



CITY OF ALLENTOWN

30916

**RESOLUTION**

**R144 - 2024**

***Introduced by the Administration on August 21, 2024***

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Denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness – 620 N 6<sup>th</sup> Street

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***Resolved by the Council of the City of Allentown, That***

**WHEREAS** a Certificate of Appropriateness is required under the provisions of the Act of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania No.167, June 13, 1961 (P.L.282) known as the Pennsylvania Historic District Act; and City of Allentown has adopted a Historic District Ordinance, Article 1391, under the provisions allowed in the Pennsylvania Historic District Act; and

**WHEREAS**, Jose Rivas, the owner of 620 N 6<sup>th</sup> Street, applied to the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB) for a Certificate of Appropriateness to legalize the installation of two first-floor and one third-floor window with aluminum windows at this property, as described in the attached final report; and

**WHEREAS** the HARB held meetings on this application on June 3, July 1 and on August 5, 2024, where the applicant did not provide sufficient evidence that the windows needed to be replaced therefor; and

**WHEREAS** based on the evidence presented, the HARB has determined that the work did not comply with the Guidelines for Historic Districts and that there were no know unique circumstances that would apply.

**WHEREAS**, based on the above findings of fact, the HARB agreed on the motion not to approve the legalization of the window installations, and recommended to City Council denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness as detailed in the attached final report.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Allentown that a Certificate of Appropriateness is hereby denied for the above referenced legalization of the window installations on the second and third floor at 620 N 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

	Yea	Nay
Candida Affa	X	
Ce-Ce Gerlach	X	
Daryl Hendricks	X	
Santo Napoli	X	
Natalie Santos	X	
Ed Zucal	X	
Cynthia Y. Mota, President	X	
TOTAL	7	0

***THIS IS TO CERTIFY, That the above copy of Resolution No. 30916 was adopted by the City Council of Allentown on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2024, and is on file in the City Clerk's Office.***

  
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 City Clerk

**Historical Architectural Review Board  
COA Preliminary Review Sheet**

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**HDC-2024-00046**

**Address: 620 N 6<sup>th</sup> Street**

**District: Old Fairgrounds Historic District**

**Owner: Jose Rivas**

**Applicant: Jose Rivas**

**Proposal: Replacement of three aluminum windows. (Violation Correction)**

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**Building Description:** This 3-story brick end of row house, ca 1880 is a porch house. The mansard roof has shingles, a large triple dormer with a gable roof, projecting decorative cornice, the center window has a curved upper sash with decorative muntins and the small side windows are Queen Anne windows. There is a decorative muntin window with a shed roof to the left of the dormer. The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor has a two-sided bay with 1/1 sash windows, decorative wood cornice, with brick corbels and decorative wooden tops. There is a window to the left of the bay with a curved upper sash. The main entry is a double glazed door with transom, there are two windows with transoms and carved lintel on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. The concrete porch has wrought iron columns and railings.

**Project Description:**

This application presents the replacement of two first-floor and one third-floor windows with aluminum windows.



**Current Front Elevation (Applicant)**



**Installed Third Floor Window (Applicant)**

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**Previous Third Floor Window (Applicant)**



**Installed Third Floor Window (Applicant)**



**Previous First Floor Windows, c.2019 (Google)**



**Installed First Floor Windows (Applicant)**

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### Applicable Guidelines:

#### Section 3.5 – Windows

**3.5.1** Retain and preserve historic windows and all associated components whenever possible, including window sash, frame, hardware, lintel, sill, trim, hood, shutters, and glazing (glass). Retain original windows in type, shape, size, operation, and material. Preserve existing glazing including stained glass as a distinctive feature of the window.

**3.5.2** Keep historic wood windows in good condition by maintaining sound layers of paint at exterior and interior surfaces. Where wood has been exposed by paint failure, clean with the gentle methods possible and using lead-safe practices prior to repainting. Scrape peeling or flaking paint using hand tools down to the next sound layer of paint and ensure that the surface is clear of dirt and debris before priming and repainting.

**3.5.3** Maintain operable windows, which have inherent energy-efficient advantages for air circulation. Remove paint that has sealed a window closed from the exterior and/or interior.

**3.5.4** Inspect and test hardware. Ensure sash locks bring sashes together tightly to keep windows watertight.

**3.5.5** Consider weatherization improvements that have minimal impact to historic fabric including sealing or recaulking around exterior and interior trim, installing weatherstripping, and installing storm windows (either exterior or interior) to improve energy efficiency.

**3.5.6** Install storm windows customized to fit each window frame properly. Wood and aluminum materials are appropriate. The horizontal rails should align with window sashes. Window finishes should match the window trim or blend with the color scheme of the building. Interior storm windows may be recommended for windows with distinctive lites, artistic glazing, or irregular shapes to preserve the exterior appearance.

**3.5.7** Repair, restore, and reuse original windows prior to replacing them. Where one component of a window is deteriorated or broken, repair or replace the individual piece rather than replace the entire window unit. Repair or selectively replace in-kind existing hardware to ensure window operability, including sash cords, weights, and pulleys. Repaired windows have been shown to achieve energy performance levels comparable to replacement windows.

**3.5.8** Replace windows in-kind if original windows are deteriorated beyond feasible repair. Wood is the preferred material for most replacement windows. Replacement windows should match the original as closely as possible in material, size, type, operation, profile, and appearance. Replicate the existing dimensions of glazing, configuration of muntins, or unique decorative lites. Match sash and frame thickness and window depths. For existing nonoriginal windows, it is preferred to replace with wood windows rather than new alternate materials.

**3.5.9** Replace windows with alternate materials if in-kind replacement is not feasible. Replacement windows must match the original as closely as possible in type, size, operation, profile, appearance, and configuration of lites and muntins. Aluminum-clad wood windows are an appropriate alternate because they can replicate the original appearance and material. Composite wood or fiberglass windows with paintable exterior surfaces can be appropriate alternates if they match the original appearance, but are not recommended from a sustainability perspective. Vinyl windows are not appropriate due to short lifespan, poor performance, and inability to match historic profiles.

**3.5.10** Preserve the ratio of window openings to solid wall surfaces. Increasing or reducing openings can impact the proportions of a facade and can look out of place within the larger streetscape. Changing the size of openings will also require a Building Permit because it changes the amount of enclosed space on a facade.

**3.5.11** Retain the historic pattern of window openings (fenestration pattern), especially on primary facades. Avoid inserting new windows into a facade or infilling existing windows. The position, number, and arrangement of windows defines the rhythm of a facade and can be a character-defining feature of an architectural style or a type of building use. If creating new openings or infilling existing ones is necessary for a project such as an adaptive reuse, locate openings on side or rear facades.

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**3.5.12** If replacing a single window on a facade, replicate the existing windows of that facade.

**3.5.13** Replace single-pane glazing in-kind whenever possible. Install double-glazed windows with simulated divided lights only upon consultation with Staff/HARB. Replicate the dimensions, details, and appearance of the original window. Simulated divided light muntins should be attached to the window exterior, not sandwiched between the panes of glass.

**3.5.14** Avoid reflective glazing in restored or new windows. Reflective glazing makes a window's lites and muntins difficult to see and alters the visual impact from the street. This change makes alterations in the historic district more conspicuous. Clear (non-tinted) and non-reflective glazing and low-e coatings are appropriate.

**3.5.15** Replace deteriorated window trim or decorative elements only as necessary to match the size, profile, and material of the original elements. For window lintels or hoods that project from the facade plane and are vulnerable to water collection, consider installing of metal drip edges to shed water away from windows. Copper is recommended and should be left to weather naturally; aluminum is acceptable and should be painted to match surrounding materials. Avoid encasing wood sills with metal or vinyl, as this will trap moisture and may cause more damage.

**Observations & Comments:** The installed replacement windows do not reflect the historic detailing and material, and are therefore not appropriate. It would be helpful if the owner/applicant can provide photos of the windows beforehand, or evidence that they needed to be replaced rather than repaired. It appears that the upper story window did have special detailing that was not replicated and should have been. The first floor windows appeared to be fixed windows with a transom above and exterior storm windows, and the installed replacements are 1/1 sash windows with no transoms. Staff request clarification on the material of the window construction. The application indicates the windows were replaced with "aluminum." Unlike aluminum clad wood, aluminum-only is not acceptable, as aluminum-only windows cannot replicate the detailing of muntins and trim.

**Staff Recommendation:** It is recommended to deny the application.

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### **Presenters:**

- Ms. Baade presented the application to HARB
- Jose Rivas represented the applicant

**Discussion:** The applicant is looking for a solution for what they need to do to resolve this. Ms. Baade asked the applicant to clarify what the material of the windows is; the applicant noted to review the provided photographs. Mr. Jordan noted that the applicant should review Section 3.5 of the Guidelines for the evidence required for window replacement. Mr. Jones noted he provided the pertinent sections of the guidelines to review. The applicant asked who he could contact to assist; Mr. Jordan noted that the board could not provide specific contractor information, but a letter from any licensed contractor could be provided to indicate the need for repair. Mr. Jordan also noted the window will need to be re-built to match the previous windows. The applicant noted he does not know any contractors that can assist. Mr. Jordan noted there is a timeline required to review, so he believes the board may need to deny the application. Mr. Jordan noted the board does not have the ability to table the application again given the timeline requirements. In the meantime, it was recommended the applicant look for a contractor that will be able to perform this work. The applicant noted concern that he has replaced the windows and does not know where he'd find the materials to match the original windows.

It was noted that his application will go in front of city council, who will make the final decision; the applicant is welcome to attend the city council meeting on August 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Action:** Mr. Jordan made a motion to deny the application presented on August 5, 2024 for the replace of windows at 620 N 6<sup>th</sup> Street because it did not comply with the Guidelines for Historic Districts: Chapter 3, Section 3.5 – Windows and there were no known unique circumstances that would apply.

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Mr. Huber seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.