and proposed new casing/trim for each new window type so that staff can determine how closely they match. Staff therefore cannot recommend the proposal for this reason.
- The application does not propose to replicate the historic window sash that remained after the fire and were removed without HDC approval. This includes wood casement windows with leaded glass at the front and side walls, the double-hung wood sash at the west side wall and

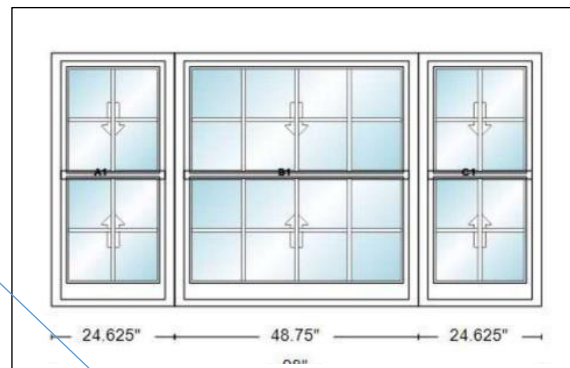
rear rooftop dormer, and the wood casement windows at the rear, two-story porch. This does not meet the Standards. Also, staff cannot ascertain if their condition merited removal because they were not documented prior to their unapproved removal.

- The five remaining wood casement windows with leaded glass at the first story, east wall which are proposed for replacement with new aluminum clad wood casement windows are distinctive character-defining features. The current application does not provide documentation that the windows are deteriorated beyond repair nor do the replacement windows replicate the existing. The work item therefore does not meet the Standards.
- As previously noted, the Standards do not require that the window sash that was completely destroyed by the fire to be replicated. Rather, the new windows must be compatible with the property's historic character. It is staff's opinion that the following windows which are proposed for installation to replace a window destroyed by fire are incompatible with the property's historic character and therefore do not meet the Standards:
 - One, double-hung, 8/1 wood window in the east elevation attic story dormer (below left photo). The proposed window is composite and wood, fixed six pane, simulated divided lite window (below right photo).



It is staff's opinion that the proposed new window is incompatible because a fixed window of this size is not commonly found at this location on a house of this vintage.

- Two, wood casement windows (outlined in green in below photo to the left) with leaded glass at the second story, front façade. The proposed windows are to be double-hung wood units with simulated divided lites. (below left photo)



It is staff's opinion that the new windows are incompatible because the size of the central window is inappropriately large. Also, the third window in the grouping did remain after the fire and therefore should be replicated per the Standards.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation #1 - Section 21-2-78. Determination of the Historic District Commission – Denial: Replace wood casement windows with leaded glass, wood casement windows, and wood double-hung windows with new aluminum-clad wood windows and wood and composite windows; install a wood and composite, fixed six pane, simulated divided lite window at the east, attic story dormer; install double-hung wood units with simulated divided lites at the front façade, first story; and remove original window trim/casing

The above-listed work items are inappropriate for the following reasons:

- The historic windows and trim that remained after the fire and were removed without HDC approval were distinctive, character defining features at the home. Therefore, the elements should have been kept and repaired or, if deteriorated beyond repair, replicated. The current application does not propose to replicate these elements
- The five remaining wood casement windows with leaded glass at the first story, east wall which are proposed for replacement with new aluminum clad wood casement windows are distinctive character-defining features. The current application does not provide documentation that the windows are deteriorated beyond repair nor do the replacement windows replicate the existing. The work item therefore does not meet the Standards.
- The fixed, composite and wood, six pane, simulated divided lite window proposed for installation at the east elevation attic story dormer to replace a casement window that was destroyed by the fire is not compatible with the property's historic character as large fixed casement window would not be commonly found at this location on house of this style and vintage.
- The double-hung wood units with simulated divided lites proposed for installation at the front façade, second story, to replace two wood casement windows that were destroyed by the fire, are not compatible with the property's historic character as the size of the central window is inappropriately large for a house of this vintage and style.

Therefore, the work does not conform the district's Elements of Design nor does it meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular, 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 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*

Recommendation #2 - Section 21-2-78. Determination of the Historic District Commission – Certificate of Appropriateness: Replace vinyl windows with aluminum-clad double hung wood units; install new aluminum clad wood windows and composite and wood windows; and install two composite and wood sidelites at the rear doorway

It is staff's opinion that the below work generally meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and conforms to the district's Elements of Design:

- Replace 8 vinyl windows with new aluminum-clad, double-hung wood units with simulated lites
- Install a fixed, six-pane simulated divided lite wood and composite window at the front façade, in the attic story gable end, where a window was destroyed by a fire.
- Install three double-hung, aluminum clad wood windows with simulated divided lites at the west wall, second story, where windows were destroyed by fire.
- Install composite and wood sidelites at rear doorway

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work items with the following conditions:

- The wood trim/casing which was removed without HDC approval shall be replicated at the three new windows proposed for installation at the west wall
- The trim/casing at the new windows which will replace the vinyl units and the window that was destroyed by fire at the front façade, attic story gable end shall be consistent with the building's historic character/the house's historic trim. Staff shall be afforded the opportunity to review and approve the final trim/casing specs prior to the issuance of the permit