

STAFF REPORT: 7-10-2019 MEETING  
APPLICATION NUMBER: 19-6320  
ADDRESS: 874 CHICAGO  
HISTORIC DISTRICT: BOSTON EDISON  
APPLICANT: YVONNE SEBREE  
DATE OF STAFF VISIT: 7/6/2019

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

## PROPOSAL

The dwelling at 874 Chicago is a two-story, Tudor Revival single-family dwelling that was erected ca. 1920. The building's exterior walls are clad with brick and stucco with false half timbering detailing. The home is front gabled with intersecting side-gabled and flat-roofed wings. Windows are wood 3/1 units. The building's front elevation displays a partial-width, gabled-roof entry porch.

An historic-age 1½-story carriage house/garage is located to the rear of the home. The building originally featured wood windows throughout.

In February 2019, a resident contacted HDC staff to note that existing 3/1 wood windows at the property's carriage house (at the roof dormer) had been replaced with new 1/1 white vinyl units **as per the below photo**. Staff reviewed building files maintained by the Planning and Development Department and noted that the vinyl windows had not been approved by the HDC. Staff therefore forwarded the complaint to the Detroit Building, Safety, Engineering, and Environmental Department (BSEED) for enforcement. In May 2019, the applicant visited HDC staff offices with a proposal to replace the existing deteriorated concrete at the home with new concrete. At that time, staff noted the existing vinyl window violation and alerted the current applicant that the work must be submitted to the Commission for review. The applicant subsequently painted the white vinyl windows and associated wood trim brown **as per the below photo**. With the current submission, the applicant is seeking the Commission's approval of the vinyl windows that were installed at the garage without permit and/or Certificate of Appropriateness.

## STAFF OBSERVATIONS

It is noted that the garage is minimally visible from the public right-of-way, despite that fact that it is located to the rear of the home/yard. It is staff's opinion that the historic-age garage does contribute to the property's historic character and its original wood windows were/are character-defining features of the structure. Therefore, in staff's opinion, if the windows are too deteriorated to be repaired, they should have been replaced with new windows which match the original as per the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, standard number 6. The light configuration of the new vinyl windows are 1/1 and do not replicate/reflect the original windows' 3/1 light configuration.

## APPLICABLE ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

- (7) *Relationship of materials.* The majority of houses are faced with brick, while many are partially or totally stucco. There are some stone buildings, sometimes combined with stucco; clapboard is rare, and is extremely rare as the sole material. Roofing includes slate, tile and asphalt shingles. Wood shingle roofs were once common and have generally been replaced with asphalt. Wood shake does not exist and there is no known evidence that it was ever used in the district. Stone trim is common. Wood is almost universally used for window frames and other functional trim and is used in many examples for all trim.
- (8) *Relationship of textures.* The most common relationship of textures in the district is

that of a low-relief pattern of mortar joints in brick contrasted with the smooth surface of wood or stone trim. There are a few houses with rough or rusticated stone surfaces. The use of stucco or concrete, with or without half-timbering, as a contrast to brick surfaces, is not unusual. Tile, slate, or wood shingle roofs have particular textural values where they exist. Asphalt shingles generally have little textural interest, even in those types which purport to imitate some other variety.

- (9) *Relationship of colors.* Natural brick colors (such as red, yellow, brown, buff) predominate in wall surfaces. Natural stone colors also exist. Where stucco or concrete exists, it usually remains in its natural state, or is painted in a shade of cream. Roofs are in natural colors (tile and slate colors, natural and stained wood colors), and asphalt shingles are predominantly within this same dark color range. Paint colors often relate to style. The buildings derived from classical precedents, particularly those of Neo-Georgian style, generally have woodwork painted white, cream, or in the range of those colors including "putty"; doors and shutters are frequently dark green or black. Colors known to have been in use on similar buildings of this style in the eighteenth or early twentieth centuries may be considered for appropriateness. Buildings of medieval inspiration (notably neotudor) generally have painted woodwork and window frames of a dark brown or cream color. Half timbering is almost always stained dark brown. The original colors of any building, as determined by professional analysis, are always acceptable for a house, and may provide guidance for similar houses.
- (10) *Relationship of architectural details.* Architectural details generally relate to style. Neo-Georgian buildings display classic details, mostly in wood, and sometimes in stone. Porches, shutters, window frames, cornices, and dormer windows are commonly, although not always, treated. Details on "Mediterranean" style or vernacular buildings including arched windows, door openings, and porches, are often done in stone, brick, tile, and sometimes in stucco. Buildings of medieval inspiration tend to have details in the form of carved wood or carved stone ornaments on window frames, door frames, and eaves. In general, the various styles are rich in architectural details.

#### RECOMMENDATION

As noted above, it is staff's opinion that the historic-age garage does contribute to the property's historic character and its original wood windows were/are character-defining features of the structure. Therefore, in staff's opinion, if the original 3/1 wood windows are too deteriorated to be repaired, they should have been replaced with new windows which match the original. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission deny the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the current vinyl windows at the garage/carriage house because they do not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation standard number 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.*



REPORT

Rear garage/carriage, prior to window replacement



Rear garage/carriage, immediately after window replacement



REPORT

Rear garage/carriage after window replacement. Note that vinyl windows have been painted brown

