

REVIEWED

By Susie Murray at 3:08 pm, May 17, 2022

ROBERT E. ANDERSON

103 MORRIS STREET, SUITE N, SEBASTOPOL, CALIFORNIA 95472
TEL.(707) 823-7802 e-mail: arkitekt@sonic.net

ARCHITECT

CALIFORNIA 95472
FAX (707) 823-5636

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MINOR LANDMARK ALTERATION PERMIT APPLICATION RESIDENCE @ 401 DENTON WAY, SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA

INTRODUCTION

The Owners of 401 Denton Way, Thambi Borrás and John Ramaley have asked me to provide my professional evaluation of their recent application to make minor modifications to the exterior of their residence. I have reviewed the Owners' proposal to install eleven replacement windows and to remove one exterior door on the rear and interior side of their residence; and I have given specific attention given to evaluating the architectural impact of the proposed modifications.

I am a registered architect in the State of California with 46 years of experience practicing throughout Sonoma County; with additional registration with the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB).

EXISTING WINDOW CONDITION

The existing wood sash shows deterioration of the adhesive utilized in the original joinery, making the sash units unstable for re-glazing. When the individual window panels are removed from the opening and the putty, glazing points and glass are removed, the deteriorated joints at the corners of each panel will become more apparent. Additionally, the profile of the original millwork appears to be too narrow to accommodate the much wider thickness of dual glazing. Even if the existing wood sash could be successfully re-glazed with more energy-efficient dual glazing the windows are likely to experience substantial air leakage at their perimeters, reducing the thermal benefit of the higher R-value of the new glazing.

1. CONSISTENCY WITH APPLICABLE ZONING STANDARDS

The application is for window replacement only, and is consistent with applicable zoning standards except the portion of Zoning Code Section 20-12.020 that references allowed material for replacement window sash. It should be noted the proposal to utilize replacement sash that retains the existing wood window frames will result in windows of identical size, color and function as the existing windows.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN AND/OR APPLICABLE SPECIFIC PLANS

In addition to the proposal to replace the windows and remove a door on the two sides of the residence not visible from the public way, the application also includes a proposal to replace the windows readily visible from Denton Way and Glenn Street with fiberglass-clad wood windows of the same location, size and configuration as the existing windows. This portion of the work is consistent with prior approvals of the Cultural Heritage Board that implement the establishment of the historic district.

3. CONSISTENCY WITH THE ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLE AND DETAILS OF THE BUILDING

The application does not alter the architectural style or details of the building.

4. COMPATIBILITY OF THE PROPOSAL WITH OTHER ADJACENT OR NEARBY LANDMARK OR PRESERVATION DISTRICT STRUCTURES

The replacement windows, whether single-hung, double hung or fixed glazing are proposed to be the same size and function as the existing windows, maintaining the proportion of each window or window grouping as well as the ratio of existing window area to wall surface. This proposed like-for-like replacement allows the basic window forms when used both individually and in pairs to maintain the compatibility of this residence with surrounding preservation district structures.

5. THE CONSISTENCY AND/OR COMPATIBILITY OF THE PROPOSED FENESTRATION WITH THE TIME PERIOD

For this particular application, the most critical factor to maintaining consistency with the most common fenestration used at the time the residence was built is the proposal to continue with the use of single-hung and double-hung windows that emphasize the vertical dimension of each window. The use of white vinyl sash at the proposed locations will not be inconsistent with the appearance and basic architectural feel of the white-painted wood sash used for fenestration of the original residence.

The Owners' proposal to remove an existing door on the interior side yard and to finish the surface of the closed opening with exterior cement plaster to match the existing surrounding will maintain the overall architectural appearance of the residence.

6. WILL THE PROPOSED REPLACEMENT WINDOW INSERTS DESTROY OR ADVERSELY AFFECT IMPORTANT ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES OF THE RESIDENCE

The window replacement proposal does not relocate or re-orient the window openings or change the overall composition of the elevations, nor does the application propose to alter or remove any important architectural features of the original construction of the residence.


7. CONSISTENCY WITH APPLICABLE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

In the sections of the referenced standards addressing windows, the standards suggest using wood sash for replacing existing wood assemblies. However, the document does make reference to the acceptability of alternate window options on "rear or other secondary, less visible elevations". The eleven windows in the application to use white vinyl replacement sash inserts at the rear and interior side yard is consistent with that position. The Owners have specifically chosen to use insert replacement windows on these two elevations. The use of inserts retains the existing wood window frames, interior and exterior trim and the "blind stop" around the perimeter of the frame; allowing a future owner to replace the vinyl inserts with wood windows if they choose.

MY PROFESSIONAL OPINION OF THE ARCHITECTURAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED REPLACEMENT WINDOWS INCLUDING ELIMINATION OF THE EXISTING DOOR

Since visibility from the public way is a primary concern with any alteration in the District, it's my opinion the proposed window replacement and door removal will have no substantive impact on the architectural character of the residence as seen from the public way. The combination of solid fencing 6 feet tall and heavy foliage make the interior side and rear yard elevations virtually invisible from vehicular or pedestrian traffic on Denton Way or Glenn Street.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert E. Anderson
Architect

CA Registration No. C-8731
NCARB No. 47172