APPEAL OF HPC DECISION DENYING REQUEST FOR PERMIT TO REPLACE IN-SWING WINDOWS AT 1621 SUMMIT AVENUE (FROM THE HPC JULY 24, 2014 MEETING)

Date: August 7, 2014

We, the homeowners of 1621 Summit Ave, request that the City Council allow a permit to be issued for the replacement of 9 pairs of in-swing casement windows with out-swing casement windows.

We disagree with the following findings presented in the HPC staff report:
4. We do not believe the in-swing capability is a distinctive architectural feature of the property. They are located behind non-conforming aluminum storm windows and open into the interior of the home. When opened, they are not visible to passersby. When closed, they are obscured by the storm windows. The in-swing design and functionality make these an interior feature of the home, which places them outside of the HPC's jurisdiction.

7. We are not altering the relationship between the window openings and windows. The replacement windows would be custom ordered to be the same size as the in-swing casements. They would sit in the same plane that is currently occupied by the non-conforming storm windows. From the exterior of the home, this would be an aesthetic improvement. This opinion was supported in an unsolicited letter submitted by the Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association presented at the HPC hearing that stated:

"1621 Summit: SARPA is not convinced that outward opening casement windows are appropriate for this house. However, we feel that the removal of the non-original storms (along with the retention of the transoms) is an extremely positive alteration. We believe the removal of the storms is the most important factor, and would not oppose outward-swinging casements in that case."

10. Replacing these windows will not have an adverse impact on the Program for Preservation and architectural control of the Summit Avenue West Heritage Preservation District. Due to the way these 18 windows open inwards into our home, we consider them to be an interior feature. Our hope is to make them an exterior feature, and to do so in a manner that is mindful and respectful of the exterior design and style of our home.

In addition to the architectural arguments we have against the HPC findings, we also wish to replace these windows due to concerns with:

1) Safety – the in-swing feature is a danger to children. We've had pinched fingers and bruised and cut foreheads from kids running into the windows and the wind blowing the windows open unexpectedly. We currently cannot open the windows when children are home. We have two young boys and are expecting our third to arrive this winter. This sunshine-filled room is our children's favorite and they both spend a large portion of their day playing in there. These windows affect us every day.
2) Security – the in-swing feature makes it difficult to place window coverings over the windows (an uncomfortable situation on the primary floor of a home facing a street with considerable foot and vehicle traffic and directly across the street from two college dormitories). It also is less secure to intruders than windows that can be partially opened. If our in-swing window is open, it leaves a 2' x 3' gap covered only by a screen – again on the primary elevation of our home.
3) Energy Efficiency – Our current windows (there are 9 pairs in this one room) are extremely cold in the winter and hot in the summer. We are trying to lead an environmentally conscious lifestyle and our first major project four years ago was investing in a geothermal heating and cooling system

throughout the home. There is no doubt that these windows diminish the savings we should be seeing and are increasing our energy usage unnecessarily. In addition, due to the safety and security issues I have previously mentioned, we rarely open these windows to bring in fresh air – which is something we would like to do. We have put significant time and effort into creating a replacement plan for these windows which will help us minimize our energy usage while being respectful of our home's design.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our situation and desire to improve our home,

Wendy Caucutt George Caucutt

Wendy & George Caucutt
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Attachments:
6 Photos
Design Review Application
Plan Drawing
HPC Staff Report
HPC Decision