

## ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### Staff Report

**ADDRESS:** 718 Lawrence St, Application Number HDC22-1229

**DISTRICT:** Old Fourth Ward Historic District

**REPORT DATE:** December 8, 2022

**REPORT PREPARED BY:** Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

**REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE:** December 5, 2022

	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>APPLICANT</b>
<b>Name:</b>	Andrew Palms	Same
<b>Address:</b>	10500 Scio Church Chelsea, MI 48118	
<b>Phone:</b>	(734) 433-0500	

**BACKGROUND:** This well-cared-for 2 ½ story first appears in City Directories in 1911 as the home of Mrs. Anna Newbold and students Alfred and Grace. It features a hip roof with front and rear clipped-gable, shingle sided dormers with corner returns and a smaller dormer on the west side; wide board trim beneath the eaves; wood lap siding; a bay window on the west elevation's first floor; an original front door and leaded glass in a large street-facing window under the porch; a full-width front porch with tapered round columns and turned balusters; diagonal lattice skirting; and a stone foundation.

Staff approved repairs to the fire escape in 2019 (HDC19-079) and a new roof in 2010 (HDC10-008). These records may be viewed in eTrakit at <https://etrakit.a2gov.org/etrakit>.

**LOCATION:** The site is located on the south side of Lawrence Street, east of North State and west of North Thayer Streets.



**APPLICATION:** The applicant seeks after-the-fact HDC approval to replace seventeen non-original wood windows with Andersen 400 series insert windows that are fibrex-clad wood. The work was done in 2015.

### APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

#### Ann Arbor City Code Chapter 103 § 8:421(3)

When work has been done upon a resource without a permit, and the commission finds that the work does not qualify for a certificate of appropriateness, the commission may

require an owner to restore the resource to the condition the resource was in before the inappropriate work or to modify the work so that it qualifies for a certificate of appropriateness. If the owner does not comply with the restoration or modification requirement within a reasonable time, the commission may request for the city to seek an order from the circuit court to require the owner to restore the resource to its former condition or to modify the work so that it qualifies for a certificate of appropriateness. If the owner does not comply or cannot comply with the order of the court, the commission may request for the city to enter the property and conduct work necessary to restore the resource to its former condition or modify the work so that it qualifies for a certificate of appropriateness in accordance with the court's order. The costs of the work shall be charged to the owner and may be levied by the city as a special assessment against the property. When acting pursuant to an order of the circuit court, the city may enter a property for purposes of this section.

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

- (2) The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
- (5) Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
- (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 will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property will be unimpaired.

**From the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (other SOI Guidelines may also apply):**

**Windows**

*Recommended:* Designing and installing additional windows on rear or other non-character-defining elevations if required by the new use. New window openings may also be cut into exposed party walls. Such design should be compatible with the overall design of the building, but not duplicate the fenestration pattern and detailing of a character-defining elevation.

Conducting an in-depth survey of the conditions of existing windows early in rehabilitation planning so that repair and upgrading methods and possible replacement options can be fully explored.

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.

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.

Using substitute material for the replacement part that does not convey the visual appearance of the surviving parts of the window or that is physically or chemically incompatible.

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.

**From the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines (other Ann Arbor guidelines may also apply):**

**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:* Removing or radically changing a window that is important in defining the overall historic character of the property.

**STAFF FINDINGS**

1. A rental inspection of the property in May of 2022 flagged these windows for being installed without permits. The owner quickly got in touch with historic preservation staff and applied to the commission in October for a certificate of appropriateness for the windows that were installed.
2. Most windows in the house were replaced by the owner with hand-built pine windows in 1987. These windows used the existing pulley system but were not meant as a long-term installation. Staff has no records or comment on the appropriateness of the 1987 window work. In 2015 a contractor replaced the 1987 windows with 17 Andersen fibrex-clad

windows, without pulling permits. A work narrative and photos of the installed windows are included with the application.

3. Since the windows that were replaced were not historic (pre-1945), this application is for a change of materials from wood windows to clad wood windows. In addition to the seventeen windows in this application, five original windows remain as well as two existing non-original replacements. The large front window, which has the most historic character because of the leaded glass transom, was not replaced.
4. No historic windows or doors are affected by the work. If the commission finds that the work is not appropriate and denies the first suggested motion, the second motion orders the work to be reversed and wood windows based on the existing historic windows to be installed.

**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 make a recommendation at the meeting.)

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 718 Lawrence Street, a contributing property in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District, to replace 17 post-1945 wood windows with clad wood windows, as proposed. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the surrounding resources and meets the *Ann Arbor Historic District Guidelines* for windows, and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, in particular standards 2, 5, 9 and 10, and the guidelines for windows.

*If the motion fails:*

I move that the Commission finds that the windows as replaced do not qualify for a certificate of appropriateness, and that the property owner is ordered to restore the windows to their former condition or to wood windows that meet the HDC Design Guidelines, as determined by staff, within 90 days.

**ATTACHMENTS:** narrative, photos.

718 Lawrence Street (November 2020  
courtesy Google Street View)

