

STAFF REPORT: AUGUST 13, 2025 REGULAR MEETING

PREPARED BY: E. THACKERY

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2025-00439

ADDRESS: 1155 CLARK

HISTORIC DISTRICT: HUBBARD FARMS

APPLICANT: ANTHONY J. KALED

PROPERTY OWNER: AYANA HEUMANN

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: JUNE 30, 2025

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: JULY 29, 2025

SCOPE: REPLACE WOOD WINDOWS AND VINYL WINDOWS WITH NEW VINYL WINDOWS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The building at 1155 Clark is a two-and-a-half-story apartment building of brick and stone. It has a prominent front porch that is both gabled and hipped, and a slightly projecting central bay that is topped by a gable roof. This gabled roof, along with two shed-roof dormers, interrupts the building's mansard roof. Currently, much of the building is heavily covered by ivy.



Photo 1, 1155 Clark, front (east) elevation, staff, July 2025.

According to the Historic Designation Advisory Board's 1993 final report for the District, architect Hugo Bloquelle built this 4-unit building for Charles Staebler in 1902-03. According to the report, "Staebler ran a saloon and restaurant called Staebler's Hall on Beaubien at the time. This 2 and one-half story red brick building can be classified as late Victorian eclectic, even at the late date it was built, because it contains features of several Victorian styles: the Second Empire style in its slate mansard roof; Queen Anne in the stylized sunbursts over second story windows; Romanesque Revival in the round arches of the entrances and the treatment of the gable in the attic; and Classical Revival in the pediment and the columns of the wooden porch. The result is a very unusual and interesting architectural composition."



Photo 2, undated historic photo, Burton Historical Collection. (Posted on a Historical Detroit Area Architecture Facebook page by Benjamin Gravel, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/412764338844049/posts/9121883221265407/>, accessed July 31, 2025.) The building appears to have a high degree of integrity in this c. 1970s photo.



Photo 3, 1155 Clark, front (east) elevation (with a portion of the south wall shown), staff, July 2025. The central projecting bay with gable roof (covered in ivy), the front porch, and the mansard roof are visible.



Photo 4, 1155 Clark, south elevation (with some of the east elevation also shown), staff, July 2025.



Photo 5, 1155 Clark, partial east and north elevations, staff, July 2025. Most of the proposed window replacements are on the house's north side.



Photo 6, 1155 Clark, detail of two windows on the front of the building near the southeast corner, staff, July 2025. These windows were documented as part of unapproved work in 2006. The board infilling the larger window opening is painted to match the brick. This unapproved 2006 work is not part of the current application.

PROPOSAL

- Replace five (5) existing wood windows and five (5) vinyl double-hung windows with ten (10) new vinyl double-hung windows.
- Of the five wood windows proposed for replacement, two are on the front of the house in the attic (applicant's windows labeled A and B) and three are on the second floor on the north side (applicant's G, H, and I).
- The remaining five windows proposed for replacement are vinyl windows—four are on the second floor on the house's north side (applicant's C, D, E, F) and one is on the second floor in the lightwell in the center of the building (applicant's J).



Figure 1. Satellite Image from Satellite Signals (www.satsig.net, accessed August 6, 2025). Window approximate locations proposed for replacement have been labeled by staff. Windows A, B, G, H, and I are currently wood windows. Windows C, D, E, F, and J are currently vinyl windows. Proposal is for new vinyl windows.

FRONT - EXTERIOR 3RD FLOOR - CENTER WINDOWS (A & B)



Figure 2. Applicant's Windows A and B on the front (east) of the house. From Applicant's Cycle 1 response to staff's request for additional information, June 30, 2025. These two windows are wood.



Figure 3. Applicant's Windows C (left) and D (right) on the house's north side. From Applicant's Cycle 1 response to staff's request for additional information, June 30, 2025. Both windows are vinyl.

WINDOWS (E, F, G H)



Figure 4. Applicant's Windows E through H on the house's north side. From Applicant's Cycle 1 response to staff's request for additional information, June 30, 2025. Windows G and H are wood.

WINDOW (I)



Figure 5. Applicant's Window I, house's north side near rear. From Applicant's Cycle 1 response to staff's request for additional information, June 30, 2025. Window I is wood.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

Research

- The Hubbard Farms Local Historic District was enacted in 1993.
- In 2019, a new rear porch for this house was proposed, and as part of that related staff report, staff noted that there were 2006 window violations in the building's property file. The 2006 violations were for the installation of vinyl windows, and boards to infill where the new windows were smaller than the historic openings, without approval on the front of the house on the upper left and lower left. Staff noted in 2019 that it appeared that "the vinyl windows that were installed in 2006 were recently replaced with new vinyl windows with grilles between the glass." These violations are not addressed in the current application. The age of the vinyl windows the applicant proposes to replace is unknown.

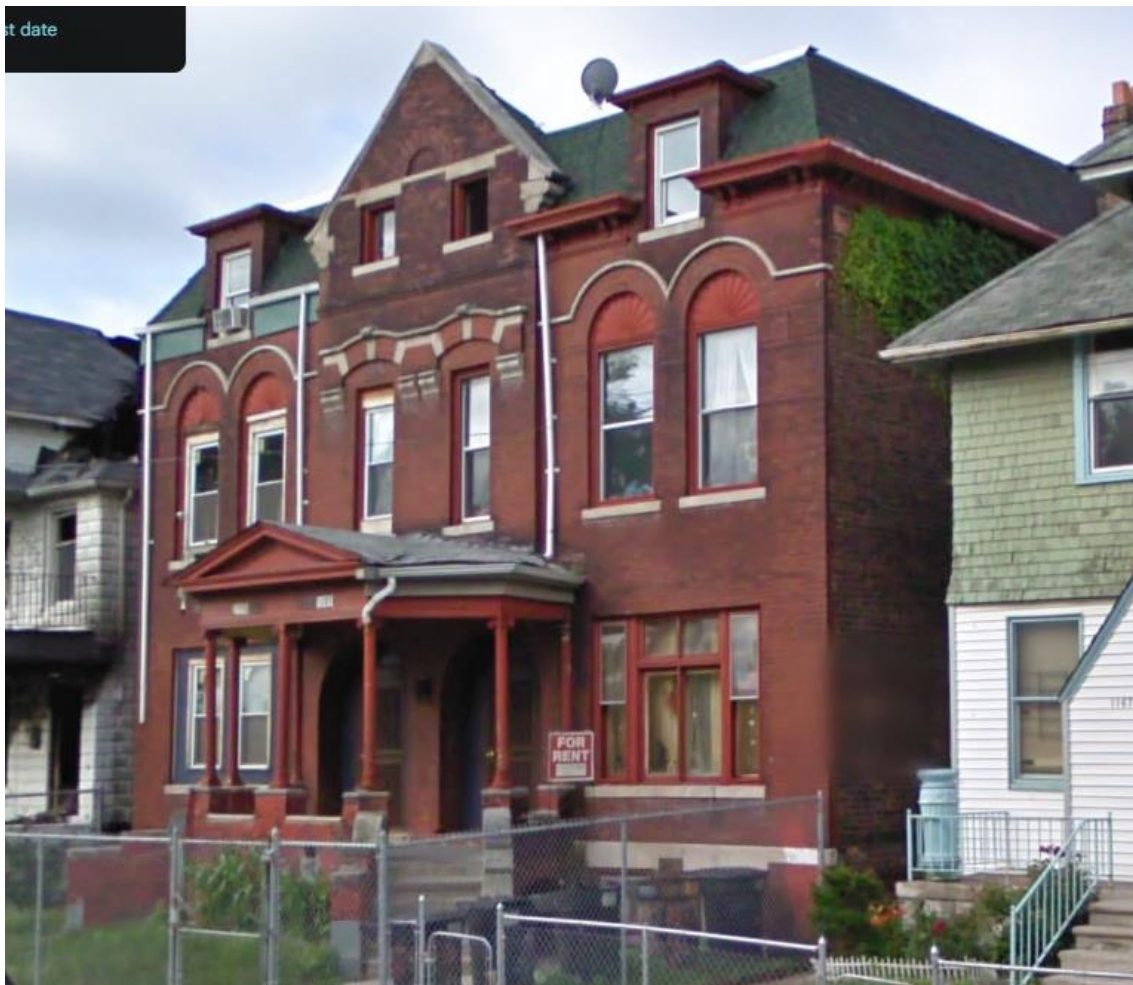


Photo 7, screenshot of the July 2009 Google streetview. This picture shows the house in the recent past but without the ivy overgrowth, for reference.



1155 Clark, Detroit Parcel Viewer. The lightwell at the center of the building is visible.

Observations

- Historic **wood windows** are almost always character-defining features. In this case, there are two types of wood windows proposed for replacement: two small, hinged windows on the front of the house in the attic (applicant's windows A and B), and three wood double-hung windows on the north side of the house (applicant's G, H, and I). The small attic windows appear never to have been double hung, based on Photo 6 (the historic photo included here). The three wood double-hung windows are significant both because they are character-defining and also because they serve as physical evidence to help guide future window work at this property.
- The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation Standard 6 requires a two-part review for window replacement applications subject to the review by the Commission. First, the condition of the existing windows must be understood. Only after confirmation that the windows have deteriorated beyond repair should the Commission consider whether the selected replacement windows are appropriate for the structure and window locations.
 - Regarding condition, the applicant has provided photos of every window proposed for replacement, but staff could not evaluate condition from these photos.
 - The photos of Windows A and B show some deterioration and plastic glazing instead of glass, but staff could not assess complete window conditions, the windows' operability/hinge condition, or repairability from the photos.
 - The photos for windows G, H, and I also do not show conditions details. Staff can see that

the windows appear not to stay up on their own, so the windows appear to need re-roping, but the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings state that it is not recommended to replace windows when repair of the window and limited replacement of deteriorated or missing components are feasible. It appears from the photos that the historic windows G, H, and I are protected by storm windows, which would be expected to help preserve them.

- While more detailed photographs of each window's condition and/or an assessment from a window restoration professional might help provide more complete information for the commission to make their assessment about repairability, staff's current assessment based on available documentation is that the wood windows are not beyond feasible repair.
- If Standard 6's first condition about repair infeasibility could be met, staff identified some concerns regarding appropriateness of the proposed replacements. Specifically, staff is concerned about the proposed vinyl windows' ability to match the historic wood windows in design, color, and texture, as Standard 6 requires. The proposed new windows will likely not be able to match the dimensions of the wood sashes' components like rails and stiles because vinyl is not as strong as old-growth wood. The beige of the proposed vinyl on this reddish/brownish brick building will have a higher contrast than the windows historically did. In Photo 2, the windows appear dark like the building's bricks, and Photo 7 shows windows in the lower right corner on the front façade that maintain their original configuration and the darker paint color that matches the bricks. Perhaps most different from the historic wood windows is the texture of the vinyl. It will appear to have a plastic finish, and it will lack the profiles and details that historic wood windows feature.
- Because the existing **vinyl windows** are not historic or character-defining features of the building, their condition and repairability do not need to be assessed. The proposed replacements, however, still need to be compatible with the historic building and meet the Standards. The Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings state that when features, like wood windows, are missing, the missing feature should be replaced to match the historic feature based on physical or historic documentation of its form and detailing. The preferred option when a feature is missing is to replace it in kind (wood for wood). The Guidelines state that if in-kind replacement of a missing feature "is not feasible, a compatible substitute material that can reproduce the overall appearance of the historic material may be considered," but it is staff's opinion that vinyl cannot reproduce the overall appearance of wood.

ISSUES

- The heavy ivy growth makes it difficult to see the building and its features, assess the building's conditions, and perform maintenance, and it also likely traps moisture and may be damaging the masonry.
- The wood windows proposed for replacement are distinctive, character-defining features of the property.
- The current application does not provide documentation of each wood window proposed for replacement that demonstrates that they are deteriorated beyond repair.
- The existing historic windows proposed for replacement should therefore be retained and repaired in kind where necessary, as required by the Standards.
- The proposed vinyl replacement windows do not meet Standard 6 for the historic windows or for the replacement of the existing vinyl windows.
- The proposed windows are vinyl framed units with vinyl sashes. Because of limits of fabrication

and material, vinyl windows are not appropriate for historic districts.

- Vinyl windows and poly-products offer a plasticity and flat/thick appearance that does not adequately match the profile/dimensionality and appearance of historic windows, such as wood.
- Consumer-grade vinyl windows weather poorly, deteriorate rapidly, and exhibit poor detailing and detracting color/sheen.
- The framing material, glazing, and seals of vinyl windows break down more quickly in ultraviolet light than higher quality materials, introducing condensation and other degradation to the insulated glass unit in a few years' time.
- Vinyl also lacks rigidity and can expand and contract more than wood and steel during exposure to weather. This can result in discoloration and warping of the frames and failure of window elements.
- The Secretary of The Interior's Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings state that it is not recommended to remove repairable historic windows and replace them with new windows for perceived improvement in energy performance. They also state that it is not recommended to replace repairable historic windows with new insulated windows or to install incompatible or inefficient replacement window units that are not durable, recyclable, or repairable when existing windows are deteriorated beyond repair or missing. The proposed vinyl windows cannot be repaired or recycled.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation # 1 of 1 Denial – Replacement of windows

Staff recommends that the proposed work would 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 and 6.

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

For the following reasons:

- The wood windows proposed for replacement are distinctive, character-defining features of the property.
- The current application does not provide documentation of each window proposed for replacement that demonstrates that they are deteriorated beyond repair.
- The existing historic windows proposed for replacement should therefore be retained and repaired in kind, where necessary.
- The proposed vinyl windows are not compatible with the building's historic materials, features, and proportions, even as replacements for the existing non-historic vinyl windows. Because of limits of

fabrication and material, vinyl windows are not appropriate for historic districts.

- Vinyl windows and poly-products offer a plasticity and flat/thick appearance that does not adequately match the profile/dimensionality and appearance of historic windows, such as wood.
- Consumer-grade vinyl windows weather poorly, deteriorate rapidly, and exhibit poor detailing and detracting color/sheen.
- The framing material, glazing, and seals of vinyl windows break down more quickly in ultraviolet light than higher quality materials, introducing condensation and other degradation to the insulated glass unit in a few years' time.
- Vinyl also lacks rigidity and can expand and contract more than wood and steel during exposure to weather. This can result in discoloration and warping of the frames and failure of window elements.
- For these reasons, and because vinyl windows fail to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Sustainability, vinyl windows are not compatible with historic buildings and they don't protect the integrity of the property or its environment.