

**CITY OF SAINT PAUL
HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

FILE NAME: 809 Portland Avenue
DATE OF APPLICATION: January 29, 2014 (complete – February 12th, 2014)
APPLICANT: Kevin Haugtvedt, A Plus Windows
OWNER: Pergola Properties
DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING: February 27th, 2014
HPC SITE/DISTRICT: Hill Heritage Preservation District
CATEGORY: Contributing
CLASSIFICATION: After-The-Fact Building Permit
STAFF INVESTIGATION AND REPORT: John Beaty, Christine Boulware
DATE: February 20, 2014 revised February 25, 2014

A. SITE DESCRIPTION: The apartment building at 809 Portland Avenue is a rectangular two-story masonry building with a flat roof behind a small parapet. A two-story, inset front entry has a recently-added, awning between the stories. The rear also has a two-story inset porch with stairs that serve as an entry to the rear apartments. The front windows have soldier brick lintels and rowlock brick sills. The secondary elevation windows have segmental header brick arches for wide openings, and hidden lintels for narrow openings. The historic windows are a mix of double-hung, in-swing casement, fixed, and awning windows in the basement. The primary elevation has uneven 12-over-one, grouped, double-hung windows: triples in the front, doubles in the first side bays, and doubles in the third side bays. The piano windows on the side elevations (second bay) were originally uneven 16-light fixed with matching divided-light storm windows, but three of four are now wood, in-swing casements. The triple windows at the landing in the second story of the inset front porch are a narrow, uneven, nine-over-ones, and the sixth side bays have triple, even 12-over-ones. All other windows are one-over-ones, except for the vertical, three-light, awning basement windows. The primary entrance had a wood glazed door and wooden sidelights and a full width-transom.

B. PROPOSED CHANGES: The applicant is proposing to replace the windows in the building with Anderson Fibrex series 100 windows. These windows fit into the existing frame, and have a patterned grille in between the glass and are six-over-one.

C. CHANGES COMPLETED AND BACKGROUND:

On **December 18, 2013**, work commenced at 809 Portland Avenue and 26 windows were replaced without a building permit application or HPC review. The applicant was notified by DSI staff of the building's historic designation when he was applying for a building permit. The applicant then contacted HPC staff.

On **January 29, 2014**, the applicant submitted an HPC application, and scheduled a site visit.

On **February 12th**, HPC staff met the contractor at 809 Portland Avenue and noted other recent alterations to the primary entrance of the building not performed by the contractor. The front door, sidelights and transom had recently been replaced and an awning was installed over the door. The door work and awning were done without HPC approval and without a permit from DSI.

D. GUIDELINE CITATIONS:

Historic Hill District Design Review Guidelines

Sec. 74.64. - Restoration and rehabilitation.

(a) General Principles:

1. *Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property which requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.*
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 historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.

- 3. All buildings, structures, and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.*
- 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.*
- 5. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building, structure, or site shall be treated with sensitivity.*
- 6. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, whenever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.*
- 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.*
- 8. Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archaeological resources affected by, or adjacent to any project.*
- 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.*
- 10. Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if such alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.*

(e) Windows and Doors:

- (1) Existing window and door openings should be retained. New window and door openings should not be introduced into principal elevations. Enlarging or reducing window or door openings to fit stock window sash or new stock door sizes should not be done. The size of window panes or sash should not be altered. Such changes destroy the scale and proportion of the building.*
- (2) Window sash, glass, lintels, sills, architraves, doors, pediments, hoods, steps and all hardware should be retained. Discarding original doors and door hardware, when they can be repaired and reused in place, should be avoided.*
- (3) The stylistic period(s) a building represents should be respected. If replacement of window sash or doors is necessary, the replacement should duplicate the material, design and hardware of the older window sash or door. Inappropriate new window and door features such as aluminum storm and screen window combinations, plastic or metal strip awnings, or fake shutters that disturb the character and appearance of the building should not be used. Combination storm windows should have wood frames or be painted to match trim colors.*

(f) Porches and Exterior Architectural Features:

- (1) Porches and steps which are appropriate to the building and its development should be retained. Porches and additions reflecting later styles of architecture are often important to*

the building's historical integrity and, whenever possible, should be retained. Porches and steps removed from the building should be reconstructed, using photographic documentation and historical research, to be compatible in design and detail with the period and style of the building. In replacing porch railings, it is important to maintain the original spacing, section and profile of the balustrades.

- (2) *Decorative architectural features such as cornices, brackets, railings, and those around front doors and windows should be preserved. New material used to repair or replace, where necessary, deteriorated architectural features of wood, iron, cast iron, terracotta, tile and brick should match the original as closely as possible.*
- (3) *Shutters should not be used on buildings not designed for them. If used, they should be large enough to cover the entire window area, should be functional and operable, and should not look as if they were simply flat-mounted on the wall.*
- (4) *Deck and firestair additions may be acceptable in some cases, but should be kept to the rear of buildings where they will be the most inconspicuous and detract the least from the historical context. The detailing of decks and exterior stairs should be compatible with the period and style of the building.*

E. FINDINGS:

1. On April 2, 1991, the Historic Hill Heritage Preservation District was established under Ordinance No. 17815, § 3(II). The Heritage Preservation Commission shall protect the architectural character of heritage preservation sites through review and approval or denial of applications for city permits for exterior work within designated heritage preservation sites §73.04.(4).
2. The property at 809 Portland Avenue is categorized as contributing to the character of the Historic Hill Heritage Preservation District.
3. Approximately twenty-six windows were replaced without HPC review and approval or a building permit. The Legislative Code Sec. 74.64.(a)(2) states, *"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 historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.* The original windows have a distinguishing quality and are a character defining feature that contributes to the significance of the building and the surrounding historic district. The removal and replacement of the windows does not comply with the guideline.
4. The front entry was replaced without HPC review and approval or a building permit. The removal of the original materials, details and configuration of the front entry resulted in the loss of distinguishing original qualities and architectural character of the building and does not comply with Legislative Code Sec. 74.64.(a)(2) or Sec. 74.64.(e)(2) as *"Discarding original doors and door hardware, when they can be repaired and reused in place, should be avoided."*
5. An awning was installed over the front entry without HPC review and approval or a permit. There is no evidence that an awning ever existed at the property. Legislative Code Sec. 74.64.(a)(9) states, *"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.* The design of the awning does not have a traditional loose valance, but the size of the awning is proportional with the bay and the material appears to be canvas-like and traditionally appropriate. Attachment into mortar joints is recommended so as not to damage brick; it is not known how the awning was attached and removal of the awning at this time may result in damage to the facade. It does not appear that any decorative architectural features were removed for the installation of the awning [Sec. 74.64(f)(2)].
6. The windows that were installed are of a different material (Fibrex), size, profile and design

than the original, wood, divided-light windows the replaced. These new windows do not comply with Sec. 74.64.(e)(3) of the Legislative Code which states, *"The stylistic period(s) a building represents should be respected. If replacement of window sash or doors is necessary, the replacement should duplicate the material, design and hardware of the older window sash or door."*

7. Sec. 74.64.(e)(3) of the Legislative Code which states *"The size of window panes or sash should not be altered. Such changes destroy the scale and proportion of the building."* The new window frames were installed into existing frames; the window openings were not blocked in, but the size to the sash and glass were reduced by a few inches. This does not comply with the guideline.
8. At the site visit on February 12, 2014, HPC staff observed the condition of the windows at the property and advised the applicant that the remaining historic and early double-hung, wood windows with divided-lights and in-swing casements were in a condition that could be repaired as well as the one remaining divided-light storm window; repair of these windows would comply with Sec. 74.64.(e)(2). The one-over-one double-hung windows that were replaced at some point in the past 20-30 years as well as the majority of the original one-over-one double-hung windows were in a condition that replacement was justified.
9. Violation: The building at 809 Portland Avenue is located in the Historic Hill Heritage Preservation District and is subject to St. Paul Legislative Code Chapter 73 and the Hill Heritage Preservation District Design Review Guidelines. As such, a permit must be obtained prior to any exterior work, construction, or demolition. The exterior of 809 Portland Avenue was altered without a permit, as windows were replaced, the front entry was replaced and an awning was installed at the front entry. The alterations do not comply with Historic Hill Heritage Preservation District Design Guidelines and were performed in violation of St. Paul Legislative Code Chapter 73.
10. Violation: St. Paul Legislative Code section 73.07 states that persons who violate Legislative Code Chapter 73, or assist in the commission of violation of Chapter 73, are guilty of a misdemeanor. Section 73.07 further states that a historic preservation site on which there exists any remodeling, repairing or construction in violation of chapter 73 constitutes a nuisance.
11. The proposal to replace the windows at 809 Portland, as proposed, will adversely affect the Program for the Preservation and architectural control of the Historic Hill Heritage Preservation District (Leg. Code §73.06 (e)). The window replacement and repair could be approved at the property so long as the conditions are met.
12. The replacement of the entrance at 809 Portland adversely affects the Program for the Preservation and architectural control of the Historic Hill Heritage Preservation District (Leg. Code §73.06 (e)).

F. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on the findings staff recommends approval of the building permit application provided the following condition(s) are met:

1. The original and early wood windows shall be retained and repaired.
2. Divided-light windows matching the ones that were replaced on the front and side elevations shall be installed to match the material, size, style, profile and divided-light configuration of the original windows. These windows shall be installed by June 30, 2014.
3. The one-over-one double hung windows on the north, east, and west elevations may be replaced to match the existing in size, profile, style and detail.

4. The basement windows that were replaced by the applicant may remain; the basement windows that were not replaced shall be repaired.
5. New windows approved for installation at the property shall have either full-frame, flush-mount screens with a horizontal bar that lines up with the meeting rail installed that the same plane as the historic screen/storm windows or shall have no screens/storms shall be installed.
6. There shall be no wrapping or panning of brick mold, trim or window sills.
7. The awning that was installed may remain.

Based on the findings staff recommends denial of aluminum entry system that was installed at the front elevation. The entry door, sidelights, and transom that were replaced without review and approval shall be restored to their historic size, profile, material and detail. This work shall be completed by June 30, 2014