



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date: 9/9/2024
Staff reviewer: Andrew Stern

Ald. Bauman
CCF # 240599

Property	1119 E. Knapp St.	First Ward Triangle Historic District
Owner/Applicant	Slyed Development One Daniel Slade 1660 N. Prospect Ave. Milwaukee, WI 53202	Steven Brandenburg 1628 N. Astor St. Milwaukee, WI 53202

Proposal

The applicant is requesting after-the-fact approval for window replacement of nearly all windows on the property.

Staff comments

The Charles Forsythe House was designed by architect Howland Russel and constructed in around 1885. The house is an impeccable example of Queen Anne residential architecture. The house has an asymmetrical massing, clapboard siding with sawn and incised ornament and shingling on the front, decorative stickwork and large one-over-one windows with a distinctive square and triangle stained glass design in the upper sash, and paired entry doors with stained glass windows.

The present owner purchased the property in May 2021. The owner has been before HPC for previous proposals, including adding porch alterations, adding an accessible entrance, and new concrete work on the east side yard. In April 2024, a complaint was received about new windows at the property. Order violations were sent to the property address and to the property owner in May 2024 for removal of both entry porches and work done without a COA. Photos provided by the inspector indicated a large scale construction project underway without permits or without approval of a COA. Nearly all of the original windows had been removed and replaced with Jeld Wen aluminum clad one-over-one windows. Two window openings were infilled with glass block. Window openings on the west façade were replaced with Semco replacement windows. No specs were provided for these windows. Both the front and rear entry porches had been partially or completely removed. Air conditioner units were installed adjacent to the east façade of the property without COA approval or a permit. A new concrete walkway was installed in the east side yard in a different design and configuration that was approved by HPC in 2022. A large portion of wood clapboard siding had been replaced in-kind with new cedar clapboard siding. A COA was subsequently approved by staff for that aspect of the work.

The applicant is proposing after-the-fact approval of the new Jeld Wen aluminum clad windows, glass block windows, and Semco windows. The applicant has stated they want to “add a stained glass detail” to the storm windows. Specs for proposed storm windows have not been provided at this time.

The preservation guidelines for the First Ward Triangle Historic District recommend:

“Retain existing window and door openings that are visible from the public right of-way. Retain the original configuration of panes, sash, lintels, keystones, sills, architraves, pediments, hoods, doors, shutters and hardware. Avoid making additional openings or changes in the principal elevations by enlarging or reducing window or door openings to fit new stock window sash or new stock door sizes. Avoid changing the size or configuration of windowpanes or sash. Avoid discarding original doors and door hardware when they can be repaired or reused.

Respect the stylistic period or periods a building represents. If replacement of window sash or doors is necessary, the replacement should duplicate the appearance and design of the original window sash or door. Avoid using inappropriate sash and door replacements such as unpainted galvanized aluminum storm and screen window combinations. Avoid the filling in or covering of openings with materials like glass-block or the installation of plastic or metal strip awnings or fake shutters that are not in proportion to the openings or that are historically out of the

character with the building. Avoid using modern style window units such as horizontal sliding sash in place of double-hung sash or the substitution of units with glazing configurations not appropriate to the style of the building.”

Retention of the original windows is obviously not possible, given they were removed and discarded without approval. No documentation has been provided showing that the original windows were in disrepair or incapable or being repaired. The original windows had wood storm windows in place, which would have protected the prime windows. The unique stained glass design on the upper sash of the original windows were an integral component of the Queen Anne design of the house. The one-over-one aluminum clad windows are not appropriate to this house in terms of material or design. Staff recommends denial of the proposed windows. Staff recommends unclad wood sash double-hung windows with a stained glass upper sash that replicates the original window design be installed where they had previously been installed. Staff recommends wood sash one-over-one windows without the stained glass design be installed where glass block or unoriginal replacement windows had previously been installed.

Recommendation Recommend HPC Denial

Conditions

Previous HPC action

Previous Council action