



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

KRISTENNA CHASE, *PRESERVATION PLANNER*
SARAH WHITE, *PLANNER & PRESERVATION PLANNER*

Case #: HPC 2019.085
Date: November 19, 2019

Recommendation: *Conditional Approval*

PRESERVATION STAFF REPORT

Site: 33 Warren Avenue

Applicant Name: Attila Javor
Applicant Address: 17 Village Street, Unit 1
Owner Name: same as above
Owner Address: same as above

Petition: Attila Javor, Owner, seeks permission from the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to remove the asbestos siding and replace the windows and doors.

HPC Hearing Date: November 19, 2019

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- I. **Subject Property:** The subject building is located on Warren Avenue, a side street off Bow Street in a residential neighborhood. See Form B for details. The building has been rental property for many years.

It is sided with asbestos shingles over the original clapboard. Investigations have shown that the house was clapboard with turned rope wood corner boards as can be seen on several other buildings in the neighborhood. Very little maintenance has been undertaken.

All masonry is in poor condition. The chimney needs to be rebuilt as does the foundation.

The windows in the attic have replaced with aluminum sliders. The remaining windows appear to be the original wood. Several windows have rotted sills. Many of the basement windows are missing and boarded up. A ground floor on the left side bay toward 58 Columbus Avenue has been blinded. This window is minimally visible from Warren Street due to its proximity to the adjacent house on



33 Warren Avenue – 2017 Google photo

Columbus Avenue. A second floor window on the opposite bay, second floor is also blinded and much more visible. A highly visible fire escape runs down the back of the building from the attic to the ground. There is a skylight to the front of the chimney visible from uphill Warren Avenue and Columbus Avenue.

2. **Proposal:** The Applicant proposes to remove the asbestos siding and restore the exterior of the building with in-kind materials with exception of the windows. The Applicant told the Staff that the windows were of mixed materials and contained lead. He would like to replace the windows with Andersen 400 series double-hung windows with no muntins in the color black. He would like to replace the front door with period appropriate double doors as seen on other properties in the neighborhood. See attached photos and spec sheet.

II. FINDINGS FOR EXTERIOR WALLS

1. Wood Siding: clapboards, shingles, board and batten, etc.
 - a. Retain and repair original or later important material whenever possible.
 - b. Retain and repair, when necessary, replace deteriorated material which matches as closely as possible.
 - c. Invest in quality paint and proper preparation.
 - d. Synthetic siding (aluminum, vinyl, artificial stone or brick) is prohibited because it severely compromises the appearance and integrity of old buildings. In those rare instances where, for reasons of hardship, synthetic siding is approved, the new siding must reproduce the dimensions of the original, including its relationship to corner boards, window trim and other architectural details, all of which must be retained. The application for a Certificate of Hardship must include precise installation specifications supplied by an expert.
2. Masonry
 - a. Wherever possible, original masonry and mortar should be retained.
 - b. Original mortar should be duplicated in composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile and method of application.
 - c. Deteriorated masonry should be repaired and replaced with material which matches as closely as possible the original.
 - d. When masonry is cleaned, only the gentlest methods should be used. Sandblasting is not permitted because of its environmental impact, and because it changes the visual quality of the masonry and accelerates deterioration. Test patches should always be carried out well in advance of cleaning (including, if possible, exposure to all seasons.)
 - e. Because the application of waterproofing or water repellent coatings can accelerate the deterioration of masonry, it should be done only to solve a specific, small-scale problem.
 - f. Painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some point in the history of the property.

III. FINDINGS FOR WINDOWS AND DOORS

1. Retain original and later important door and window openings where they exist. Do not enlarge or reduce door and window openings for the purpose of fitting stock window sash or doors, or air conditioners.
2. Whenever possible, repair and retain original or later important window elements such as sash, lintels, sill, architraves, glass, shutters and other decorative elements and hardware. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence. If aluminum windows must be installed, select a baked finish that matches as closely as possible the color of the existing trim. Investigate weather-stripping and storm windows with a baked enamel finish as an alternative to the replacement of historic sash.

Staff Findings: Staff finds that the removal of the asbestos siding and the repair of the historic fabric beneath are in keeping with the HPC Guidelines and recommends granting a Certificate of Appropriateness for that change. A Certificate of Non-Applicability will be issued for the repairs to the original fabric thereby revealed.

However the Staff finds that the replacement of the historic wood windows with Andersen 400 Series double-hung windows are not in-keeping with the Guidelines. It is not known what type of low-E glazing might be used. The Andersen windows have double glazing, no muntins and vinyl clad exteriors. It is also not known from the information provided as to whether the proposed replacement windows have the same proportions as the existing wood windows and how they would be installed within the casings for minimal visibility. Staff recommends that a Certificate of Appropriateness not be issued for the proposed windows.

A Certificate of Appropriateness should be issued to replace the attic windows with double-hung wood windows to fit the original opening to match the remaining existing double-hung windows; and replacement of the basement windows to match the existing. A Certificate of Non-Applicability may be issued for the repair of the original wood windows.

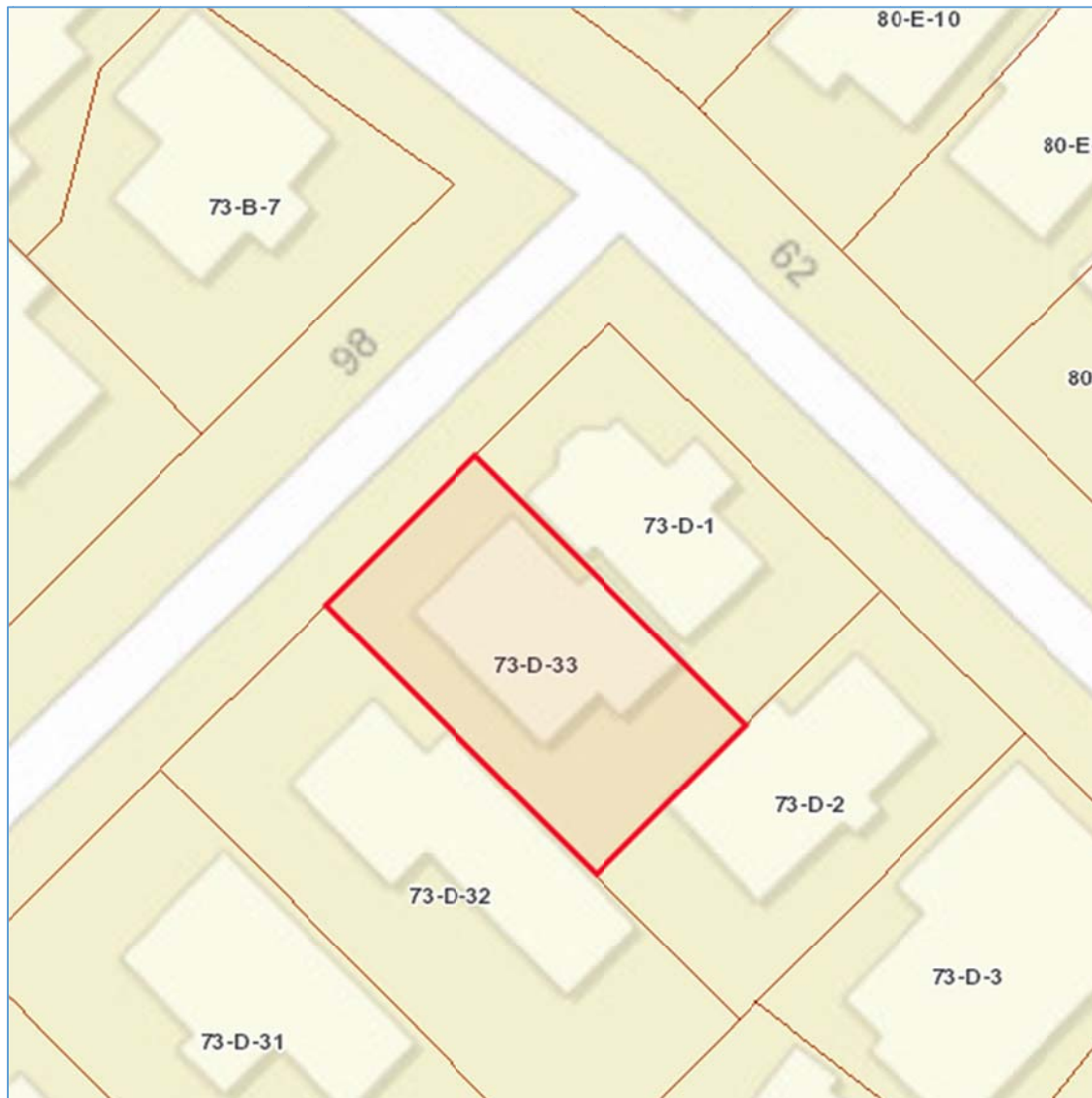
Staff also finds the replacement of the existing front door with period appropriate wood double doors to match other houses on the street to be in compliance with the Guidelines and recommends a Certificate of Appropriateness be issued for that alteration. See attached photos.

III. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the information provided and an assessment of the proposal against the Somerville LHD guidelines, Staff recommends A Certificate of Appropriateness with the following conditions:

1. All appropriate building permits shall be obtained prior to the start of any work.
2. If changes are necessary to the proposed design for which this Certificate of Appropriateness was issued, new plans shall be submitted to Historic Staff prior to commencing the work.
3. The asbestos siding shall be removed.
4. The attic windows shall be replaced with single-pane double-hung windows to match the existing windows with the same size stiles, rails and muntins and installed fit the original openings.
5. The front door shall be replaced with period appropriate double doors, preferably salvaged similar to those in the photo attached.
6. Historic Staff shall issue a sign-off upon completion of the project that this was done in accordance with the Certificate and approved plans.

A Certificate of Non-Applicability shall be issued for the extensive repairs and maintenance in kind including the refurbishment and replacement of the original fabric found under the asbestos siding and the re-pointing of the basement and chimneys. The Applicant may also install new storm windows which are excluded from HPC review.





Front elevation



Right elevation



Left elevation



Rear elevation



condition

Typical basement window and foundation



Attic window and fire escape

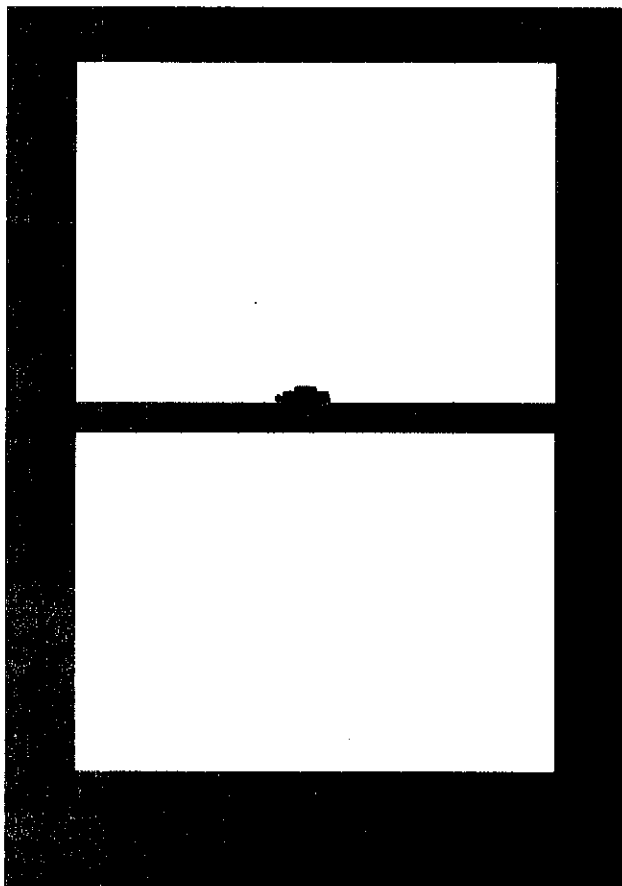


Proposed door style

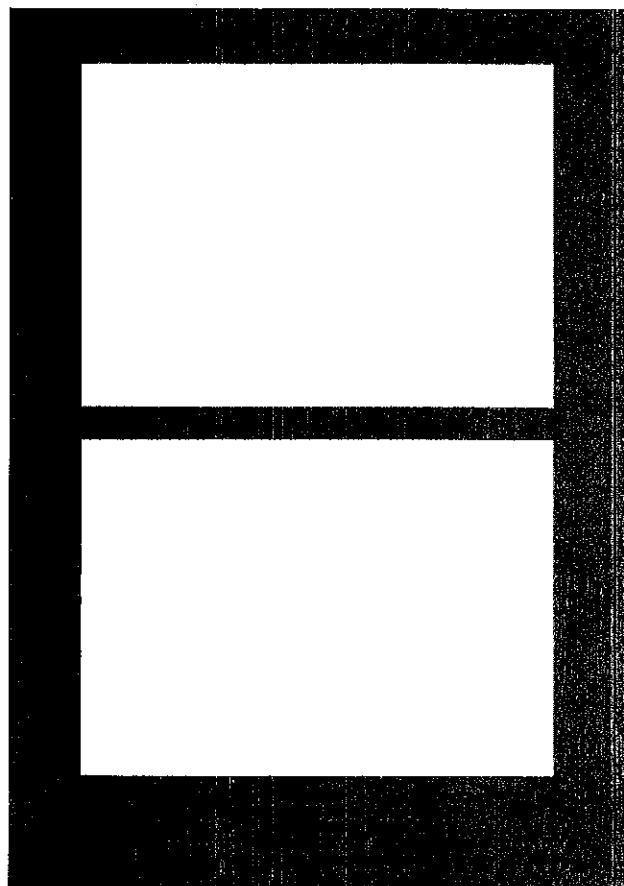


30 Warren Avenue showing alternate door style and rope corner molding

400 Series Double-Hung Window



Interior



Exterior

SUMMARY

To purchase this product or customize it further, take this summary to your Andersen dealer.

Product Name	400 Series Double-Hung Window
Product ID#	TW2636
Unit Width	31 5/8"
Unit Height	44 7/8"

Interior Color	Black
Glass	Dual-Pane Glass
Hardware	Standard Lock and Keeper, Black
Optional Hardware	None, Black
Grille Pattern	None
Exterior Color	Black
Exterior Trim Profile	None
Exterior Trim Color	Black

* Distressed bronze and oil rubbed bronze are 'living' finishes that will change with time and use.

* Options shown are not available for all products within the series. Computer monitor limitations prevent exact color duplication. For an accurate representation of color options please view actual color samples available at your Andersen window & patio door supplier.

