

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The residence at 60 Capen was built in 1875 in the Victorian Italianate style. The structure is composed primarily of yellow brick with a hipped roof with eaves that extend several feet beyond the façade. The building is used as an apartment building. The site is in the Capen-Clark National Historic District and the nomination specifically mentions that 60 Capen as a “standard, four-square vernacular Italianate Hartford type”.

The windows on the front and both side facades are visible from the street and are therefore subject to historic review. The windows on the rear façade are not visible and are therefore exempt from review and may be replaced as proposed.

This application was originally scheduled to be heard by the Historic Preservation Commission at their regular meeting on April 21, 2021. Prior to that meeting the application was continued to the May 19, 2021 meeting at the request of the applicant.

The application was heard at the May 19, 2021 regular meeting with the Commission ultimately continuing the item to June 16, 2021 to allow the applicant to submit evidence of hardship in the form of two estimates for wood window replacements and one for vinyl window replacements.

The applicant submitted a revised narrative with existing window details, estimates of costs for multiple replacement window brands/types, and an overall project budget.

Proposed Project: The applicant seeks to replace the windows on all three floors of the building. The extent windows are constructed of wood and appear to be a mix of two over two and one over one in configuration. The applicant proposes to install white vinyl double hung windows in a one over one configuration. The applicant has provided specifications for the Crystal Series 100 windows proposed to be used in the project.

LEGAL STANDARD

The Commission reviews and acts upon all applications for Document of Suitability. No person or entity may, without first applying and obtaining the approval of the Commission, file an application for a demolition permit, or for a building permit for any protected property as designated in the Historic Preservation Ordinance Sec. 28-219.

STANDARD SPECIFIC TO THE USE

The commission shall adopt the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Hartford Guidelines for Renovations and Additions to Historic Buildings.

The following sections of the Guidelines apply:

- Windows and Doors, page 19:
 - o “Recommended: Replace to match as closely as possible the dimensions and profiles of existing components such as stiles, rails, muntins, glazing bars (interior and exterior) and area of glass. Applied muntin frames may be acceptable. These guidelines apply regardless of the material of the new windows.”

FINDING OF FACTS

CURRENT USE:	Multi-Family	PROPOSED USE:	Multi-Family
YEAR BUILT:	1875	STYLE:	Victorian Italianate

Particular Mention in historic nomination: *“Capen Street: Included in this row are a number of distinctive buildings. Three Civil War-era houses stand along the north side of the block. Two (#36-38 and #60) are of a standard, four-square vernacular Italianate Hartford type with ornamental bracketed porticos and deeply overhanging cornices.*

Current Conditions: The exterior of the building is in good condition, in particular the brick and the window sills and lintels.



Front Façade – Google Street View Image, October 2020

Condition of other properties in neighborhood: Other properties on the north side of Capen Street are in good condition. The south side of Capen Street is a cemetery. The building to the west has white vinyl windows in a one over one configuration for the majority of the windows.

COMMENTS RECEIVED (None received as of April 16, 2021)

ANALYSIS

The applicant proposes to replace the existing windows on all three floors of the structure with vinyl replacement windows. The existing windows are a mix of wood, vinyl, and aluminum storm window systems in a mix of one over one, two over one and two over two configurations.

The applicant provided photographs showing that some of the windows have been infilled with wood and do not have original windows in place and other conditions that show a lack of a single cohesive design of windows for the entire house and each individual side of the house. They did not submit any estimates of cost to repair and retain.

The applicant submitted multiple estimates of the cost associated with using wood windows versus vinyl windows. The estimate for the proposed vinyl windows is between \$22,195 and \$22,772, while the wood window estimates range from \$43,917 to \$68,041. The minimum difference between vinyl and wood windows being \$21,722. The wood window estimates use three different window brands (Jeld Wen W-2500, Pella Lifestyle Series, and Trimline EW300) in a 1 over 1 configuration.

The applicant also submitted a total project budget of \$163,300 which has \$20,500 budgeted for windows. This would mean the true budget (reflecting the lowest vinyl bid) would be \$164,995. The budget including the lowest wood window bid would equal \$186,717, or an increase of only 11.5%. this does not meet the preservation ordinance's 20% increase threshold to demonstrate a hardship.

The applicant also provided an email which indicates that tempered glass is required because of the minimal distance from floor to sill for some of the windows. The requirement of tempered glass complicates but does not eliminate the ability to repair the existing windows or replace them with wood framed windows.

Staff does not find sufficient justification to support the use of vinyl windows in place of the wood windows that previously existed, and further finds that per the guidance of the historic guidelines, the replacement windows should be of a configuration (2 over 2) that matches the previous wood windows.

The applicant did mention a willingness to consider retaining/repairing enough existing wood windows to have the 8 front façade windows be a consistent original design if that would allow them to replace the other windows with the proposed vinyl window.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends denial of the application.

A draft resolution follows.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Application Form
2. Project Budget and Window Estimates submitted by the applicant on June 9, 2021
3. Photos submitted by the applicant on April 7, 2021

REVIEWED,

Aimee Chambers, Director



CITY OF HARTFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION
60 CAPEN STREET
HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROPOSAL

Whereas, The City of Hartford Historic Preservation Commission reviewed the proposal to replace the windows in an existing residential structure; and

Whereas, The property is located in the Capen Clark National Historic District; and

Whereas, The structure is a 3 story brick building in the Victorian Italianate style; and

Whereas, All rehabilitation work will not be done in a manner consistent with the historic character of the house; and

Whereas, The applicant proposes to replace all existing wood windows with vinyl windows; and

Whereas, The proposed windows are not consistent with the City's Historic Design Principals;

Now therefore Be It

Resolved, The City of Hartford Historic Preservation Commission hereby denies this application without prejudice.

Be It Further,

Resolved, This 16th day of June 2021.