



## AGENDA SUMMARY EUREKA CITY COUNCIL

**TITLE:** Appeal of the Metropole Siding and Window Rehabilitation Historic Preservation Review

**DEPARTMENT:** Development Services

**PREPARED BY:** Millisa Smith, Assistant Planner

**PRESENTED FOR:** Action  Information only  Discussion

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Hold a public hearing; and

Adopt a resolution to modify the Historic Preservation Commission's conditions of approval to allow replacement of windows on the south-facing façade of the Metropole Building located at 306 2nd Street (aka 217 D Street).

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

No Fiscal Impact  Included in Budget  Additional Appropriation

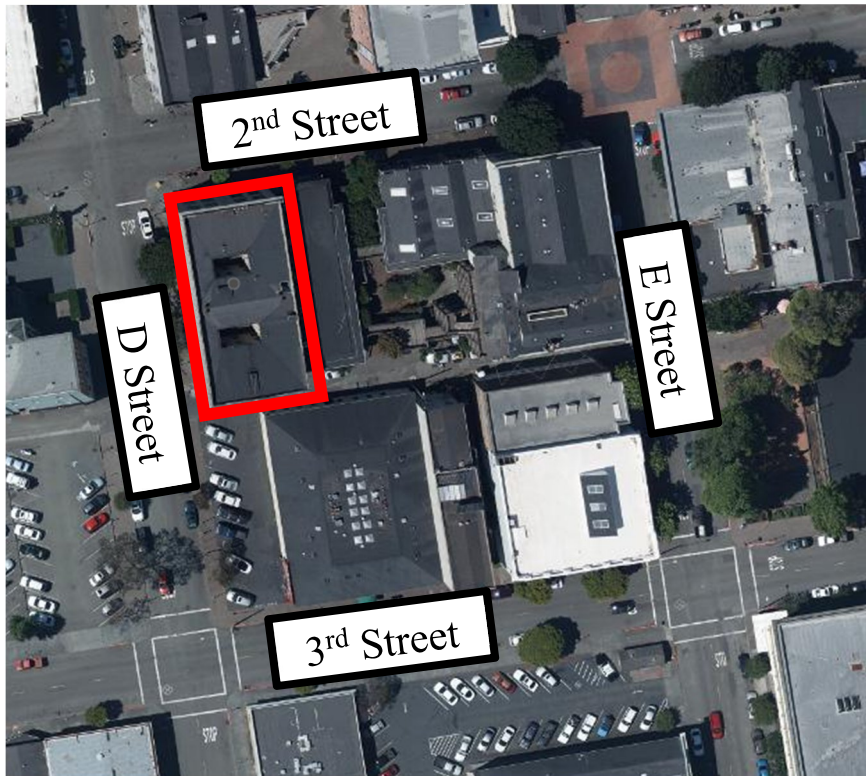
### **COUNCIL GOALS/STRATEGIC VISION**

**General Plan Policy HCP-1.1 Preservation.** Encourage and support the identification, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historically significant buildings, landscape features, significant trees and plantings, hardscapes, fountains, lighting, sculptures, signs and other natural or designed features through incentives such as reduction of Historic Preservation application fees and programs such as the Local Register of Historic Places and the Mills Act.

### **DISCUSSION**

The applicant, Dave Gaddis, on behalf of the property owner, Evo Fanucchi, originally applied for Historic Preservation Commission (Commission) approval to replace all siding, window trim and sills, and window sashes along the south-facing (alley-facing) façade of the Metropole Building located at 306 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (aka 217 D Street; APN 001-093-016) (Figures 1 and 2). The three-story frame Classic Revival building was constructed in 1903, and the property is included on the Local Register of Historic Places. Pursuant to Eureka Municipal Code (EMC) §157.006.C, any modification to the exterior of the building visible from a public way requires the Commission's review and approval.

Figure 1: Site Map



After continuing the item twice, the Commission ultimately approved the project at their regular meeting on November 1, 2023. Pursuant to EMC §§157.005.C and 155.416, within 10 calendar days of the Commission’s action, any person may appeal the Commission’s decision to the City Council. The applicant has appealed the decision within the 10-day time window (Attachment 2), taking issue with the Commission’s Condition “e” requiring the wooden window sashes of the ten windows on the south-facing façade be repaired rather than replaced as requested. The applicant continues to request that the City approve replacement of the ten single-pane 35.5-inch by 79.5-inch single-hung Redwood-framed south-facing windows with double-pane vinyl single-hung windows of the same exact dimensions.

Pursuant to EMC 155.416.030.F, during the appeal hearing, the City Council may:

- (1) affirm, modify, or reverse the action that is the subject of the appeal;
- (2) adopt additional conditions of approval that address the matter appealed; or
- (3) remand the appeal for further review, recommendation, or action by the Commission.

City staff is recommending that the City Council hold a public hearing and modify Condition “e” of the Commission’s approval to remove the requirement to repair the existing window sashes, and instead require that any wooden window sashes removed from the south-facing façade which are able to be repaired, be stored and repaired over time, and retained for future window replacement on the other building façades.

Figure 2: South-facing building façade (facing north east from D Street)



### **Background**

Originally, the applicant intended to sand and repaint the lower section of existing Redwood siding on the south-facing building façade. After beginning the work, the applicant noticed large portions of the existing Redwood siding were severely damaged and thus removed portions of the siding to inspect the wall behind for additional damage.

City staff, while conducting a site visit for the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design grant program for a tenant in the Metropole Building, saw the work being conducted to remove the lower section of siding. City staff informed the applicant the work needed to stop because the building is on the Local Register of Historic Places and thus Historic Preservation review is required.

At the Commission's September 6, 2023 meeting, the applicant proposed to replace the existing rotted and deteriorated Redwood siding on the south-facing building façade with Cedar siding of similar dimensions and profile as the original. The applicant further proposed to replace deteriorated window trim and sills of the south-facing façade with Cedar of the same dimensions and design, and replace south-facing deteriorated Redwood windows (herein referred to as window sashes) with vinyl Milgard brand windows of the same dimensions as the original. All window sashes, trim, and sills, and building siding would be painted to match the existing, and the proposed alterations would match the original in dimensions, design, color, and material appearance as best as possible.

The Commission expressed concern that the dimensions of the proposed Cedar siding differed from the existing Redwood siding, and the profile (or height) of each individual piece of new Cedar siding would not match the profile of the existing Redwood siding on the adjacent façades which would cause a lack of alignment at the corners of the building

where the façades meet. Additionally, the Commission expressed concern with the proposed window trim and sills being Cedar rather than Redwood, with the Commission noting a like-for-like (rather than in-kind; i.e. something similar but not identical) replacement with Redwood is preferable. Lastly, the Commission expressed concern that the proposed vinyl window sashes would fail in a short period of time, and preferred the applicant consider replacing the window sashes like-for-like with Redwood or restoring the existing where possible.

The Commission requested the applicant explore options for the building siding, window trim and sills, and window sashes, other than those presented in the Staff Report (Attachment 8) by contacting both local and out-of-area contractors for quotes. The Commission voted to continue the project to their next regularly scheduled meeting on October 4, 2023, in order to provide the applicant time to address their requests.

Options the Commission suggested to the applicant at their September 6, 2023 meeting included:

- Utilizing the Hardie Panel Artisan Line for siding (the Commission noted Hardie brand siding is produced in a variety of different profiles, one of which could match the existing siding more closely than what was proposed);
- Contacting Truitt and White Lumber and Hardware out of Berkley, CA for a quote for siding, window trim, sills, and window sashes milled to match the existing exactly; and
- Restoring the existing Redwood window sashes where possible or replacing them with new Redwood window sashes from a local contractor, instead of replacing with vinyl window sashes as proposed.

At the Commission's October 4, 2023 meeting, the applicant proposed to utilize the Hardie brand Artisan Line for siding. The applicant contacted Truitt and White, as suggested by the Commission, but they found that without a contractor license they were unable to open an account and thus could not obtain a quote. The applicant obtained a quote from one local contractor, Floyd Cunha of Cunha Creations, for wooden window sashes, but due to numerous factors, including the substantial cost difference between the wooden window sashes and Milgard brand vinyl window sashes, the long-term durability of the proposed vinyl window sashes, the manufacturer's warranty, the time-frame associated with replacing the window sashes like-for-like, and the reluctance of contractors to accept the job of replacing the window sashes like-for-like with Redwood, continued to propose to replace the window sashes with vinyl as presented in the Staff Report (Attachment 8) and felt their due diligence had been done in exploring alternative options.

After they received the applicant's new information, the Commission again requested the applicant explore additional options for the siding and window sashes, and voted to continue the project, for a second time, to the next regularly scheduled meeting on November 1, 2023, in order to provide the applicant additional time to explore alternatives.

The Commission specifically noted at the October 4, 2023 meeting that vinyl windows can fail, and, while they do come with a warranty, a vinyl window sash is more than likely not going to last the length of time the original windows have lasted, which can be repaired. Commissioners then indicated the point of the Commission, and the Historic Preservation ordinance, is to see original materials remain where they can, and they did not believe the feasibility of using original materials had been fully explored. The Commission discussed how, during past applications, vinyl window sashes have been considered a poor replacement for historic window material. Therefore, the Commission wanted to give the applicant more time to explore options for window sashes and building siding, noting specifically if Redwood siding compared in cost to Hardie siding, the replacement with Redwood would be preferable. Commissioners noted several local contractors who can recreate siding to match historically-used products, and felt it was important to tap into those resources before deciding to get rid of historic fabric. Although the Commissioners discussed both the proposed vinyl window sashes and Hardie siding, there was no discussion about the proposed Cedar window trim and sills.

At the Commission's October 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, they specifically requested the applicant contact the contractors listed on the Historic Preservation Resource List and the Historic Preservation Wooden Window Resource List on the City's website, and requested the applicant obtain quotes for new wooden siding and window sashes milled to match the existing in both materials and dimensions. Specific local resources mentioned by Commissioners included:

- Blue Ox Millworks
- C.J.'s Sash and Door
- Daniel Jones with Humboldt Bay Window and Door
- Mad River Woodworks
- Valley Lumber and Millwork

Following the October 4, 2023 meeting and prior to the November 1, 2023 meeting, the applicant contacted all of the companies listed above and received responses and quotes from Blue Ox Millworks (Attachment 9), Mad River Woodworks (Attachment 10), and Valley Lumber and Millwork (Attachment 11). The applicant additionally contacted Schmidbauer Building Supply to obtain quotes for materials previously proposed, including Hardie brand siding and Cedar siding (Attachment 12), as well as the vinyl Milgard brand window sashes. A detailed summary of the quotes obtained can be found in the project's Addendum Memo prepared for the November 1, 2023 Commission meeting (Attachment 4).

Based on the quotes obtained by the applicant, Redwood window sashes would cost between \$19,000 to \$35,000 for materials only, and siding milled to match would cost between \$21,000 and \$39,000, bringing the total cost of materials for the window sashes and building siding to \$40,000 to \$74,000. In contrast, the Milgard brand vinyl windows cost \$4,730, and the Hardie brand siding costs \$9,166.96, bringing the total cost of the materials proposed by the applicant for window sashes and building siding to \$13,896. The applicant stressed the cost of installation had not been included in any of the quotes,

which, in their opinion, would more than likely double the cost of the project due to the height of the building wall.

A representative from Valley Lumber and Millworks informed the applicant the Hardie brand only produces a V groove siding for the Artisan line (which differs in profile to the existing siding) and Hardie discontinued the bevel channel in their Artisan line in 2021 (which was suggested by Commissioners at their September 6, 2023 meeting to match the original more closely). This representative further expressed the next closest option is “finger jointed” Cedar, which is prone to failure.

At the November 1, 2023 Commission meeting, the applicant proposed to replace the existing rotted and deteriorating siding with “V groove Artisan line” Hardie brand siding, outlined in the Schmidbauer Building Supply quote (Attachment 12), and the Milgard brand vinyl window sashes, as detailed in the original September 6, 2023 Staff Report (Attachment 8). The applicant provided a comment letter (Attachment 5) at this time outlining that due to their current financial state, coupled with the fact that other materials are either not available or are far beyond what they can afford, like-for-like repairs are not possible.

At the November 1, 2023, meeting, the Commission voted to approve the project with the proposed Hardie brand siding in the closest profile to the original as possible and with the replacement of window trim and sills with the best wood available, likely Cedar. The Commission did not approve the proposed vinyl Milgard brand window sashes, and instead added a condition requiring the existing wooden window sashes be restored rather than replaced.

The applicant filed an appeal of the Commission’s decision, specifically contesting Condition “e” requiring the existing wooden window sashes be restored rather than replaced with the vinyl window sashes. The applicant’s explanation for the appeal is included as Attachment 2.

### **Staff Recommendation on Appeal**

City staff believes due diligence has been exhibited by the applicant to explore alternative options suggested by the Commission, and believes the difference in price between window sash restoration and replacement is significant, considering the additional cost of installation of ten windows on a three-story building.

EMC §157.006.C specifies that for properties listed on the Local Register of Historic Places, a proposed replacement/alteration must be considered in light of its effect on the existing historical character of the affected structure as it relates to the streetscape. Also, as provided in Chapter 157, the Commission has adopted the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties as their guidelines for alterations to historic properties and in carrying out their historic preservation responsibilities. As outlined in the original Staff Report (Attachment 8), City staff believes the necessary findings can be made for the window sash replacement with vinyl. Although the proposed

replacement materials are different from the original Redwood, the appearance of the façade will remain unchanged.

The alterations are proposed on the south-facing building façade, which does not contain any distinctive historical features or decorative elements similar to those which characterize the 2<sup>nd</sup> and D Street façades of the building. Condition “c” of the Commission’s November 1, 2023 approval requires any Redwood siding removed from the south-facing façade which is not rotted or deteriorated be repurposed for patchwork repairs to the Redwood siding on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and D Street façades in the future; and Condition “d” requires that any future repairs to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and D Street facades be done like-for-like, utilizing, for example, Redwood siding and wood framed windows with no alteration to decorative features which define the historic character of the building. Staff believes these conditions ensure the historic character of the structure will be retained.

Thus Staff recommends the City Council sustain the Commission’s approval of the project, including Conditions “a” through “d”, but modify Condition “e” to remove the requirement that the existing deteriorated wooden window sashes be repaired rather than replaced with vinyl sashes, and instead require that any wooden window sashes removed from the south-facing façade which are able to be repaired be stored, repaired over time, and retained for future window replacement on the other building façades.

Staff believes with this modification, the project as conditioned can be found in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s standards for rehabilitation. The essential form and integrity of the historic property will be visually unimpaired, with proposed materials matching the old materials almost exactly in design, color, and texture (but not materials); and, as conditioned with revised Condition “e”, any windows or sections of siding which are repairable or not severely deteriorated will be retained for future repairs on other more prominent façades of the building.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1: City Council Resolution
- Attachment 2: Appeal of the Historic Preservation Commission’s decision filed by applicant
- Attachment 3: Historic Preservation Commission Resolution 2023-13 adopted November 1, 2023
- Attachment 4: Staff Addendum Memo for November 1, 2023 Historic Preservation Commission meeting
- Attachment 5: Comment letter from applicant for November 1, 2023 Historic Preservation Commission meeting
- Attachment 6: Staff Addendum Memo for October 4, 2023 Historic Preservation Commission meeting
- Attachment 7: Comment letter from applicant for October 4, 2023 Historic Preservation Commission meeting
- Attachment 8: Original Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report
- Attachment 9: Blue Ox Millworks quote

- Attachment 10: Mad River Woodworks quote
- Attachment 11: Valley Lumber and Millwork quote
- Attachment 12: Schmidbauer Building Supply quote