

**STAFF REPORT:** 06/11/2025

**PREPARED BY:** L. SAINT JAMES

**APPLICATION NUMBER:** HDC2025-00154

**ADDRESS:** 4282/4284 WAVERLY

**HISTORIC DISTRICT:** RUSSELL WOODS-SULLIVAN

**APPLICANT:** JON BABB / ADKIN & SONS

**PROPERTY OWNER:** SPARROW FREEDOM PROJECT

**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION:** 05/18/2025

**DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT:** 05/27/2025

**SCOPE:** REPLACE WINDOWS, ADD WINDOWS TO EXTERIOR OF EXISTING WINDOW, INSTALL WINDOWS WHERE CURRENT WINDOWS ARE MISSING

## **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Located in Russell Woods-Sullivan, 4284 Waverly is a two-and-a-half story brick two-family home built in 1924. The dwelling features a hipped roof with a slight eave overhang boxed without bracket, a dormer with cedar shingles, a two-story porch on the left side of the front façade, and a curved metal roof, supported by brackets, sits above the entrance. The exterior walls are clad in tan brick on the front façade and red brick on the remaining sides.

The south (front) facade predominantly features historic wood, leaded glass casements, multi-lite windows in the dormer, and what is likely a mid-century window with horizontal panes on the second floor. The other elevations are comprised of mostly single-lite, double-hung wood windows with some additional leaded glass casements with aluminum storm windows.



*Staff photo, 05/27/2025*

## PROPOSAL

- Remove historic wood windows and replace them with aluminum clad windows
  - 24 double-hung, single-lite
  - 4\* casement, leaded glass
    - \* see 'Casements with Leaded Glass Analysis Pt. 1'
  - 2 casement, 9-lite (attic)
  - 2 fixed, single-lite
- Install aluminum clad windows where existing windows are missing
  - 8 basement
- Add aluminum clad window to exterior of historic wood windows
  - 6 casement, leaded glass

## STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Russell Woods-Sullivan Historic District was enacted in 1999. The Final Report for the district states, "The residential buildings in Russell Woods are among the finest examples of middle class, builder-designed residential architecture in the city of Detroit erected between 1920 and 1949," implying a period of significance.



*Staff photo, 05/27/2025*

- The second level porch railing was replaced sometime between 1999 and 2009. At this time, staff doesn't have confirmation of review and approval and will follow up with property owner as necessary.



*Designation photo, 1999*



- The building permit for the erection of the dwelling was issued 06/21/2024 and 07/31/2024 for the erection of the garage. The other permit on file was for a “cellar” recreation room and a “two-piece toilet room” issued 01/22/1971.

4282	Waverly	39	
HOUSE NO.	STREET	LOT NO.	
41160	6-21-24		
PERMIT NO.	dwelling	2 fy	DATE
USE	rbk ven		
CONS.			

4282	Waverly	44	
HOUSE NO.	STREET	LOT NO.	
44353	7-31-24		
PERMIT NO.	garage		DATE
USE	frame		
CONS.			

*BSEED permit cards*

- The applicant states that the current wood windows are “in an advanced state of deterioration” where “a fair amount of wood has started to rot.”
- The existing wood windows are distinctive character-defining features that have not been proven to be beyond feasible repair, as supported below.

### Double-hung Window Analysis

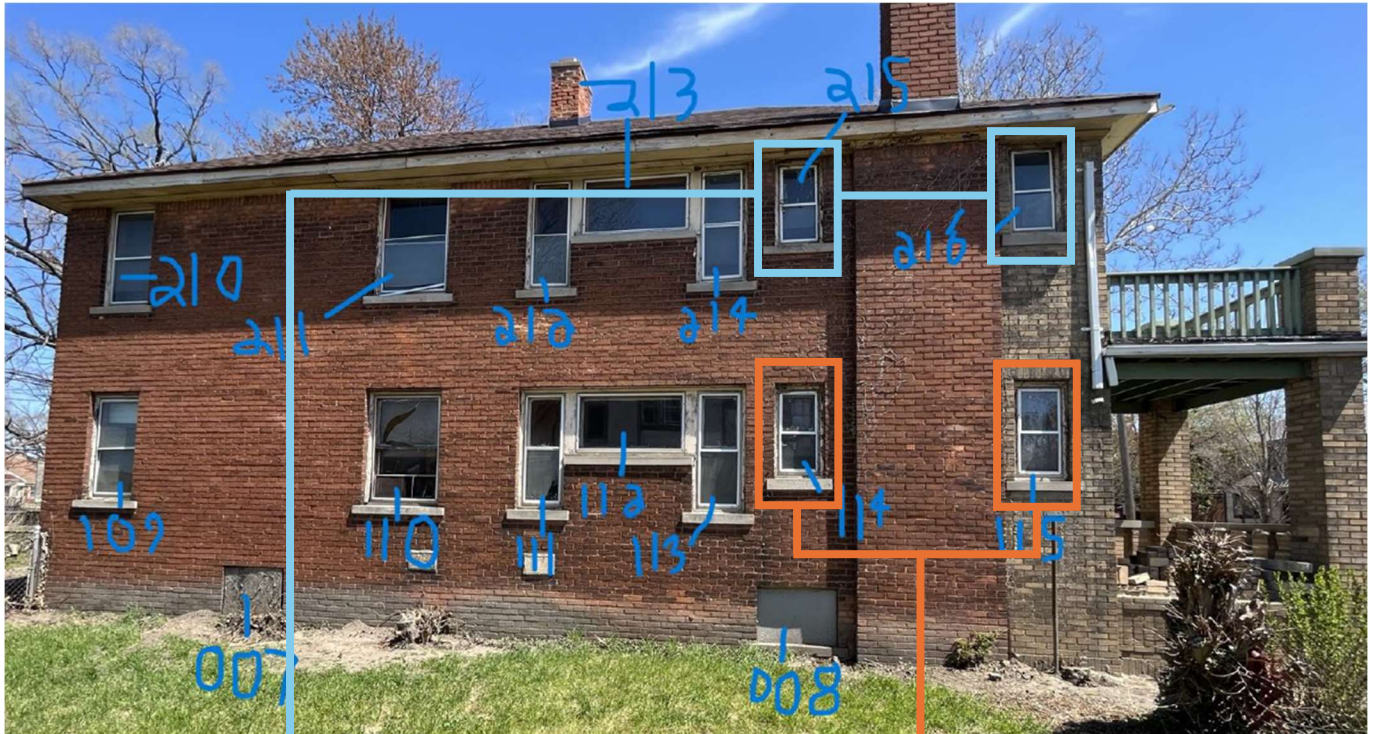


*Photos from application*



- Photos provided with the application show additional, relatively minor, deterioration, such as peeling paint and cracked glazing. Photos also show that some of the windows seem to have been painted over multiple times, a condition that will impair their operation.

#### Casements with Leaded Glass Analysis Pt. 1



*Photo from application*



*Photos from property owner's website, sparrowfreedomproject.org*

- The applicant states that there currently are no windows on the second floor flanking the fireplace, but as shown in an attic photo from the property owner's website, the historic wood leaded glass casements seem to still exist, though not currently installed.

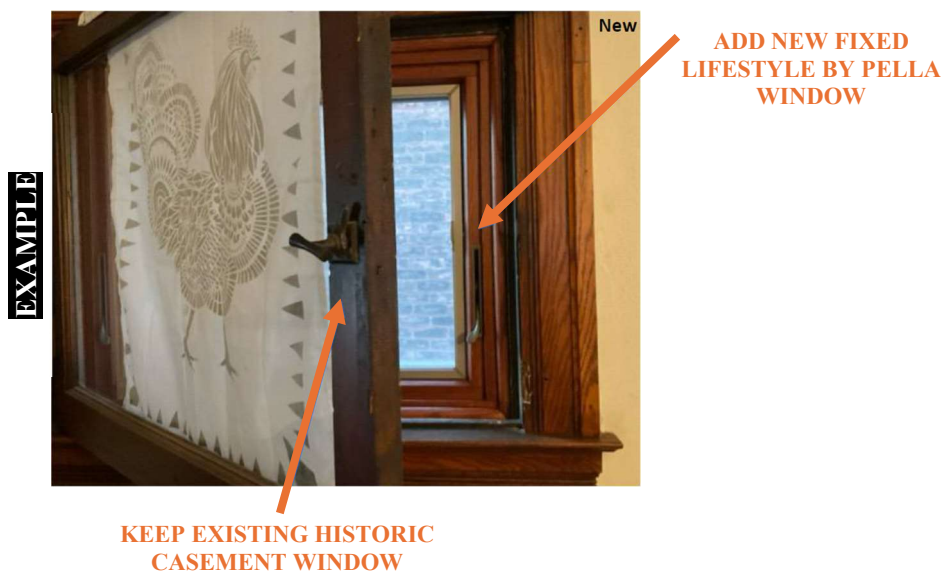
### Casements with 9-Lite Analysis



- It is staff's opinion that the right casement window is beyond repair. To preserve the visual and architectural continuity of the paired casements, it is recommended that the right casement be replicated and the left casement be restored. If the left casement is proven to be beyond feasible repair, staff recommends replacement casements simulate the 9-lite division of the historic windows.

### Casements with Leaded Glass Analysis Pt. 2

- Applicant states that the “new [fixed] window will go outside the existing window, but leave the [existing] leaded glass [casements] in place so that it shows through the new window.”





- The windows proposed to be covered are historic and unambiguously character-defining as they are leaded glass, and as described in the Elements of Design, “create considerable interest” when referencing the relationship of textures.



- The installation of the proposed composite windows does not follow [NPS guidelines for new windows](#), as the proposed windows are not “compatible with the overall historic character of the building.” Specifically, referencing the factors to consider in evaluating the match of a window:

- **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.

## ISSUES

- The deterioration noted above constitutes typical maintenance needs of old windows and is repairable (per Preservation Briefs: 9 linked below). 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”](#)
- The proposed addition of exterior windows to existing historic window units are not compatible with the overall historic character of the dwelling.
- 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).

## RECOMMENDATION(S)

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

#### **Recommendation 1 of 2 – Denial – Remove historic wood windows and replace them with aluminum clad windows, add aluminum clad 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 Russell Woods-Sullivan 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 #: 7, 8*

For the following reasons:

- The existing wood windows are distinctive character-defining features that have not proven to be beyond feasible repair.
- The proposed addition of exterior windows to existing historic window units are not compatible with the overall historic character of the dwelling.

#### **Recommendation 2 of 2 – COA – Install aluminum clad windows where current windows are missing, excluding windows #215 and #216**

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 Russell Woods-Sullivan Elements of Design, with the condition that:

- If window #301 (and thus #302) proves to be beyond feasible repair, subject to staff approval, replacement aluminum clad casement windows with 9-lite configuration is allowed.