

CONTACT INFORMATION:

APPLICANT

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PROPERTY OWNER

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Zip Code: _____
Work #: _____
Cell #: _____
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Home: _____
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BILLING ADDRESS

Name: Same
Address: _____
Zip: _____
Work #: _____
Cell #: _____
Fax #: _____
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ARCHITECT

Name: N/A
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Work #: _____
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CONTRACTOR

Name: N/A
Address: _____
Zip Code: _____
Work #: _____
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Kevin Beal
Applicant's Signature

Owner's Signature (if different)

462 Cumberland Avenue
Portland, ME 04101
kbeal@maine.rr.com
(207) 807-3075

March 15, 2016

Historic Preservation Program
Dept. of Planning & Urban Development
Portland City Hall, 4th Floor
389 Congress Street
Portland, ME 04101

Re: 462 Cumberland Avenue

Dear Sir or Madam:

Enclosed please find my application for staff review and historic preservation approval of the following proposed renovations at my home:

1. West Bay Window "Skirt" Enclosure & Improvements;
2. Chimney Restoration;
3. Front Step / Cement Pad Replacement; and
4. Mansard Shingles Replacement.

I also enclose my check in the amount of \$50 to cover the filing fee for this application for staff review.

Thank you for your attention and kind assistance with this application.

Sincerely,



Kevin Beal
Owner / Applicant

Encl.

NARRATIVE: APPLICATION FOR 462 CUMBERLAND AVENUE

The purpose of this application is to propose and obtain approval of a context-sensitive solution for adding structural support to the west bay window at my home at 462 Cumberland Avenue. I offer the following narrative to summarize the need for alteration and to outline my proposed solution. I also seek permission to restore the appearance of the two chimneys, to replace the front steps, and to replace asphalt shingles on the mansard with composite shingles that replicate the slate characteristic of similar, modest homes of this period and style.

1. West Bay & Porch Skirt

The house at 462 Cumberland Avenue is a vernacular interpretation of the Second Empire style, and was built in approximately 1873. Research suggests that 462 Cumberland was constructed contemporaneously with, identical to, and by the same builder as the home of Annetta and Stephen Weatherhead, my neighbors, at 458 Cumberland Avenue. A copy of the 1924 Assessor's photo of 462 Cumberland is attached as Exhibit A. Like many homes of similar style in this era, the house was constructed above-grade, over a full, 8 ft. basement. The upper three feet of the basement walls are above-grade, and are composed of brick over below-grade shale and mortar.

At some point after its construction, a prior owner added four protruding bays at 462 Cumberland, and extended and enclosed the front porch. As a result, there is a bay on each side of the house, containing – with the exception of the rear bay – considerable fenestration. (For ease of reference I refer to these bays as “bay windows.”) The west, north, and east bay windows are trimmed with recessed panels and other architectural elements. The bay windows are not cantilevered, and three of them – the east, north, and west bays - are structurally unsupported, and sag slightly. The rear, or southern, bay window is small, and is adequately supported by plan, 4" x 4" corbels.

Following my purchase of the property in 1997, I retained an engineer to study the structural integrity of the other three bays. The engineer concluded that though the east, north, and west bays sag, they are stable, not worsening, and possibly have been in that condition – sagging below the horizontal plane – since they were added to the home.

When I purchased the house in 1997, the bays each had different treatments. The front, or north bay had a deteriorating, metal skirt stamped to resemble the bricks that comprise the above-grade portion of the foundation. The faux-brick sheathing concealed deteriorated, fallen wood supports for the bay window, and improperly covered part of two, square basement windows.

The east bay had a pair of decorative and attractive, non-structural corbels, recessed from the side edges of the bay. The west bay had a pair of unattractive, poorly-executed copies of the corbels

under the east bay.

In 1998, I conferred with Deb Andrews, who approved the removal of the front bay's metal skirt, and my plan to replicate the east bay corbels under the north and west bays. Pond Cove Millwork designed and produced the new corbels, at considerable expense, and I mounted them as proposed under the north and west bays. I also removed plywood from the basement windows, and arranged for the manufacture and installation of replacement, exterior windows and screens for them, replicating and thus restoring these features within their original frames, which survived.

In 2000, Ms. Andrews approved the replacement of the wood gutters on the house with identical wood gutters available at Deering Rufus lumber. Will Cheever, of Yankee Restoration, replaced the front gutter, which was rotten, in 2000, and the remaining wood gutters in 2011. At that time, Mr. Cheever felt it was necessary to jack up the west bay, to assure the functionality of the wood gutter on that side of the house. The west bay is taller, wider, and shallower than the other three, and was incorporated into the gutter system, with the gutter continuing from the house onto and around the bay. However, the sag of the west bay undermined the gutter, and caused leaks into west bay, occasionally damaging the ceiling plaster and paint in the west bay, which forms part of the formal dining room. To rectify this problem, Mr. Cheever jacked up the west bay to plane, and removed the decorative corbels. Today, the west bay remains supported by jacks that Mr. Cheever placed under the bay at that time.

At this point, I seek an appropriate solution for adequately supporting the west bay, and incorporating that bay window support system into what I call the "skirt" below the adjacent, extended, enclosed front porch.

When the bays were added and the porch extended and enclosed, they were decorated with a series of recessed, horizontal panels along their bottom edges. From the 1924 Assessor's photo, it appears that the skirt of the enclosed porch was comprised of comparable, recessed vertical panels. As of my purchase of the house in 1997, these vertical panels in the porch skirt had been replaced with vertical slats, or laths, measuring 2 ¼ inches wide at 1 inch intervals, banded along the base with a plain, 7 ½ inch wide board. Some of these laths have an internal frame, to form a door that allows access and storage under the porch. A series of photos, attached together as Exhibit B, show that skirting, and the jacks temporarily supporting the west bay.

I propose to use the same approach under the west bay. My preference would be to restore the corbels; however, they are non-structural, and I must use posts at the outer corners of the bay to adequately support it. (Cantilevering the bay, from the interior basement, seems impracticable.) Therefore, it seems to make the most sense to trim out corner posts with vertical recessed panels modeled on the existing panel system, and to use vertical laths to enclose the area under the west bay,

similar to the porch. My sketch of this proposal is attached as Exhibit C. Enclosing the area under the west bay will continue the architectural themes of the porch skirting, and provide additional storage, though at the cost of making the decorative corbels unnecessary, and reducing light to the basement from the basement window under the west bay. I am, of course, open to other appropriate, cost-effective solutions as well.

In addition, I propose to replace flat vertical surfaces that frame the projected architectural elements of the porch skirt with recessed vertical panels. *See* Exhibit D. Though the 1924 Assessor's photo shows these areas as unadorned, replacing them with recessed vertical panels will bring back the vertical panel system that originally comprised the entirety of the porch skirt, while retaining the current, useful, and not unattractive lath skirt under much of the porch, that I propose to replicate under the west bay. To my mind, the use of six recessed vertical panels in the porch skirt as shown in the 1924 Assessor's photo – which were not an original architectural feature of the home – was excessive, and heavy handed, and detracted from the visual effect of the considerable fenestration, horizontal recessed panels, and trim that adorn the enclosed porch and bay windows above. So, I propose to use recessed panels only under the protruding, structural elements of the porch and the porch skirt.

2. Chimney Restoration

My house has two chimneys, each containing at least two flues. From the 1924 Assessor's photo, it appears that the chimneys have lost their top several courses, and slate caps. I enclose photos of the chimneys as Exhibit E. Happily, most or all of the extant brickwork appears to be original. While this work may not happen this year, I propose to add a minimum of five courses of brick to each (more may be required, upon closer visual inspection): the first, bottom course at the same dimensions of the current chimneys, and the remaining four graduating as shown in the 1924 photo. I also propose to restore the slate caps, in identical fashion to that shown. Of course, it is impossible to state what the measurements of the caps were, but I have conferred with experienced mason – Chris Blum, of Yarmouth – who has visited and believes he can faithfully restore the original appearance of the chimneys. The caps are needed, in particular, to reduce water intrusion, which has caused limited, interior damage to mortar and bricks that will also be repaired. The chimney restoration should allow me to better screen the metal chimney liner that currently protrudes from the north chimney (it vents a fireplace insert). Mortar repair, and limited brick replacements in the existing chimney reveals likely will also be required. Finally, it may also be possible to reduce the extent to which the lower portions of the chimneys previously covered during a roof repair to prevent water intrusion.

3. Front Stairs Replacement & Repairs

The property is accessed via poured concrete steps from Cumberland Avenue. These steps are in deteriorated condition (photos enclosed as Exhibit F), and I have obtained an estimate from Mast Landing Construction to replace them, and replace poured concrete pads along the west side of the house. As Ms. Andrews requested a number of years ago, I plan to replace the front concrete steps with identical but, code-compliant, poured concrete steps. I am not sure if their replacement in kind requires approval; if so, approval is requested as part of this application. At the same time, the contractor will remove and repair the upper, wood stairs, including new wood banisters replicating the existing, which are rotting out. I believe the balusters can be salvaged; if not, they will be replicated as well.

4. Mansard Shingles

At some point, a prior owner re-shingled the mansard with charcoal-colored asphalt shingles. They are deteriorating, and will need replacement within a few years. I cannot determine, from the City's records or the 1924 Assessor's photo, what type of shingles preceded the asphalt shingles. That is, it cannot be stated, categorically, that the house had slate shingles rather than, say, cedar shakes. However, I propose to replace the asphalt shingles with a composite shingle that replicates the appearance of traditional slate shingles, utilizing – if cost permits – a pattern that would distinguish the home from my immediately adjacent neighbors' homes, which are shown in Exhibit G. Perhaps final approval of the type and configuration of the replacement composite shingles could be left to staff's final approval at the time work is commenced.

List of Attachments

- Exhibit A: 1924 Assessor's Photo of 462 Cumberland Avenue
- Exhibit B: Photos of Porch & West Bay Skirting & Pole Jacks
- Exhibit C: Sketch of Proposed West Bay Skirt
- Exhibit D: Sketch of Proposed Porch Skirt Vertical Recessed Panels
- Exhibit E: Photos of North and South Chimneys
- Exhibit F: Photos of Existing Front Steps
- Exhibit G: Photos of Shingle Patterns at 458 and 464 Cumberland Avenue