



CITY OF PONTIAC
Department of Building Safety & Planning

Mayor Deirdre Waterman

CITY OF PONTIAC
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
WINDOW REPLACEMENT GUIDELINES

The Pontiac Historic District Commission hears many requests to replace character-defining historic windows. Per the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the City of Pontiac's Historic District Commission Historic Review Criteria, window replacement are generally not permitted because of the impacts upon historic features of the structure.

WINDOW REPLACEMENT REVIEW CRITERIA

In applying the City's review standards, proposed window replacements often do not meet the following City Historic Review Criteria:

- 74-55 (b)(1) "historical or architectural value and significance of the structure...to the surrounding area" will be impacted by the new windows that will not match the original windows and new windows affect the historic integrity of the structure and affect the integrity of the wider historic district;
- 74-55 (b)(2) "relationship of the exterior architectural features" will be impacted by the new windows as these new windows often will not have the same exterior features, like true divided lites and these changes will significantly affect the overall visual character of the house and may negatively impact the significance of the structure;
- 74-55 (b)(3) "general compatibility of exterior design" will be negatively affected by the proposed work as it will impact the original exterior design of the home. Window design is often a key overall design feature of the building and window selection is often a key part of the architect's or designer's building design process;
- 74-55 (b)(5) "avoid, where possible, the removal or alteration of any historic building materials" – the proposed replacement of windows will remove historic building materials;
- 74-55 (b)(7) "where reasonably possible, will repair rather than replace deteriorated architectural features and where replacement is necessary, whether such replacement is similar in composition and texture...and reasonably accurate duplication of the architectural feature" requires repair over replacement and replacement materials must match composition, texture and detail of original where replacement windows with flat profiles does not meet this criteria; and
- 74-55 (b) (11) "alteration will be done in such a manner as to not impair the essential form and integrity of the structure" - proposed new windows will impact the overall essential form of the structure by changing an important character defining feature, its windows.

For the Historic District Commission to approve window replacements, the applicant must provide clear and irrefutable evidence that the windows are in such disrepair that they cannot be repaired or that the historic

windows have already been replaced. This requirement will allow the Commission to ensure compliance with review criteria #5 and #7 that prevents damage to historic building materials. If replacement is required and for approval by the HDC, the applicant must provide specification sheets for all of the proposed windows, including those on the primary façade with evidence of true divided lite muntins (the wooden divider between window panes).

PRIMARY FAÇADE WINDOW TREATMENT REQUIREMENTS -

The Historic District Commission will authorize the approval of work on windows under the following conditions, in order of desirability on all elevations facing street frontages:

- 1) Repair of Existing Windows
- 2) Replace with Like
 - a. Use of the same materials
 - b. Matching existing configuration – an example, a six-over-one true divided lite double-hung window would be replaced with true divided lites that match the existing muntin profile (width and depth of the dividing materials) and window trim detailing

The Historic District Commission will approve windows that match these criteria on the primary façade(s) on all street frontages only.

NON-PRIMARY ELEVATION WINDOW TREATMENT ALLOWANCES -

The Historic District Commission desires these primary façade-quality windows on all facades, but within residential districts, the Historic District Commission will accept replacement windows to a lower design standard than those on the primary façade(s).

Order of desirability for non-primary façade windows:

- 1) Repair Existing Windows
- 2) Replacement with Like
 - a. Use of same materials
 - b. Matching existing configuration
 - c. Matching of color
 - d. Matching trim detailing
- 3) Replacement with modern materials with true divided lites and muntins that match the existing profiles
- 4) Replacement with new windows of modern materials and exterior divider grilles to match existing window profiles
- 5) Standard replacement windows with either interior divider grilles or no divider grilles (least desirable – for non-primary facades only)