

UPPER ALLEN TOWNSHIP
HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
July 19, 2022

MEMBERS

Joseph Botchie, Chairperson
Natasha Adler, Vice-Chairperson
Matthew Taylor
Virginia LaFond
Joseph Cooper (absent)
Susan Sears
Frank Grottola, UAT Building Inspector

TOWNSHIP STAFF

Jennifer Boyer, Comm. Develop. Director
Scott Finkenbiner, Planning Technician

CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Upper Allen Township Historical Architectural Review Board was called to order on Tuesday, July 19, 2022, at 7:01 p.m. at the Upper Allen Township Municipal Building. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all, and Roll Call was taken by Chair Botchie. Chair Botchie noted that Mr. Cooper was absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A **MOTION** was made by Mrs. LaFond to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2022, meeting. The **MOTION** was seconded by Mr. Grottola. The **MOTION** carried unanimously (6-0).

NEW BUSINESS

1. 814 McCormick Road

Mrs. Rachael Pham of 814 McCormick Road represented the plan with her daughter Maureen Pham and contractor Mr. Ted Zinn. Mr. & Mrs. Pham have made an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace all the windows and the front door of the property. The property is located within the Yellow Breeches Municipal Historic District and within the Low Density Residential (R-1) Zoning District.

Mrs. Pham began by explaining that this property is expensive to maintain due to the constant upkeep measures required to keep the property in a livable condition, and that there is a health concern due to potential lead paint on the walls around the windows. Mrs. Pham went on to state that the family would like to update their windows as cost effectively as possible, while also reducing overall energy costs and improving the climate within the residence. They would also remove the existing aluminum storm windows to restore a more historic appearance. Mrs. LaFond asked Mrs. Pham if the paint had been tested for lead, to which Mrs. Pham stated that no testing had been done, but that the windows were last replaced and painted in the 1930s and that paint used before 1940 typically contained lead. Additionally, some of the windows have broken glass and they cannot close all the way. Some rooms, particularly the kids' rooms, are cold and drafty because of the window issues.

Maureen Pham described how the windows would be replaced and what they would look like, as well as, how wood does not have the same longevity as vinyl. Wood windows are considerably more expensive, costing \$1,500.00 per window, for a total of \$36,000.00. Mr. Zinn was able to provide a sample of the window proposed to be used and explained that an entirely vinyl window would cost around \$300.00 per window while an interior wood window with vinyl exterior would cost about \$700.00 per window. Both options would significantly reduce the overall cost, compared to full wood windows.

Ms. LaFond stated the Phams were aware the home was located in the historic district and asked if they had considered obtaining grants to which Mrs. Pham stated they had not. Mr. Grottola suggested the use of composite windows as a compromise; however, Mr. Zinn stated that composite windows would be difficult to obtain, to which Mr. Grottola agreed.

Ms. Sears stated that the material of the windows shouldn't matter if the window looks the same and allows the owner to maintain the property. Mr. Zinn stated that this is a home and not a museum. The homeowner would not be changing the exterior façade. The homeowner is concerned about the health and safety of their family, and they want to replace the windows, while saving money and still providing energy efficiency.

Chair Botchie was concerned about the thickness of the jams when replacing windows. Both Mr. Zinn and Mr. Grottola said they would only lose about an inch, so it isn't an issue. There shouldn't be any noticeable difference from the street.

Chair Botchie stated he objects to the use of vinyl windows because they are a petroleum-based product. They can't be recycled, unlike wood. Mrs. LaFond advocated for keeping the wood windows. If the expense was an issue, she suggested the homeowners relace one window at a time over the course of living in the home and repaint every few years, like what she did with her home. Mr. Taylor said he believes in allowing property owners to have freedom to do what they want but suggested they should consider alternatives. Mr. Taylor detailed his experience with repairing wood windows, stating appearance and function trumps material. He also stated that the wood windows required little maintenance over a 15-20-year period.

Chair Botchie moved to the second request, which involved the replacement of the front door. Mr. Zinn detailed how he was planning to build a custom door for the property owners, how it would match the existing storm doors, would maintain the same color as the current door, and have insulated glass windows. Ms. LaFond was concerned that the new door would not fit the historic look and a glass door would have reduced security over a solid wood door. She suggested keeping the existing wood door and maybe repairing the hinges. Mr. Taylor suggested that the door be required to look like the doors pictured on page three of the application. He also suggested keeping the original door in the house for any future homeowners.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Eric Fairchild of 1224 McCormick Road stated that when he put wood windows in his home, they cost around \$300, noting that inflation may have increased the cost. He encouraged the homeowner to consider alternatives and shop around. He also stated he could tell the difference between wood and vinyl windows when he walked down the street, and he can appreciate the original look of homes. He encouraged maintaining the historic appearance of the front of the home.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Taylor to recommend approval for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the door as proposed. The **MOTION** was seconded by Vice-Chair Adler. The **MOTION** carried 5-1.

A **MOTION** was made by Chair Botchie to recommend approval for a Certificate of Appropriateness for wood clad aluminum or vinyl clad wood windows. The **MOTION** was seconded by Vice-Chair Adler. The **MOTION** carried 4-1-1.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Mr. Grottola made a **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Taylor seconded the **MOTION** and the meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.