

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 223 E Ann Street, Application Number HDC22-1097

DISTRICT: Old Fourth Ward Historic District

REPORT DATE: July 14, 2022

REPORT PREPARED BY: Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE: July 11, 2022

	OWNER	APPLICANT
Name:	Judith Grossi	Same
Address:	223 E Ann Street Ann Arbor, MI 48104	
Phone:	(734) 216-0573	

Additional Contacts: Mark Middleton, Middleton Property Services LLC

BACKGROUND: The Ann Arbor Armory was constructed in 1911 and was used as an armory until the early 1990s. Its last military occupant was the Company D 156 Signal Battalion. The building housed a drill room, reading room, billiard room, the captain's office, orderly rooms, locker rooms, and an indoor shooting range and kitchen in the basement. It was vacant for several years before being converted to condominiums in 1996.

In 1996, the HDC approved the removal of a garage and its replacement with an accessible ramp behind the north elevation, and the replacement of non-original windows with wood windows. An upper-story balcony on the west elevation was approved in 2016 (Trakit HDC16-010).

LOCATION: The site is located at the northwest corner of North Fifth Avenue and East Ann Street.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to replace the deteriorated pine trim installed in 1996 with Azec trim in matching dimensions. Because this is a change from the historic material (wood), HDC approval is necessary instead of staff approval.

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:

From the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

- (2) The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

- (9) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
- (10) New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

From the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings:

Windows

Recommended: Replacing in kind an entire window that is too deteriorated to repair using the same sash and pane configuration and other design details. If using the same kind of material is not technically or economically feasible when replacing windows deteriorated beyond repair, then a compatible substitute material may be considered.

Designing and installing new windows when the historic windows (frames, sash and glazing) are completely missing. The replacement windows may be an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial, and physical documentation; or be a new design that is compatible with the window openings and the historic character of the building.

Not Recommended: Introducing a new design that is incompatible with the historic character of the building.

Changing the historic appearance of windows through the use of inappropriate designs, materials, finishes, or colors which noticeably change the sash, depth of reveal, and muntin configuration; the reflectivity and color of the glazing, or the appearance of the frame.

Installing new windows, including frames, sash, and muntin configuration that are incompatible with the building's historic appearance or obscure, damage, or destroy character-defining features.

Wood - Repair

Recommended: Repairing wood features by patching, piecing-in, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing the wood using recognized preservation methods. Repair may also include the limited replacement in kind – or with compatible substitute material – of those extensively deteriorated or missing parts of features where there are surviving prototypes such as brackets, molding, or sections of siding.

Not Recommended: Using substitute material for the replacement part that does not convey the visual appearance of the surviving parts of the wood feature or that is physically or chemically incompatible.

From the City of Ann Arbor Design Guidelines:

Windows

Appropriate: If a window is completely missing, replacing it with a new window based on accurate documentation of the original or a new design compatible with the original opening and the historic character of the building. Materials other than wood will be reviewed by the Commission on a case-by-case basis.

Not Appropriate: Wrapping exterior wood window trim in aluminum or vinyl.

Wood Siding, Trim, and Architectural Details

Appropriate: Replacing missing features with elements based on documentation of the original feature or with a new design that is compatible in size, scale, material, and texture with the historic building and district.

Not Appropriate: Using substitute materials to cover or replace wood siding, shingles, trim, and architectural features.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. Most of the current wood windows and trim were installed in 1996, and replaced windows installed between 1960 and 1978. The original windows were multi-paned, mostly nine-over-nine, with 6-lite transoms. Many photos of the Armory and its windows are documented at the Ann Arbor District Library's Old News site (<https://aadl.org/community/oldnews>). The current materials match the historic wood, but neither the trim nor the windows match the originals. This should be taken into account when applying the SOI Guidelines.
2. This application requests the use of Azek PVC for the window trim. The current pine trim is facing severe deterioration after 25 years despite consistent maintenance. For further information, please see the applicant's explanation in the attachments.
3. Since the trim is neither historic nor matches the historic, staff believes that applying the standards and guidelines comes down to compatibility with the building and district, specifically this description of appropriate work from the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*: "Replacing missing features with elements based on documentation of the original feature or with a new design that is compatible in size, scale, material, and texture with the historic building and district." Photo documentation of the original windows is available, but this application is a request for a compatible new design, in a substitute material.
4. Staff has limited experience with the use of Azek in historic districts, though it has been approved on a handful of projects where wood in contact with the ground or water, or with other rot issues, makes it a reasonable choice. In those projects, the resulting appearance was consistent with painted wood. (Azek can be painted if desired.)
5. Since the window trim and windows are not original and not based on the original, staff

believes that this window trim is compatible in size, scale, material, and texture with minimal change to the appearance of the current window trim.

POSSIBLE MOTIONS: (Note that the motion supports staff findings and is only a suggestion. The Review Committee, consisting of staff and at least two Commissioners, will meet with the applicant on site and then report their findings at the meeting.)

I move that the Commission approve the application at 223 East Ann Street, a contributing property in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District, to replace the deteriorated pine trim installed in 1996 with Aztec trim in matching dimensions, as proposed. The Commission finds that the work meets *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standards 2, 9, and 10 and the guidelines for windows and wood repair, and the *City of Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for windows and wood siding, trim, and architectural details.

MOTION WORKSHEET

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 223 East Ann in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District

_____ Provided the following condition(S) is (ARE) met: 1) STATE CONDITION(s)

The work is generally compatible with the size, scale, massing, and materials and meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, standard(S) number(S) (*circle all that apply*): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

ATTACHMENTS: application, letter, photographs, drawings

223 East Ann (November 2020, Google Street View)





Postcard postmarked 1914 (from the 1996 HDC application to convert to condominiums)



1936 Ann Arbor News/Eck Stanger



1946 courtesy MLIVE 11/12/2015



Circa 1960 Ann Arbor District Library (Dale Leslie)



1978 (courtesy AADL Old News, copyright Susan Wineberg)



Dear Historic Commission of Ann Arbor,

We are looking at replacing the rotted exterior window trim on all windows of the historic Armory building at 223 East Ann Street. We are exploring options as far as material goes due to the fact that the treated pine wood trim that was installed has rotted extensively. The building was renovated and converted into condos in 1997 and the installed trim has not held up to the elements. The trim has been painted on multiple occasions yet still encounters the problem of rot and deterioration.

We are proposing to replace the rotted pine with an identical Azek PVC which is the leading building material for this application and has gone through rigorous testing for longevity. This material is rated to last 30-50 years whereas pine is rated only for 20. I have attached the material spec sheets to the application. We will also be looking to install a window flashing waterproofing tape on the rough framing of the windows underneath the trim to maintain a waterproof and more airtight seal.

Ultimately, we are looking to replace the rotted material with PVC to maintain the other historic portions of the building that have been affected by the entry of water through the rotted portions of trim. This will not affect the aesthetic image of the building as the material looks identical. I have also included images of the sample materials in question. Thank you for your time and please contact me or the armory board with any further questions.

Mark Middleton

Middleton Property Services L.L.C.

(734)-730-0191

Specs:

Proposed material: <https://www.homedepot.com/p/2448-1-1-4-in-x-2-in-x-8-ft-PVC-Composite-White-Brick-Moulding-0244808012/100077259>

Window dimensions are approximately 55" x 50" for lower windows and 4' x 6' on upper windows.

The trim will be painted an approved color to match windows.

Here is a photo of the two materials. The trim piece on the left is the pine that is currently on the armory and rotting, and the trim piece on the right is PVC





AZEK Moulding

- Same color, look and feel as AZEK Trim
- Crisp, authentic architectural details
- Increases stability/predictability and minimizes expansion/contraction when fastening
- No painting required, yet easy to paint if a custom color is desired
- UV protection inside and out
- Uniform material minimizes chip outs on cut lengths
- One warranty covers all products
- No cupping, rotting or splitting
- Most can be heat formed to create curved moulding details
- Installed with similar tried-and-true installation methods as traditional wood mouldings
- Standard AZEK Installation Guidelines will apply to AZEK Mouldings
- Use AZEK Adhesive for "welding" AZEK to AZEK surfaces and eliminate joints

Example of Rotting Trim:



Example of rotting trim and sill with water leakage points:



Example of rotting trim:



Example of rotten trim:



Example of Rotting Trim:

