

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
**POLICY STATEMENT ON WINDOW AND DOOR REPLACEMENTS**

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CITY OF NEWPORT

DEPARTMENT OF ZONING AND INSPECTIONS

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Newport, Rhode Island

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By motion of the Historic District Commission at their April 20, 2021 meeting, the following design guidelines and standards were adopted concerning window and door replacements on properties within Newport's Historic Districts:

Windows and Doors are character-defining features of historic buildings. Historic windows and doors are highly significant elements of the buildings in Newport's historic districts and should be preserved. Historic Newport windows and doors form an important part of the visual experience of the city. Therefore, the Historic District Commission establishes the following standard and statement of policy:

Exhibit A: Example Window Restoration Expert/Assessment Letter

Exhibit B: Example Window Inventory or Window Schedule

1. Wherever possible, historic windows should be repaired rather than replaced (Newport City Ordinance 17.80.060.A.5). No original windows or doors shall be replaced unless it can be documented by an accepted door or window expert that they are beyond reasonable repair. Expert letter must be provided on letterhead and signed and should be accompanied with a 'Window Inventory' or 'Window Schedule' (examples included in Exhibit A and B - attached).

2. When windows must be replaced due to deterioration, the following guidelines shall be adhered to:

a. For Contributing Buildings

- If the windows to be replaced are original (or considered to have 'historic value') they shall be replaced in kind. Construction methods and materials should match the quality and material of the original window. (Example: if replacement is necessary and approved, original wood windows should be replaced with all-wood replacement windows, then finished to match the original.)
- If the windows to be replaced are determined to be replacement windows themselves, the applicant is encouraged (but not required) to consider the most historically accurate material, typically an all-wood window. Composite or clad windows are acceptable. No vinyl clad.
- Structure of windowpanes (e.g. 12 over 12; 2 over 1; etc.) is extremely important and shall be selected to be most historically accurate based on existing windows, in historic photos or as determined by the Preservation Planner. Double pane insulated glazing with simulated divided lights is acceptable in replacing true divided light windows. All simulated divided lights shall contain spacer bars between the glazing.

- Muntins and muntin profiles are also extremely important and shall be selected to be most historically accurate based on existing windows in historic photos or as determined by the Preservation Planner. Muntins must be on the exterior of the windowpanes (proud). Replacements of original true divided light windows should have exterior 'putty profile.'

b. For Non-Contributing Buildings

- If the windows to be replaced are original, the applicant is encouraged (but not required) to replace them in kind. (Example: if replacement is necessary and approved, original wood windows are best if replaced with all-wood replacement windows, then finished to match the original.) Composite or clad windows are acceptable. No vinyl clad.
- If the windows to be replaced are determined to be replacement windows themselves, the applicant is encouraged (but not required) to consider the most historically accurate material, typically an all-wood window. Composite windows are acceptable. No vinyl clad.
- Structure of windowpanes (e.g. 12 over 12; 2 over 1; etc.) is important and should be selected to be most historically accurate based on existing windows or in historic photos. Double pane insulated glazing with simulated divided lights is acceptable in replacing true divided light windows. All simulated divided lights shall contain spacer bars between the glazing.
- Muntins and muntin profiles are important and should be selected to be most historically accurate based on existing windows or in historic photos. Muntins must be on the exterior of the windowpanes (proud). Replacements of original true divided light windows should have exterior 'putty profile.'

3. When doors must be replaced due to deterioration, the following guidelines shall be adhered to:

a. For Contributing Buildings

- When doors (including garage doors) must be replaced due to deterioration, they shall all (front, side and back) be replaced in kind. Construction methods should match the quality and material of the original door. (Example: if replacement is necessary and approved, original doors should be replaced with all-wood replacement doors, then finished to match the original.)

b. For Non-Contributing Buildings

- When front and front facing doors (including front facing garage doors) must be replaced due to deterioration, they shall be replaced in kind. Construction methods should match the quality and material of the original door. Steel, fiberglass, composite doors or garage doors may be acceptable for side or back of house entrances

4. In NO cases are fiberglass or vinyl windows acceptable within the historic district.

5. In NO cases are steel, fiberglass, composite or plastic doors or garage doors acceptable as a front (or front facing) door within the historic district. Steel, aluminum clad, fiberglass, composite doors, sliding glass or garage doors may be acceptable for side or back of house entrances of non-contributing buildings. Sliding glass doors may be acceptable on the back side of a contributing building.

6. Window and Door cut sheets should be provided as part of the application.

7. Exact Window and Door samples should be brought to the meeting.

The above criteria are intended as general guidelines to give property owners, architects, builders and others involved in presenting window and door replacements to the Historic District Commission general awareness of the Commission's expectations, samples and level of detail. Additional guidance may be found in the Standards and Guidelines for the Newport Local Historic District, (Revised 4.2016)

APPROVED BY RESOLUTION:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Historic District Commission

4/20/2021  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Exhibit A – Example Window Restoration Expert Letter

# WINDOW ASSESSMENT

[Should be on Window Expert Company Letterhead]

3/4/21

ASSESSMENT OF: [Property Address], Newport, RI

WINDOW CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT – [Property Address], NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

This Proposal is based on the observations, discussions, and notes, completed on March 3, 2021. [Window Expert] was able to assess and operate each opening on the house.

## OBSERVATIONS

The house has 13 double hung windows, weight and pulley window units, and one fixed window with a close in transom above. The windows are original to the building, with a stamp on the windows from *H.A. Grimwood and Co. Wesminister St, Providence R.I.*, a popular milling and lumber company at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



The exterior of the house has been heavily modified, where the aluminum siding definitely removed parts of the window frame (horns), and potentially some of the window trim and other house details. The storm windows are in poor condition.

The glazing is failing and the paint is chipping, peeling, and flaking. Much of the glass was no longer properly bedded, rattling inside the sash. The window trough was overly painted, peeling, alligatoring, and chalking.



Missing window sill horn

The sash's interior was a pleasant surprise. While the interior is gutted and there is quite a bit of accumulated dust, the windows operated flawlessly. Many of the windows remain a natural finish (SEE image right) without much, if any, friction from overpaint and the few that were painted (3 in kitchen, and 1 in bathroom) didn't have much paint but the paint was failing pretty bad. Many of the muntins and rails were worn from sun and condensation damage(SEE image below).



Kitchen Painted Window

While the sashes did want to operate, some were missing ropes or had debris preventing their operation. Sashes were also missing locks and pulls. There was not much physical damage to the sashes. The fixed window and transom were covered and could not be assessed.



Natural Window

These window units offer a challenge to the Owner based on the fact that the exterior has been severely modified while much of the interior remains largely original and untouched. These units can and do function, but the exterior sash condition and casing modifications will require considerable repairs.

If you have any questions or comments on this Assessment, please feel free to let us know.

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Window Expert Signature, Title and Date

## Exhibit B – Example Window Inventory or Window Schedule

See separate Document as an example of a comprehensive Window Inventory done for property at 21 Sherman Street, Newport, Rhode Island.

Note: This example is not the same property referenced in Exhibit A