

**STAFF REPORT: OCTOBER 8, 2025 MEETING**

**PREPARED BY: A. DYE**

**APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2025-00591**

**ADDRESS: 2233 PARK AVENUE (AKA IODENT BUILDING)**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT: PARK AVENUE LOCAL**

**APPLICANT/ARCHITECT: STEVE FLUM, STEVE FLUM, INC.**

**PROPERTY OWNER: SEAN HARRINGTON, 2233 PARK AVENUE, LLC**

**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: SEPTEMBER 15, 2025**

**DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: APRIL 24, MAY 2 & SEPTEMBER 25, 2025**

**SCOPE: REPLACE WOOD WINDOWS WITH ALUMINUM-CLAD WOOD WINDOWS**

### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The building at 2233 Park Avenue is located at the southwest corner of Park Avenue and Montcalm Street. According to the Historic Designation Advisory Board's Park Avenue Local Historic District Final Report:

*It is eight stories high and built with a reinforced concrete and steel structure. The building has Arts-and-Crafts-influenced decorative details in cut limestone on the façade at the two-story base and on the top floor. The entry doorway on Park Avenue has classical Greek elements on its frame. The second floor windows are arched. The body of the building, floors three through seven, has an exterior of dark brown brick. The fenestration pattern of the upper floors consists of banks of paired windows. The interior of the building has decorative elements such as plaster molding and stained-glass windows.*



*Facade of the building facing Park Avenue. Staff photo, September 25, 2025.*





*Staff photos of south (left photo) and north (right photo) walls, May 2, 2025.*

The five-bay wide design of the façade is accentuated at every floor, but most dramatically through the vertical limestone columns spanning the first two floors, and the vertical limestone detailing that extends downward from the 9<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> floors.

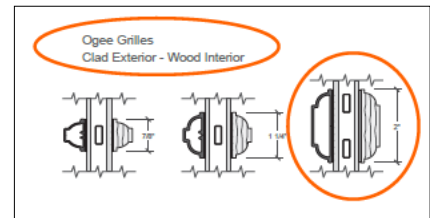
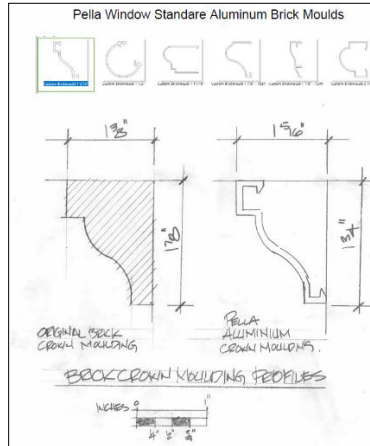
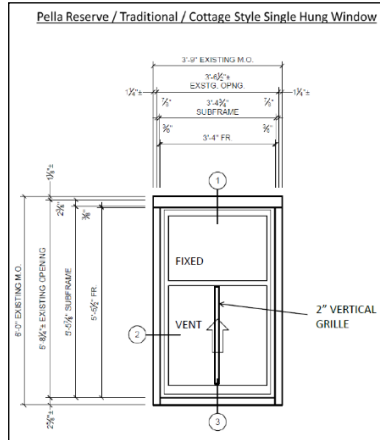
The limestone wraps the north and south side walls; however, different percentages of the side walls were architecturally articulated, based on their street-facing location. The north wall faces Montcalm, while the south wall is adjacent an alley.

The window openings at the third through eight floors at the finished front and sides of the building are comprised of wood-framed French windows with a fixed, undivided transom. The remaining windows on the side and rear walls are aluminum or steel-framed fixed windows with muntins (south-side) or a combination of fixed/casement windows with muntins (west-rear).

## PROPOSAL

Per the applicant's submitted scope of work:

1. Remove existing wood windows (front and side walls, floors 3 – 8), sashes, and trim.
2. Repair or replace wood bucks at the jamb, head and sill that is anchored to the masonry.
3. Install new aluminum-clad windows and trim; Pella Reserve, cottage-style window. Color: black
4. Install new exterior aluminum brick mould trim and masonry. Color: black.
5. Install aluminum flashing at sill.



Applicant drawings.



Applicant comparison drawing. The new window elevation shows the extra framing a replacement window has (green arrow), basically a frame within a frame, which is common with most replacement windows and, depending on the details/profile and dimensions of the existing window framing, can offer a widely varying appearance (i.e., much thicker frames and less glass size) to the replacement window when compared with a wood framed historic window.

Measuring the drawings, it appears the width of the original window's vertical element (interior stile of each window frame and central mullion) equals approximately 7" in width, which is more than three times wider than the 2" width of the applied muntin proposed for the replacement window (red horizontal lines).



## STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Park Avenue Local Historic District was enacted on January 21, 2008, and encompasses 10 buildings. Eight of the buildings are located on either side of Park Avenue between the Fisher Freeway Service Drive and W. Adams.
- The “general environmental character” as discussed in the district’s elements of design (22) states: *The Park Avenue Local Historic District consists of an eclectic mix of commercial architecture built in the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Although set in an urban setting, the district retains an intimate pedestrian scale due to the narrow right-of-way, the scale of the buildings, the buildings' street-level display windows, and the overall density of the streetscape.*



Left: Undated photo, Burton Collection.

Above: Staff photo of one of the historic windows that shows the level of detail and dimensionality to the original framing and mullion.

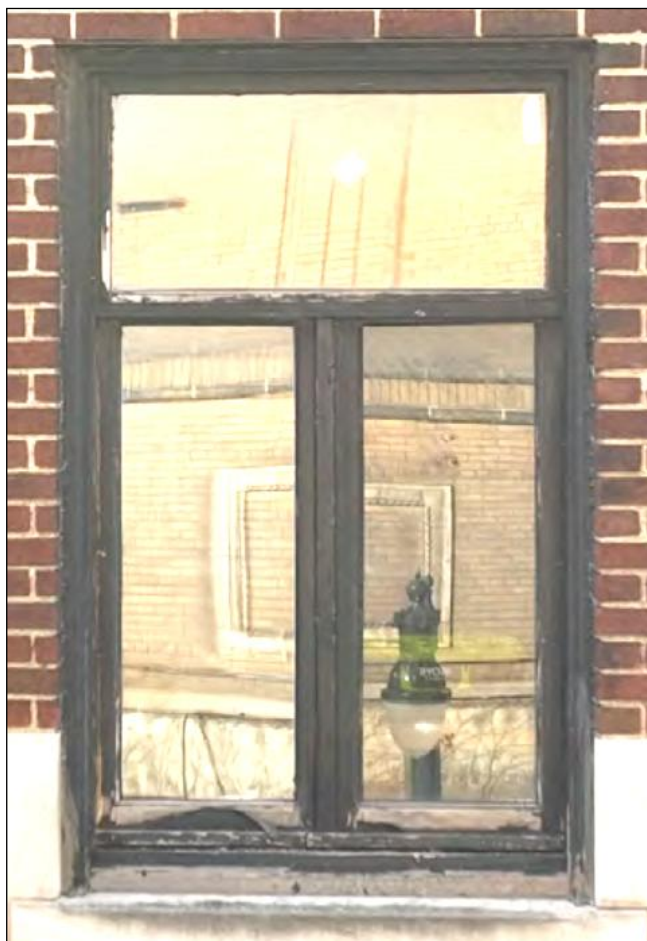
Staff photo, May 2025

- The perspective of the building in the above photo offers a clear view of the proportional width of the vertical element created by the closed French windows against the width of the fixed transom’s lower frame, creating an equally dimensioned “T”.

- It is staff's opinion that the existing historic windows are a distinctive character-defining feature of the building. The "T" design creates a uniform division of the window opening, equaling emphasizing the horizontal and vertical patterns of the stone detailing on the three primary exterior walls.
- The applicant's photos of the historic windows (an interior and exterior photo of each historic window is included in the application documents, only one opening is shown here) show wood frames that don't appear to be deteriorated beyond repair; they are intact and retain a smooth paint finish. The level of deterioration to the exterior framing is greater but is proportional to its daily exposure to the elements. The 100+ year old windows appear to be repairable, with most weathering at the horizontal components.



*Left: North wall of building. Window 301 is circled. Applicant photo.*



*Window #301 from applicant's documents.*

- The applicant's "Existing Window Building Survey" offers a numerical condition assessment but does not include a correlating written assessment detailing the problems and assessed deterioration of the historic windows. It isn't clear to staff the methodology of the factors used to determine the repair classifications. All original windows were given numbers of 3 (partial replacement) or 4 (total replacement) in conflict with staff's visual assessment; none of them had a 2 (stabilization) or 1 (routine maintenance).
- The applicant stated in their application that the historic wood brick mould is intact within every window opening, regardless of whether the windows are original or a 2000s replacement. Staff requested photographic documentation of the brickmould at large to confirm its condition/deterioration level across the entirety of the front and side walls. This wasn't submitted, so staff copied a collection of the exterior window openings of the historic windows that were submitted by the applicant.





*Window 304 -facade*



*Window 403 north wall*



*Window 506 - facade*



*Window 600 – north wall*



Window 702 – north wall



Window 704 – façade

- It is staff's opinion that the wood brick mould is a distinctive character-defining feature and is one of the most visible components of a window opening due to its proximity to the masonry wall. The deteriorated areas appear to be at the sill while the remaining vertical and horizontal surface appear to be in good condition. Therefore, this trim does not appear to be deteriorated beyond repair, so its full-scale replacement is not warranted and does not meet Standard 6.
- Many replacement windows were installed prior to local historic district designation. The National Park Service states in its document *"Replacement Windows that meet the Standards"* that replacement windows are not historic features and can be replaced without documenting that they are deteriorated beyond repair. However, replacement windows must be consistent with the general characteristics of a historic window of the type and period, i.e., "compatible".
- This is an interesting property in that the number of original windows remaining within the building is low, about 15% of the window openings involved in this application. The consideration of compatibility when replacing the existing replacement windows should take into account the design, operation, material and proportions of the remaining historic windows and the visual importance of the historic window pattern.
- If replacement of the historic windows and/or brick mould is considered, their replacement must meet the following 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 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.*
- Should the Commission consider the replacement of all the windows, it is staff's opinion that the "French window" operation is the least important feature (i.e. there is no vertical bar/mullion when both windows are open) and might not need to be duplicated. The fabrication of a factory mullied window comprised of a fixed

transom (with dimensions to match the existing units) and one double casement for the lower portion of the opening may be a compatible design as a double casement would offer the closest frame/mullion relationship as that of the historic French window (when it is closed). However dimensional drawings from the selected window manufacturer of this proposed design would be necessary for the Commission's review in order to determine if this replacement window type would meet the compatibility requirement.

## ISSUES

- The historic windows are unique in design, proportion, and operation; the "T" pattern is a distinctive character-defining feature of the building. The photos submitted of the historic windows show window frames to be intact with little interior deterioration and minimal exterior deterioration; therefore, they are not "deteriorated beyond repair".
- The proposal to install "cottage-style" windows from the third through eighth floors on three sides of the building with a centrally placed vertical 2" muntin bar in the lower sash is not a compatible solution as it does not adequately replicate the historic design, operation, dimension and profile of the double stile/mullion element of the historic windows. The installation of the proposed window would alter one of the defining characteristics of the building.
- The historic wood brick mould, a character-defining feature and a visible component of a window opening due to its proximity to the masonry wall, is intact within each window opening. The deteriorated areas appear to be at the sill while the remaining vertical and horizontal surface are to be intact with little to no flaking paint or crumbling wood. Therefore, this trim does not appear to be deteriorated beyond repair, so its full-scale replacement is not warranted and does not meet Standard 6.

## RECOMMENDATION

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

#### Recommendation 1 of 1, Denial

Staff recommends that the proposed work will be inappropriate according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Park Avenue Local Historic District's Elements of Design, specifically:

- 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 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.*

For the following reasons;

- The historic windows are unique in design, proportion, and operation; the "T" pattern is a distinctive character-defining feature of the building. The photos submitted of the historic windows show window frames to be intact with little interior deterioration and minimal exterior deterioration; therefore, they are not "deteriorated beyond repair".
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