

**HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION REPORT**  
Certificate of Appropriateness- Downtown Commercial Historic District.  
Section 115-320(d)(2)

**TO:** Heritage Preservation Commission  
**FROM:** Planning Staff  
**MEETING DATE:** July 20, 2017

**PROPOSAL:** The applicant is proposing to fill in one (1) existing window opening on the north facade facing State Bank's surface parking lot.

**PROPERTY OWNER:**

Lynne Germanson  
Crescent Jewelers  
429 Main Street  
La Crosse, WI 54601

**APPLICANT:**

Ervin Horman  
Horman Builders, Inc  
526 11<sup>th</sup> Ave North  
Onalaska, WI 54650

**BACKGROUND:** The Downtown Commercial Historic District was established by Ordinance in April 2016 along with design standards that are specific to the styles of architecture found within. The local district designation of the Downtown Commercial Historic District was created to encourage preservation of the historic resources of the district, which was named to the National Register of Historic Places in 1994. The design standards and review procedures are used to guide preservation, rehabilitation, new construction, relocation and demolitions. Plans or requests must be approved by the Heritage Preservation Commission prior to any building/demolition permit being issued. In determining whether to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition, the HPC shall:

1. Consider factors such as whether the structure is of historical significance, the state of repair of the building, and whether denial of a permit would create a significant economic hardship for the owner.
2. Issue the certificate only if the owner can demonstrate that the building is structurally unsound and/or that denial of a demolition permit would create a significant economic hardship for the owner.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The applicant was issued an Order to Correct from the Fire Prevention and Building Safety Department in December 2016 that included 1 window opening that was filled in with non-permitted siding materials. The applicant would like to replace the non-permitted material with brick and not install a window. Currently there are four (window) openings, three (3) of which are already filled in with brick and one (1) filled in with plywood. The applicant would like to match the other three openings. Additionally, the applicant has cited

security issues/concerns with installing a window as this is located in the back of the building and their workshop where they make and repair watches and jewelry is on the interior.



SEE ATTACHED OTC AND APPLICATIONS FOR MORE INFORMATION.

## **ANALYSIS:**

Design standards for windows are:

### *Windows .*

1. Original window openings shall be retained. Street facing facade window openings shall be filled in with a window consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. They shall not be filled in with wood, brick, or any other materials. Window openings on street viewable, side and rear facades may be filled in with any other permitted siding materials only if approved by the Heritage Preservation Commission.

2. Retain all decorative trim around windows, including lintels, pediments and hoods. If replacement of trim is necessary, maintain the appearance of the original material.
3. New window openings shall not be added on the primary façade without the approval of the HPC.
4. If replacement windows are required, wood windows are preferred. (If metal is chosen, it should have a baked enamel or other appropriate factory finish) Metal-clad and/or vinyl-clad windows may be considered for upper level windows or rear façade windows, with the approval of the HPC.
5. Sash shall be replaced with the same size and number of panes as the original sash. New sash, if required, shall match the original style and not the most recent. Replacement of double-hung windows with single panes of glass or crank-out windows is not permitted.
6. The HPC may require samples or examples of replacement windows to determine whether a request other than the original or period type is an appropriate replacement

Replacing the window openings with anything other than a window is not consistent with the Downtown Design Standards or the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

#### **FINDING**

Filling in the window opening is not typically in keeping with the historic character of a historic building. However, while this façade is visible from State Street, it is located on the rear of the building and a building may be constructed on the adjacent surface lot in the future that would likely screen it. Additionally, the other window openings are already bricked in. Staff also recognizes the nature of the business and the safety and security concerns of the items that are stored within this area of the building.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION BY STAFF:**

This Certificate of Appropriateness for the one (1) window on the north facing (rear) façade is recommended for approval with the condition that it be filled in with brick that is appropriate to the brick size and type on the building.