

STAFF REPORT: 05/14/2025

PREPARED BY: L. SAINT JAMES

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2025-00196

ADDRESS: 1162 VINEWOOD

HISTORIC DISTRICT: HUBBARD FARMS

APPLICANT: BRETT MAHAFFEY / RENEWAL BY ANDERSON

PROPERTY OWNER: BILL GOURLAY

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 04/21/2025

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 05/08/2025

SCOPE: REPLACE WINDOWS, ADD WINDOWS TO EXTERIOR OF EXISTING WINDOWS, REPLACE STORM DOOR

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Built in 1903 and designed by Joseph E. Mills for William Roche, 1162 Vinewood is a two-and-a-half-story, multi-family home located in Hubbard Farms. The dwelling has a steeply hipped roof with a prominent front-facing gable atop a two-story bay window. A full-width front porch, flanked by classical columns that are raised to porch-rail level. These architectural elements combine to create an asymmetrical façade. The windows visible from Vinewood are a mix of historic wood and vinyl replacements windows.

No Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) was found for the installation of the siding over the gables and dormer nor the front façade replacement vinyl windows, which has impacted the property's historic character.



Staff photo, 05/08/2025

PROPOSAL

- Remove historic wood windows and replace them with Fibrex* windows
 - (3) Double-hung
 - (2) Diamond pattern twelve-over-one
 - (1) Six-over-one
 - (7) Basement awning windows
- Add Fibrex* windows to the exterior of historic wood casement windows
 - (4) Casements
 - Diamond pattern twenty-two lite
- Replace aluminum storm door with a “full-view” storm door

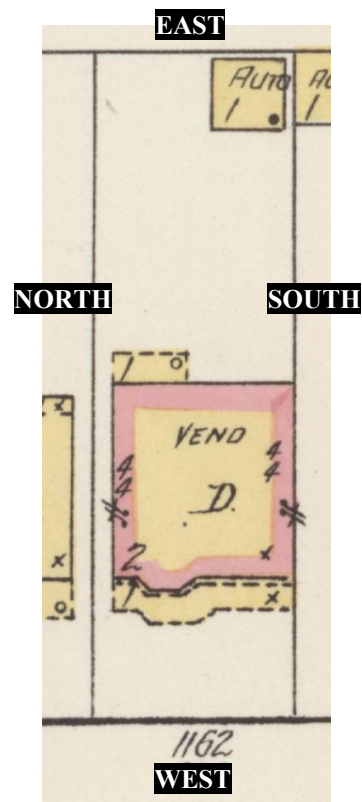
**Composite material made from wood fibers and thermoplastic polymer*

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Hubbard Farms Historic District was enacted in 1993.



Detroit News, 1903



Sanborn Map, Vol. 1, 1921



*North elevation, Second floor
Photos from application*



*North elevation, Third floor
Photos from application*

Double-hung Window Analysis

- Applicants' reasoning for replacements is that the existing historic wood windows are "old and inefficient."
- The existing wood windows are distinctive character-defining features that have not been proven to be beyond feasible repair.
- Photos provided with the application show relatively minor issues, such as missing sash rope or spots that could use a dutchman repair.
- The Elements of Design (Sec. 21-2-157) mention windows as "most often subdivided" and "the most common window type being doublehung sash, whose area is generally further subdivided by muntins." The Elements of Design also note "a variety of rich textural relationships exist in the district—those created by the juxtaposition of various materials, such as brick ... and/or wood."

PROPOSED



*Renewal by Andersen
Acclaim Double-Hung
White exterior color*



*Select basement windows
Photos from application*

Basement Awning Window Analysis

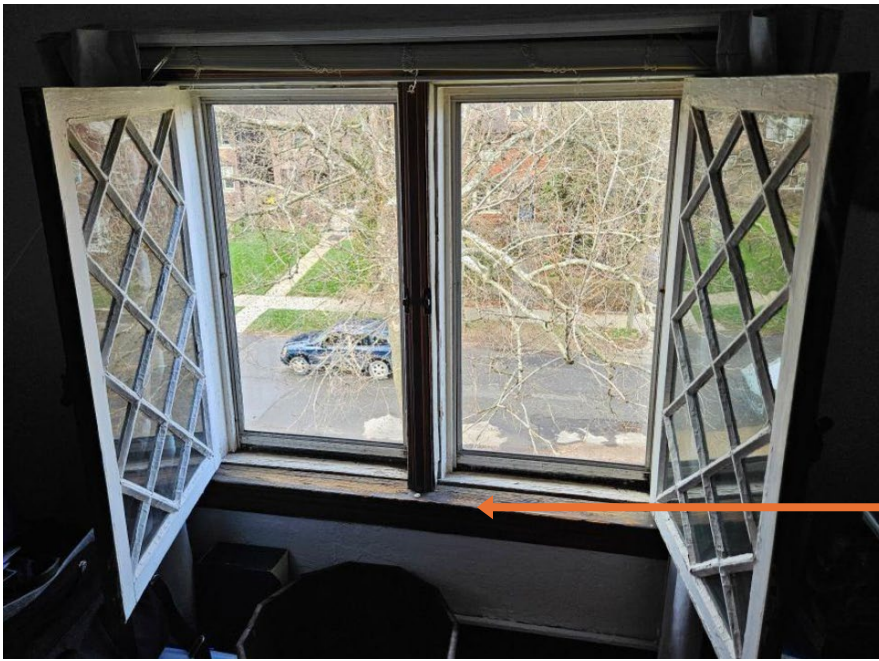
- Applicants' reasoning for replacement is that there is no way to keep them open, the exterior has metal grates over them, and they have rotting issues due to being at ground and below ground level.

PROPOSED



*Renewal by Andersen
Acclaim Awning
Terratone exterior color*

- Customarily the Commission allows, though does not recommend, glass block for basement window replacement, but the existing historic windows have not been proven to be beyond feasible repair nor do the proposed window replacements address potential safety concerns.
- Staff has authority to approve glass block basement windows granted they meet the following applicable conditions:
 - The proposal meets the Secretary of the Interiors Standards; i.e., the alteration does not damage or destroy the property's historic character or character-defining features / elements.
 - The glass block shall be located at the same plane as the existing historic window, set back from the face of the building wall.
 - The glass block shall be covered with the historic screen placed back in the window or with a new screen.
 - Glass block will only be permitted in basement window openings.
 - Openings with glass block that are on the front or visible from a side street shall be screened with foundation plantings that cover the windows.



*West elevation, Third floor
Photos from application*

Casement Windows

- Applicants' reasoning for adding an exterior window is that the existing configuration, historic wood casement window and aluminum storm window with screen inserts, is to improve energy efficiency.

EXAMPLE OF PROPOSED



**KEEP EXISTING HISTORIC
CASEMENT WINDOW**

**ADD NEW
RENEWAL BY
ANDERSEN
WINDOW**

PROPOSED



*Renewal by
Andersen
Acclaim Casement*

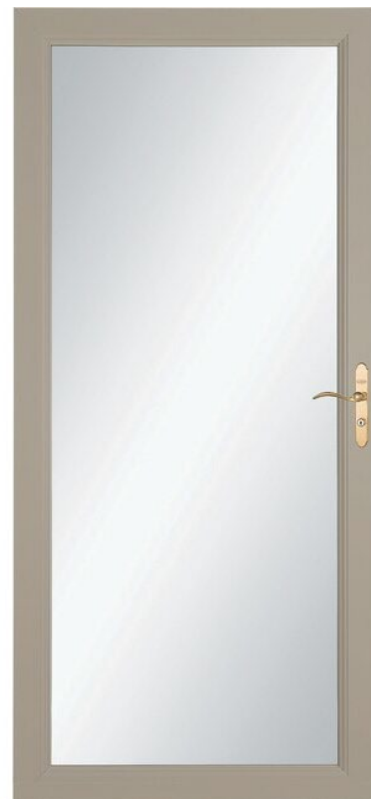
- The windows proposed to be covered are historic and unambiguously character-defining as they are subdivided, as described in the Elements of Design, adding textural interest to the façade and a prominent visual component of the building.
- The installation of the proposed composite windows does not follow NPS guidelines for new windows, as the proposed windows are not “consistent with the general characteristic of a historic window of the type and period,” and are not “compatible with the overall historic character of the building.” Specifically, referencing the factors to consider in evaluating the match of a window:
 - **Glass size and divisions.** Muntins reproduced as simulated divided lights – consisting of a three-dimensional exterior grid, between-the-glass spacers, and an interior grid – may provide an adequate match when the dimensions and profile of the exterior grid are equivalent to the historic muntin and the grid is permanently affixed tight to the glass.
 - **Materials and finish.**
 - While it may be theoretically possible to match all the significant characteristics of a historic window in a substitute material, in actuality, finish, profiles, dimensions and details are all affected by a change in material.
 - Secondary window elements that do not match the finish or color of the window can also diminish the match. Examples include white vinyl tracks on dark-painted wood windows.

Storm door



Photo from application

← PROPOSED



Example of proposed storm door replacement: full-view

- The existing non-historic, though vintage, storm door is aluminum and divided into three sections.
- Due to not having architectural or historic significance and the proposed door being compatible with the property, the existing storm door can be replaced without impact to the historic character of the house.

ISSUE(S)

- The proposed replacement of historic windows and addition of window units are not compatible with the overall historic character of the dwelling.
- The deterioration noted above constitutes typical maintenance needs of old windows and is repairable (per Preservation Briefs: 9 linked below). Any areas of damaged wood appear, to staff, to be minor and localized, and repairable. Thus, the windows do not seem to meet the standard of being “deteriorated beyond repair,” the standard required for their replacement under the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation (quoted in full below).
 - National Park Service — [Preservation Briefs: 9 “The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows”](#)
- If replacement windows were warranted (that is, if the historic windows were demonstrated to be beyond repair), the new windows would be required to “match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities, and where possible, materials” (Standard #6, quoted in full below).
- The proposed white color is not consistent with Color System B, which recommend moderate reddish brown, grayish green, dark reddish brown, and/or black sash colors.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

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

Recommendation 1 of 2 – Denial – Remove historic wood windows and replace them with Fibrex windows, add Fibrex windows to the exterior of historic wood casement windows

Staff recommends that the proposed work will be inappropriate according to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and the Hubbard Farms Historic District’s Elements of Design, specifically:

Standards #:

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic material 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.

Elements of Design #: 3, 7, 8, 9

For the following reasons:

- The existing wood windows are distinctive character-defining features that not have proven to be beyond feasible repair.

- The proposed composite windows are not consistent with the general characteristics of a historic window of the type and period (color, material, operation, and, consequently, profile, are noticeably different than the current historic wood windows).

Recommendation 2 of 2 – COA – Replace aluminum storm door for full-view storm door

Staff finds that the proposal for the remaining work items will not alter the features and spaces that characterize the property and district and therefore recommends the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as proposed as it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and the Hubbard Farms Historic District Elements of Design, with the condition that:

- Subject to staff approval of selected design/profile.