

STAFF REPORT: 06/11/2025

PREPARED BY: L. SAINT JAMES

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2025-00134

VIOLATION NUMBER: 21-442

ADDRESS: 1659 LONGFELLOW

HISTORIC DISTRICT: BOSTON-EDISON

APPLICANT / PROPERTY OWNER: WILLIAM KOLOBARIC / ABI INVESTMENTS

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 04/24/2025

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 05/27/2025

SCOPE: REPLACE FRONT FAÇADE WINDOWS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The dwelling at 1659 Longfellow is a localized interpretation of the Prairie style, built in the Boston-Edison neighborhood in 1916. The house is 2 ½ stories with a hipped roof and features dormers at the north (front), east, and south (rear) sides, each with a hipped roof. A front walkway with steps, marked by low brick piers at each landing, leads through the front yard to a covered porch. This hipped-roof porch and entrance is supported by brick columns and is flanked by a group of three windows, while the second story mirrors this arrangement with only a two grouping of windows and a single central window.



Staff photo, 05/27/202

PROPOSAL

With the current submission, the applicant/current owner is seeking the Commission's approval to mitigate exterior work items which were undertaken **without the Commission's review and/or approval**. Specifically, the applicant is proposing to undertake the following:

- Replace the existing one-over-one vinyl windows, which were installed without HDC approval, and replace them with four-over-one and three-over-one aluminum clad windows.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Boston-Edison Historic District was designated in 1973.



Note the multi-light character of the historic wood windows.

Photo, 1980

- **May 2021:** HDC staff issued a Notification of Work Observed to the property owner to note that the Commission had no record of the approval of the installation of new vinyl windows at the home.
- **June 2021:** The current property owner/applicant purchased the property.
- **February 2022:** The current property owner/applicant contacted HDC staff to note that they had purchased the property and that they were seeking to address the vinyl windows, which had been installed by the previous owner without HDC approval.
- **March 2022:** The current owner submitted application 22-7702 to the HDC for review at the 03/30/2022 meeting for the retention/installation of one over one vinyl windows, which was issued a Notice of Denial (NOD).
- **July 2022:** The current owner submitted application 22-7906 to the HDC for review at the 07/13/2022 meeting for the retention/installation of one over one vinyl windows, which was issued a NOD. A portion of this application received a COA with conditions – the outstanding work to be addressed by the owner/applicant is as follows:

- East bay is still covered in vinyl siding. Per the Commission's decision for the application 22-7906:

At the east/side elevation, first-story projecting bay, the existing vinyl siding shall be removed to reveal the original stucco finish and the stucco shall be painted a Benjamin Moore color corresponding with Moderate Reddish-Brown/#A-9 from HDC color charts.

- The vinyl windows at the side and rear elevations appear to remain white. Per the Commission's decision for the application 22-7906:

The existing vinyl windows on the side and rear elevations shall be painted a color according to the HDC color chart for this house.

- The vinyl siding at the dormer(s) are not painted A:9. Per the Commission's decision for the application 22-7906:

The vinyl siding at the rooftop dormers and rear elevation/wall of the house shall be painted a Benjamin Moore which corresponds with Moderate Reddish-Brown/#A9 from HDC color charts.

Note: the owner/applicant was given a chance to include outstanding violations in this application, but they never replied to staff's email sent on 05/30/2025.

- **March 2025:** The current owner/applicant requested a list of preapproved windows that may be installed. Our staff informed them that we do not have a list of preapproved window manufacturers as the dimensions of historic windows and replacement windows vary by manufacturer, but the proposed replacement window they select must match what was present at this house, which includes the following:

- Material for window units – *wood*
- Window operation – *double-hung (not single-hung)*
- Division of upper and lower sash – *four or three (vertical)-over-one*
- Dimensional muntins – *either true divided lights or simulated divided lights (muntins applied to the exterior pane of glass, not between-the-glass)*
- Wood brickmold and mullions (wider wood pieces between the individual windows)

- **Look under the vinyl to see if the original wood brickmold and mullions are intact and submit photographs of the existing conditions below the vinyl. If wood trim is still present, retain/repair/paint as needed.** If not, select new wood components as offered by the window manufacturer that most closely match the dimensions present within the existing window openings.

- Window and trim sections as provided by the window manufacturer that specify dimensions and profiles of window sash, mullions and muntins.

- The applicant did not provide photographs of the existing conditions of the original wood brickmold and mullions, but interior photos from the listing, the original mullions seem to still exist after the installation of the vinyl windows, as shown in below photo.



Photo from the most recent listing, posted on 01/22/2025

- The existing wood mullions and wood brickmold are distinctive character-defining features that have not been proven to be beyond feasible repair.
- The Elements of Design (Sec. 21-2-106) mention that “several windows are sometimes grouped into a combination that is wider than tall” and that “window openings are always subdivided.” Additionally, “wood is almost universally used for window frames and other functional trim and is used in many examples for all trim.”

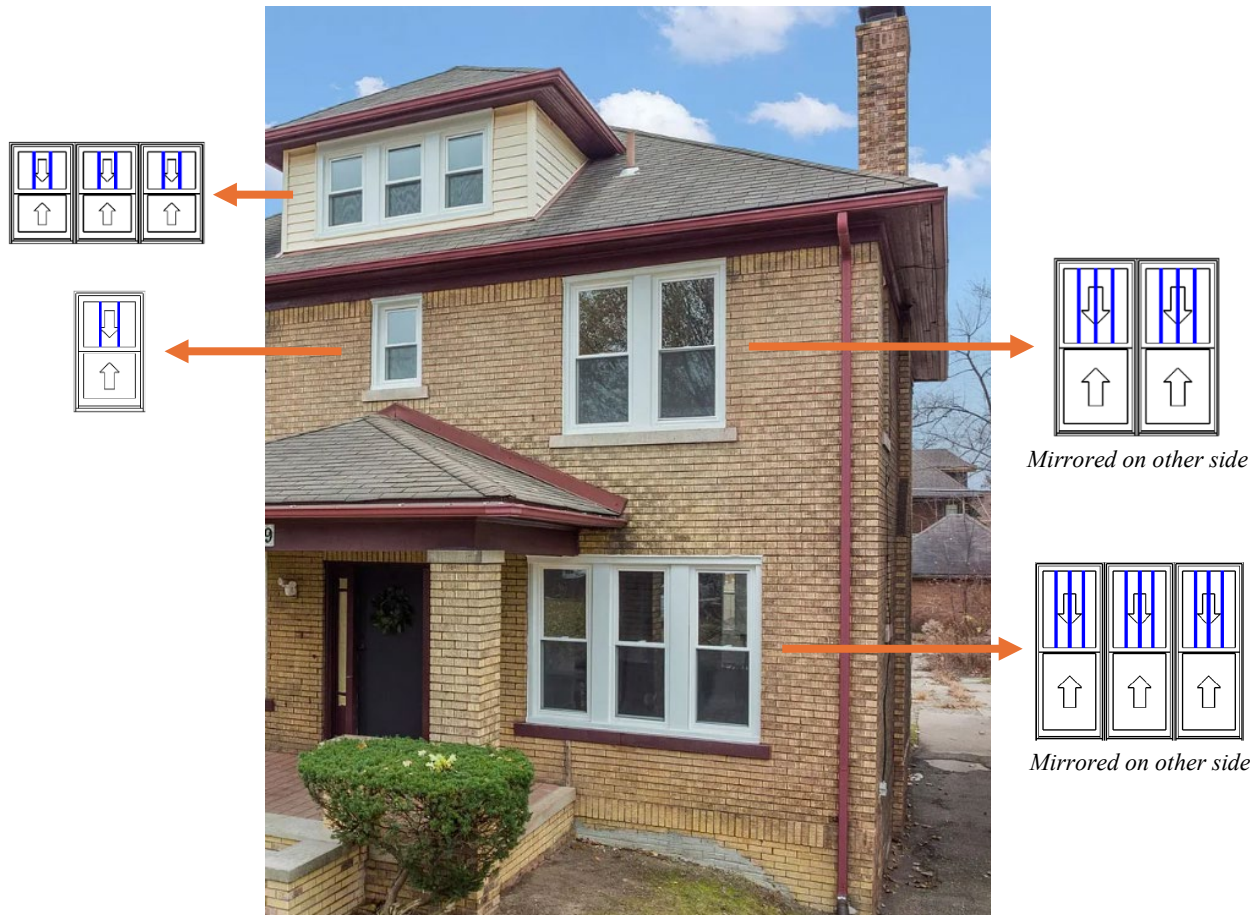


Photo from the most recent listing, posted on 01/22/2025

ISSUES

- The proposed factory mullied units will remove the character-defining and distinctive historic wood mullions.
- The color for the proposed windows is not compatible with the house.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

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

Recommendation 1 of 1 – COA – Replace vinyl windows with aluminum clad windows

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 Boston-Edison Historic District's Elements of Design, with the conditions that:

- Individual window units instead of multi-window units to retain the historic wood brickmold and mullions, with HDC staff to review the new window order.
- The proposed aluminum clad windows and surround shall be painted an exterior color according to the HDC color chart system E for this house.