

MEMORANDUM

TO: ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
FROM: Kate Schwartz, Historic Resources Planner
DATE: September 4, 2019 (for the September 9, 2019 hearing)
SUBJECT: Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alteration at 312 William Street

ISSUE

Janet Edson requests to replace the vinyl windows on the second floor of this residential building with new solid wood windows.

RECOMMENDATION

Approval of the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness as presented.

APPLICABLE HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

Windows (Historic District Handbook, pg. 82)

1. Retain original windows.
5. Repair original windows by patching, splicing, consolidating, or reinforcing. Wood may appear to be rotten because of peeling paint or separation of joints, yet still be sound and able to be repaired. Rotted parts can be replaced, as necessary, without replacing the entire window.
6. Windows should only be replaced when they are missing or beyond repair. Replacement should be based on physical evidence and photo documentation rather than the availability of stock windows or windows from other buildings. Avoid changing the physical and visual characteristics of windows by using inappropriate materials or finishes that alter the sash, depth of reveal, muntin configuration, glazing, or appearance of the frame.

Historic Fredericksburg District Window Policy

A. Repairing Original Windows

1. Wood windows, particularly those constructed of old-growth species typically found in historic buildings, are strong, flexible, rot-resistant, and easily repaired. Their lifetime, if properly maintained, can literally be hundreds of years. Even when abused and allowed to deteriorate, they can often be repaired at a cost less than or equal to that of replacement. When such repairs are made to historic windows they should be made with in-kind materials and hardware. Where wood is deteriorated yet salvageable, consolidants or epoxies may be used.

B. Replacing Original Wood Windows

1. Replacement of windows and related components is typically appropriate only when the original components are demonstrably beyond repair. In this case, the four visual characteristics—material, texture, color, and design—of the new components must replicate the original as closely as possible. Openings should not be enlarged or reduced for a replacement window, unless a case can be made that it is architecturally appropriate.

E. Replacement Materials

1. Solid wood windows – These units are the preferred replacement for historical wood windows. Stock window components are often similar to original wood windows in design and dimension. If desired, sash and trim can be custom made to exactly match the originals. Wood windows require the same degree of maintenance as original historic windows, but provide the most authentic appearance. When insulated glass is used, the muntin profiles of true divided light units will be necessarily wider than those used traditionally and cannot typically match the appearance of historic muntins.
2. Solid vinyl windows – Vinyl windows and windows with removable muntins (“grilles”) or muntins sandwiched between the glass panes are not considered appropriate or compatible in any location in the HFD.

BACKGROUND

This building was constructed c.1818 by Robert Ellis and is an excellent, well-preserved example of a Federal-style dwelling. The two-and-one-half story, five-bay building is constructed of brick laid in Flemish bond and rests on a solid foundation. The building is topped by an asphalt-shingle clad, side-gabled roof, and two front-gabled dormers with six-over-six sash windows rise from the front roof slope. Fenestration includes nine-over-nine sash on the second floor and six-over-nine, double-hung, wood sash on the first floor. The windows are framed by wood architrave moldings and splayed brick lintels. Two, single-leaf, paneled, nine-light wood doors are located on the first floor. Each is accessed by stone stoops with wrought-iron railings and topped by tracery transoms and splayed brick lintels. A third door provides access to a passageway to the rear of the property. This is a contributing structure in the Historic District.

The applicant replaced six nine-over-nine, double-hung, wood, sash windows on the second floor and two six-over-six, double-hung, wood, sash windows in the dormers with vinyl replacement units in the fall of 2018 without the prior approval of the Architectural Review Board. The ARB considered an application for approval of the replacement after the fact on June 3, 2019. At that time, the Board denied the Certificate of Appropriateness because the use of vinyl is not in accordance with the adopted Historic District Window Policy and the new windows did not match the dimensions and profiles of those removed.

The applicant proposes to replace the vinyl second floor and dormer windows with new solid wood windows. On the second floor, these will be nine-over-nine, double-hung, wood, sash windows with frame dimensions and muntin profiles to match the existing wood ground floor windows. The dormer windows will also match the details of the ground floor windows, but with a six-over-six light pattern. As the wood windows that were removed are no longer available, this proposed replacement is in accordance with the Historic District Window Policy. Approval of the request as presented is recommended.

APPROVAL CRITERIA

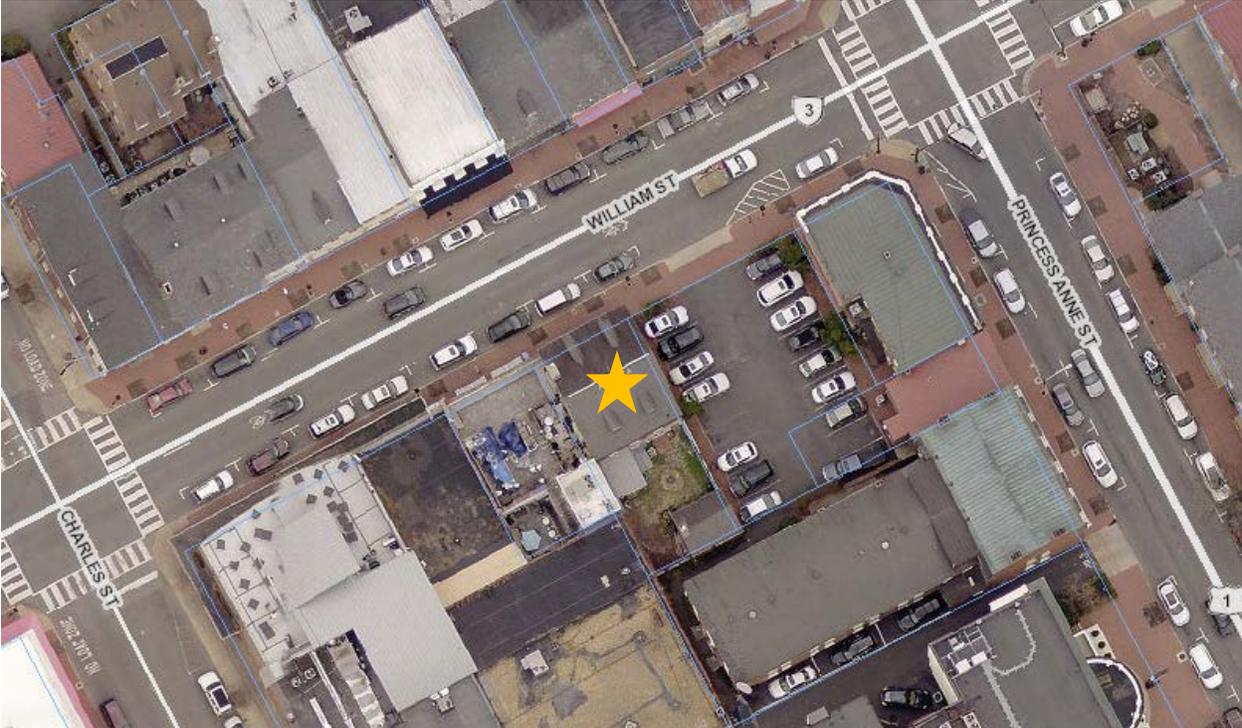
Criteria for evaluating proposed changes are found in City Code § 72-23.1(D)2 and are based on the United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

S	D	NA	S – satisfies D – does not satisfy NA – not applicable
X			(1) Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property by requiring minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or by using a property for its originally intended purposes.
X			(2) The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historical material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
X			(3) All buildings, structures, and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.
X			(4) Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.
X			(5) Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building, structure, or site shall be treated with sensitivity.
X			(6) Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. If replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Replacement of missing architectural features should be based on historic, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.

		X	(7) The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken.
		X	(8) Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archaeological resources affected by or adjacent to any project.
		X	(9) Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural, or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, or environment.
		X	(10) Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that, if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.

Attachments:

1. Aerial photograph and front elevation view
2. Photographs
3. Replacement window specifications



AERIAL



FRONT (NORTH) ELEVATION



2017 Survey Photo



Replacement vinyl sash shown on the second floor; existing wood windows on the first floor. The second floor and dormer windows will be replaced with custom wood windows that match the details of the first floor.



Replacement units boxed in red