



HISTORIC PRESERVATION

**504 N Hackberry St
Dignowity Hill Historic District**

BOA-24-10300035

April 15, 2024

**San Antonio TX 78202
United States**



Applicant: Richard Gonzalez | CHAPAWU PROPERTIES LLC
Legal Description: NCB 570 BLK 6 LOT N 56.05 FT OF 13-14
Address: 504 N Hackberry St
Zoned: C-2, H

Request:

An appeal of the Historic Preservation Officer's decision to deny the wholesale replacement of existing one-over-one wood windows on the property and to modify the existing fenestration pattern.

Case History:

- January 15, 2024: The applicant submitted an application for window repair stating repair would be done in-kind.
- January 18, 2024: OHP issued an administrative approval for wood window repair in-kind, with the following stipulations: No modifications to the existing window openings or sashes are to take place. Sashes may be removed from the frames to make repairs; elements such as rails and stiles that are rotten or missing may be replaced with new solid wood elements to match the existing (in kind repairs only). Glass should feature a clarity comparable to the existing (tinted glass should not be used).
- February 5, 2024: Staff observed work occurring on the property without a Certificate of Appropriateness and beyond prior approvals. After contacting the property owner and confirming scopes of work, staff issued a stop work order on the same day. Violations included: the replacement of the original porch steps, the replacement of original porch decking, rear door replacement, skirting replacement; chimney and wood window removal; dormer vent installation; and fenestration pattern modifications, including the removal and modification of window opening sizes.
- February 23, 2024: The Historic and Design Review Compliance and Technical Advisory Board denied the applicant's request to wholesale replace the one-over-one wood windows on the property and to modify the existing fenestration pattern, per Historic Design Guidelines Chapter 2, Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations, Section 6, Architectural Features: Doors, Windows, and Screens.



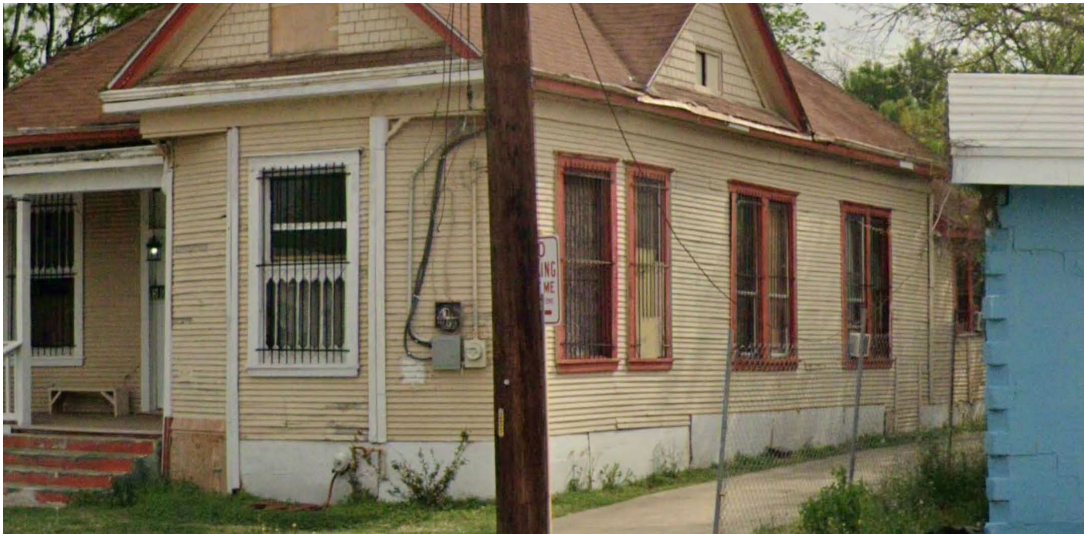
Before (Historic Conditions)



After



Before (Historic Conditions)



After



Before (Historic Conditions)



After



Applicable Citations:

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 2, Exterior Maintenance and Alterations

6. Architectural Features: Doors, Windows, and Screens

A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

- i. Openings*—Preserve existing window and door openings. Avoid enlarging or diminishing to fit stock sizes or air conditioning units. Avoid filling in historic door or window openings. Avoid creating new primary entrances or window openings on the primary façade or where visible from the public right-of-way.
- ii. Doors*—Preserve historic doors including hardware, fanlights, sidelights, pilasters, and entablatures.
- iii. Windows*—Preserve historic windows. When glass is broken, the color and clarity of replacement glass should match the original historic glass.
- iv. Screens and shutters*—Preserve historic window screens and shutters.
- v. Storm windows*—Install full-view storm windows on the interior of windows for improved energy efficiency. Storm window may be installed on the exterior so long as the visual impact is minimal and original architectural details are not obscured.

B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

- i. Doors*—Replace doors, hardware, fanlight, sidelights, pilasters, and entablatures in-kind when possible and when deteriorated beyond repair. When in-kind replacement is not feasible, ensure features match the size, material, and profile of the historic element.
- ii. New entrances*—Ensure that new entrances, when necessary to comply with other regulations, are compatible in size, scale, shape, proportion, material, and massing with historic entrances.
- iii. Glazed area*—Avoid installing interior floors or suspended ceilings that block the glazed area of historic windows.
- iv. Window design*—Install new windows to match the historic or existing windows in terms of size, type, configuration, material, form, appearance, and detail when original windows are deteriorated beyond repair.
- v. Muntins*—Use the exterior muntin pattern, profile, and size appropriate for the historic building when replacement windows are necessary. Do not use internal muntins sandwiched between layers of glass.
- vi. Replacement glass*—Use clear glass when replacement glass is necessary. Do not use tinted glass, reflective glass, opaque glass, and other non-traditional glass types unless it was used historically. When established by the architectural style of the building, patterned, leaded, or colored glass can be used.
- vii. Non-historic windows*—Replace non-historic incompatible windows with windows that are typical of the architectural style of the building.
- viii. Security bars*—Install security bars only on the interior of windows and doors.



Applicable Citations:

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 2, Exterior Maintenance and Alterations

12. Increasing Energy Efficiency

A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

i. *Historic elements*—Preserve elements of historic buildings that are energy efficient including awnings, porches, recessed entryways, overhangs, operable windows, and shutters.

REPAIR OR REPLACE?

In most cases, window repair is not only the more affordable solution upfront, but offers a much greater return on investment than replacement. Repairing and maintaining an old wood window may seem like a daunting task, but remember that historic windows were intended to be taken apart. If one piece fails, then only that piece may be replaced. By educating themselves on these practices, repairs can become something that any homeowner can tackle one window at a time (although feel free to obtain the services of a professional!)

REPAIRABLE WINDOWS

- Glass missing or broken
- Meeting rails not aligning
- Cords broken or hardware missing
- Sill or frame rotted
- Partially rotted rails and stiles which require patching

BEYOND REPAIR

- Missing components or units such as sashes
- Extreme wood rot
- Where 50% or more of a window's components must be reconstructed

B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

- i. Weatherization—Apply caulking and weather stripping to historic windows and doors to make them weather tight.
- ii. Thermal performance—Improve thermal performance of windows, fanlights, and sidelights by applying UV film or new glazing that reduces heat gain from sunlight on south and west facing facades only if the historic character can be maintained. Do not use reflective or tinted films.
- iii. Windows—Restore original windows to working order. Install compatible and energy-efficient replacement windows when existing windows are deteriorated beyond repair. Replacement windows must match the appearance, materials, size, design, proportion, and profile of the original historic windows.
- iv. Reopening—Consider reopening an original opening that is presently blocked to add natural light and ventilation.
- v. Insulation—Insulate unfinished spaces with appropriate insulation ensuring proper ventilation, such as attics, basements, and crawl spaces.
- vi. Shutters—Reinstall functional shutters and awnings with elements similar in size and character where they existed historically.
- vii. Storm windows—Install full-view storm windows on the interior of windows for improved energy efficiency.
- viii. Cool roofs—Do not install white or —cool roofs when visible from the public right-of-way. White roofs are permitted on flat roofs and must be concealed with a parapet.
- ix. Roof vents—Add roof vents for ventilation of attic heat. Locate new roof vents on rear roof pitches, out of view of the public right-of-way.
- x. Green Roofs—Install green roofs when they are appropriate for historic commercial structures.



**HISTORIC
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Applicable Citations:

Standard Specifications for Original Wood Window Replacement 12. Increasing Energy Efficiency

- **SCOPE OF REPAIR:** When individual elements such as sills, muntins, rails, sashes, or glazing has deteriorated, every effort should be made to repair or reconstruct that individual element prior to consideration of wholesale replacement. For instance, applicant should replace individual sashes within the window system in lieu of full replacement with a new window unit.
- **MISSING OR PREVIOUSLY-REPLACED WINDOWS:** Where original windows are found to be missing or previously-replaced with a nonconforming window product by a previous owner, an alternative material to wood may be considered when the proposed replacement product is more consistent with the Historic Design Guidelines in terms of overall appearance. Such determination shall be made on a case-by-case basis by OHP and/or the HDRC. Whole window systems should match the size of historic windows on property unless otherwise approved.
- **MATERIAL:** If full window replacement is approved, the new windows must feature primed and painted wood exterior finish. Clad, composition, or non-wood options are not allowed unless explicitly approved by the commission.
- **SASH:** Meeting rails must be no taller than 1.25". Stiles must be no wider than 2.25". Top and bottom sashes must be equal in size unless otherwise approved.
- **DEPTH:** There should be a minimum of 2" in depth between the front face of the window trim and the front face of the top window sash. This must be accomplished by recessing the window sufficiently within the opening or with the installation of additional window trim to add thickness.
- **TRIM:** Original trim details and sills should be retained or repaired in kind. If approved, new window trim must feature traditional dimensions and architecturally appropriate casing and sloped sill detail. Window track components such as jamb liners must be painted to match the window trim or concealed by a wood window screen set within the opening.
- **GLAZING:** Replacement windows should feature clear glass. Low-e or reflective coatings are not recommended for replacements. The glazing should not feature faux divided lights with an interior grille. If approved to match a historic window configuration, the window should feature real exterior muntins.
- **COLOR:** Replacement windows should feature a painted finished. If a clad product is approved, white or metallic manufacturer's color is not allowed, and color selection must be presented to staff.
- **INSTALLATION:** Replacement windows should be supplied in a block frame and exclude nailing fins. Window opening sizes should not be altered to accommodate stock sizes prior to approval.
- **FINAL APPROVAL:** If the proposed window does not meet the aforementioned stipulations, then the applicant must submit updated window specifications to staff for review, prior to purchase and installation. For more assistance, the applicant may request the window supplier to coordinate with staff directly for verification.



Findings:

- a. The property located at 504 N Hackberry St is a one-story, single-family Folk Victorian structure constructed c. 1934 and first appears on the 1934 Sanborn map. The structure features a wraparound porch, a front-facing dormer with hipped roof forms throughout, a dormer, and 117 wood siding. The property contributes to the Dignowity Hill Historic District.
- b. VIOLATIONS – On February 5, 2024, staff observed work occurring on the property without a Certificate of Appropriateness and beyond prior approvals. After contacting the property owner and confirming scopes of work, staff issued a stop work order on the same day. Violations include: porch steps, porch decking, rear door, skirting replacement; chimney and wood window removal; dormer vent installation; and fenestration pattern modifications.
- c. SITE VISIT – On February 13, 2024, staff conducted a site visit to take current photos of the structures condition. The photos taken show the modifications made as described in finding b.
- d. ADMINISTRATIVE SCOPES OF WORK – The applicant has received approval for wood window repair, roof replacement with retention of roof features, foundation repair, and wood siding spot repair between October 9, 2023, and January 19, 2024. The installation of a rear privacy fence, rear deck construction, skirting replacement, exterior painting, and dormer vent installation are administrative scopes of work. Once the Historic and Design Review Compliance and Technical Advisory Board has processed the present requests and the post-work fee has been paid, staff will release the administrative scopes of work to the applicant.
- e. WINDOW REPLACEMENT: EXISTING CONDITION – The applicant is requesting approval to replace all existing wood windows on the property. Staff did not have the opportunity to inspect the existing windows prior to their removal.



Findings:

- f. **WINDOW REPLACEMENT: ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND MAINTENANCE** – In terms of efficiency, in most cases, windows only account for a fraction of heat gain/loss in a building. Improving the energy efficiency of historic windows should be considered only after other options have been explored such as improving attic and wall insulation. The original windows feature single-pane glass which is subject to radiant heat transfer. Products are available to reduce heat transfer such as window films, interior storm windows, and thermal shades. Additionally, air infiltration can be mitigated through weatherstripping or readjusting the window assembly within the frame, as assemblies can settle or shift over time. The wood windows were designed specifically for this structure and can accommodate the natural settling and movement of the structure throughout seasons. Modern replacement products are extremely rigid, often resulting in the creation of gaps, cracks, and major points of air infiltration at the window frames and other areas of the exterior wall plane over time due to material incompatibility when considering the structure as whole integrated system.
- g. **WINDOW REPLACEMENT: WASTE AND LIFESPAN** – Over 112 million windows end up in landfills each year, and about half are under 20 years old. Historic wood windows were constructed to last 100+ years with old growth wood, which is substantially more durable than modern wood and clad products, and original windows that are restored and maintained over time can last for decades. Replacement window products have a much shorter lifespan, around 10-20 years, and cannot be repaired once they fail. On average, over the lifetime of an original wood window, replacement windows will need to be again replaced at least 4 times. The total lifecycle cost of replacement windows is also much more energy intensive than the restoration of existing windows, including material sourcing and the depletion of natural resources and forests, petroleum-heavy manufacturing methods, transportation, and installation. Finally, window repair and restoration utilizes the local labor and expertise of craftspeople versus off-the-shelf, non-custom composite products. Staff generally encourages the repair and restoration of original windows whenever possible.
- h. **WINDOW REPLACEMENT** – The applicant has proposed to replace all existing windows with new wood windows. According to the Historic Design Guidelines, wood windows should be repaired in place and restored whenever possible, unless there is substantial evidence that the windows are deteriorated beyond repair. If a window assembly is deemed irreparable, the window should be replaced in-kind in terms of materiality, configuration, inset, proportion, style, and detailing. As noted in finding j, staff did not have the opportunity to assess the condition of the wood windows prior to their removal. Staff does not find replacement of the wood windows consistent with the guidelines.



Findings:

- i. FENESTRATION MODIFICATIONS (WEST) – The applicant is requesting to modify the existing window openings on the west façade. Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 6.A.i. states to preserve existing window openings and to avoid enlarging or diminishing to fit stock sizes. Staff finds the proposed modifications to the window openings on the west façade do not conform to guidelines.
- j. FENESTRATION MODIFICATIONS (SOUTH) – The applicant is requesting approval to infill three windows and modify five window openings on the south façade. Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 6.A.i. states to preserve existing window openings and to avoid enlarging or diminishing to fit stock sizes. Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 6.A.iii. states to preserve historic windows. Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 6.A.iv. states to install new windows to match the historic or existing windows in terms of size, type, configuration, material, form, appearance, and detail when original windows are deteriorated beyond repair. Staff finds the proposed fenestration modifications to the south façade does not conform to guidelines.
- k. FENESTRATION MODIFICATIONS (NORTH) – The applicant is requesting approval to infill two windows, add one window opening, and modify two window openings on the north façade. Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 6.A.i. states to preserve existing window openings and to avoid enlarging or diminishing to fit stock sizes. Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 6.A.iii. states to preserve historic windows. Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 6.A.iv. states to install new windows to match the historic or existing windows in terms of size, type, configuration, material, form, appearance, and detail when original windows are deteriorated beyond repair. Staff finds the proposed fenestration modifications to the north façade does not conform to guidelines.



OHP Staff Recommendation to the Board of Adjustment

Office of Historic Preservation staff does not recommend approval of the appeal. Staff recommends that the Board of Adjustment uphold the Historic and Design Review Compliance and Technical Advisory Board's and the Historic Preservation Officer's denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the wholesale replacement of the property's wood windows and modifications to the existing fenestration pattern.



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