

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
June 24, 2014 Meeting**

9. **CAR No. 14-55** (C. & J. Early)

**514 W. 21st Street
Spring Hill Old & Historic District**

Project Description:

Replace fire damaged windows

Staff Contact:

W. Palmquist

The applicant requests permission to replace 11 wood windows that were damaged due to fire, as well as the remaining 9 wood windows at this property in the Spring Hill Old and Historic District. Of the 9 remaining windows on the structure, three have a two-over-one configuration and the other six are one-over-one windows. The applicant has provided photos from the building's interior showing the condition of each of the windows to be replaced, although it is difficult to determine which windows are salvageable and which are beyond the point of repair. Staff had viewed the interior of the building and it was clear that some windows are repairable while others are not. The applicant has stated that their preference is to replace the windows with matching windows manufactured by Sherwood, with a second choice of windows being manufactured by Legends.

Staff recommends partial approval of the project with conditions. The window guidelines outlined on page 59 of the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* emphasize the need to retain and repair all original windows, but provides guidance concerning the style of replacement windows if original windows are missing or deteriorated beyond repair:

- Original windows should be repaired by patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing them.
- Windows should be replaced only when they are missing or beyond repair. Any reconstruction should be based on physical evidence or photographic documentation.
- Changes to existing windows or the addition of new windows along a secondary elevation will be considered by the Commission on a case-by-case basis.
- The architectural character of windows should not be altered by inappropriate materials or finishes that radically change the sash, depth of reveal, muntin configuration, the reflective quality or color of the glazing or the appearance of the frame.
- Do not replace multi-paned sash windows with new thermal sash windows that use false muntins.

The *Guidelines* also address the inappropriate replacement of windows on page 90: *It is generally not appropriate to replace historic windows. Replacements are often made as a result of poor maintenance of the original materials, or from a belief that original windows do not provide sufficient energy efficiency; such replacements are considered inappropriate if the new windows do not duplicate the historic character of original windows in size, materials or design.*

From visiting the site and conducting a tour of the building's interior, it is clear that some windows are repairable. Staff would need more information from the applicant to determine exactly which windows are repairable and which ones are not. For those windows that are not repairable, staff recommends replacement with the condition that the grid pattern matches the historic grid pattern for that window, and that the replacement windows have a true or simulated-divided lites. It is the assessment of staff that, with the conditions noted above, the application is partially consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation outlined in Section 114-930.7(b) of the City Code, as well as with the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines*, specifically the page cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.