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Planning Commission Staff Report

Meeting Date: April 18, 2023

Prepared By: Kristen Hunter, Associate Planner

PROJECT INFORMATION SUMMARY

Case File: Site Plan Review (SPR) 23-05 – Historic Review

Request: Consideration of a Site Plan Review application within the Single-family Residential/ Historic District Zone to: modify an existing single-family home to (1) Replace wood windows with vinyl; (2) Paint the exterior façade, trim, gutters, and door; (3) Replace lighting fixtures visible from the public right-of-way; and (4) Find the project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as the project does not comply with the Secretary of Interior Standards and Guidelines.

Summary Recommendation: Staff recommends denial of the requests as proposed.

<u>Property Owner:</u>	Paul Coggiola
<u>Applicant:</u>	Halls Window Center
<u>Agent:</u>	Danelle Giusti
<u>Address:</u>	3176 Cedar Ravine Road
<u>APN:</u>	003-252-004
<u>Lot Area:</u>	0.24 acres
<u>General Plan:</u>	Medium Density Residential (MDR)
<u>Zoning:</u>	Single-Family Residential/Historical (R1-6 / H)
<u>Existing Use:</u>	Vacant Single-Family Dwelling
<u>Environmental Document:</u>	<p>As proposed: Subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as the project does not comply with the Secretary of Interior Standards and Guidelines. Categorical Exemption (Cat. Ex.) pursuant to</p> <p>If denied: CEQA Guidelines §15061(b)(4)</p>

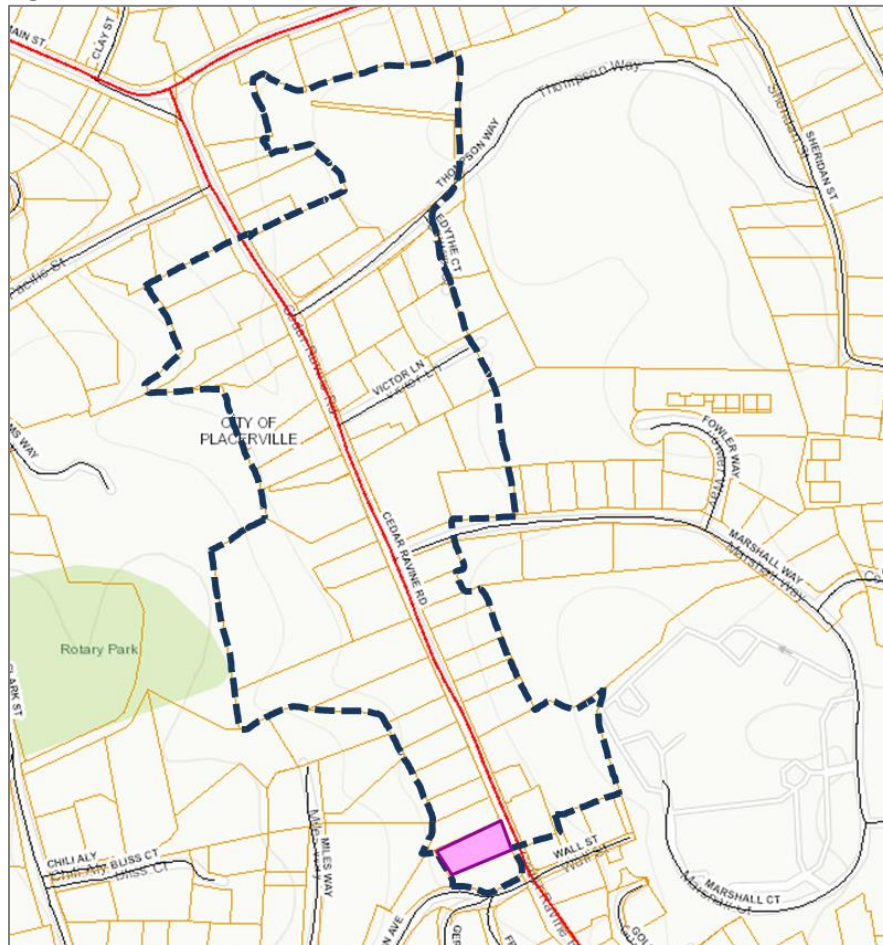
Decision Making Authority: Placerville Zoning Ordinance 10-4-9 (Site Plan Review), and 10-4-10 (Historical Buildings in the City).

BACKGROUND

The site is a 0.24 acre parcel in the area located adjacent to the west side of Cedar Ravine Road, approximately 75 feet north of the intersection of Cedar Ravine Road, Darlington Avenue, and Wall Street (Figure 1). The property is developed with a 958 square foot single-story home. The single-family dwelling was built in 1952, constructed as a ranch style home, and is within the City's Cedar Ravine Historic District (Figure 2). The subject dwelling is not included the City's Historic Resources Inventory, conducted in 1985, or listed in the State Register or the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, the site has no prior Historic District Review applications on record.

Figure 1. Project Location



Figure 2. Location in Cedar Ravine Historic District

The front of the house is oriented towards, and is visible from, Cedar Ravine Road. Of note, access to the property is provided at the rear via Darlington Avenue. The existing wood lap siding is horizontal and painted a red color. The existing windows are wood, and include a combination of single-hung and fixed. Trim elements on the structure are white. A detached garage is located behind the main dwelling and has a similar color scheme.

The subject parcel is located in a residential area comprising a mix of residential zones (R1-6/H, R3, and R1-20), as shown in Figure 1.

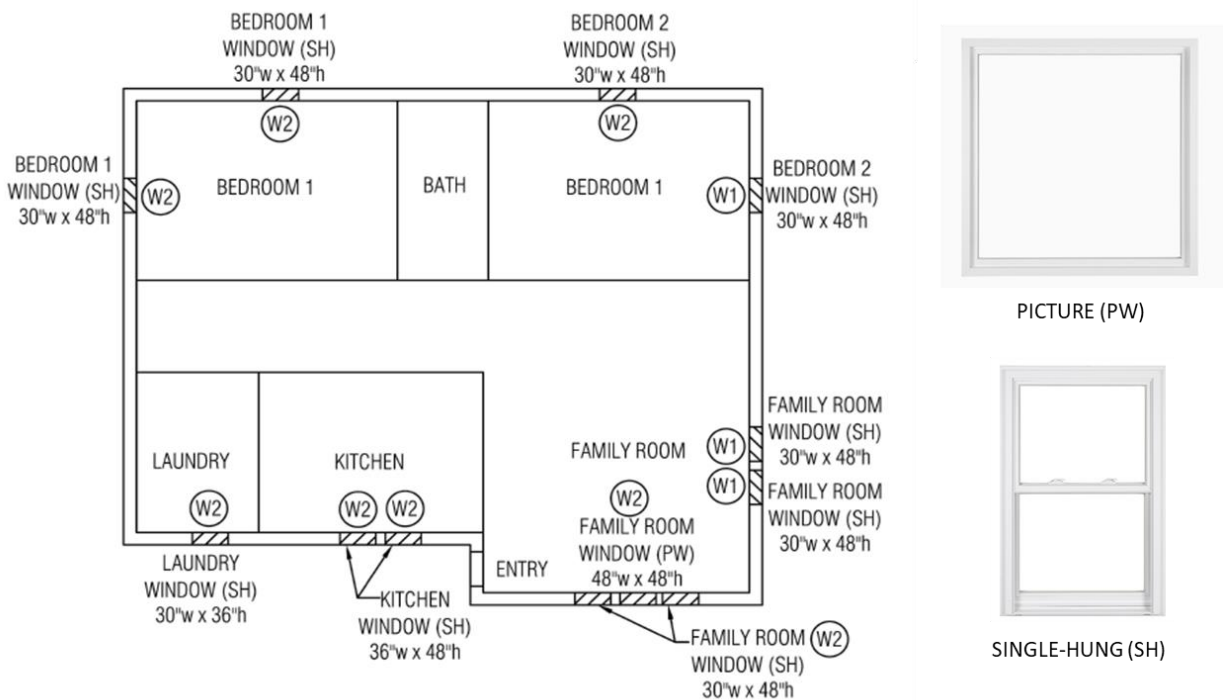
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project includes the removal and replacement of the existing wood windows with new vinyl windows. Figure 3 shows the existing windows, with eleven (11) locations with single-hung wood windows and one (1) fixed/picture wood window. The proposed windows are shown in Figure 4 below, along with the locations on a scaled drawing. The proposed windows are Simonton Madeira single-hung and picture windows.

Figure 3. Existing Windows

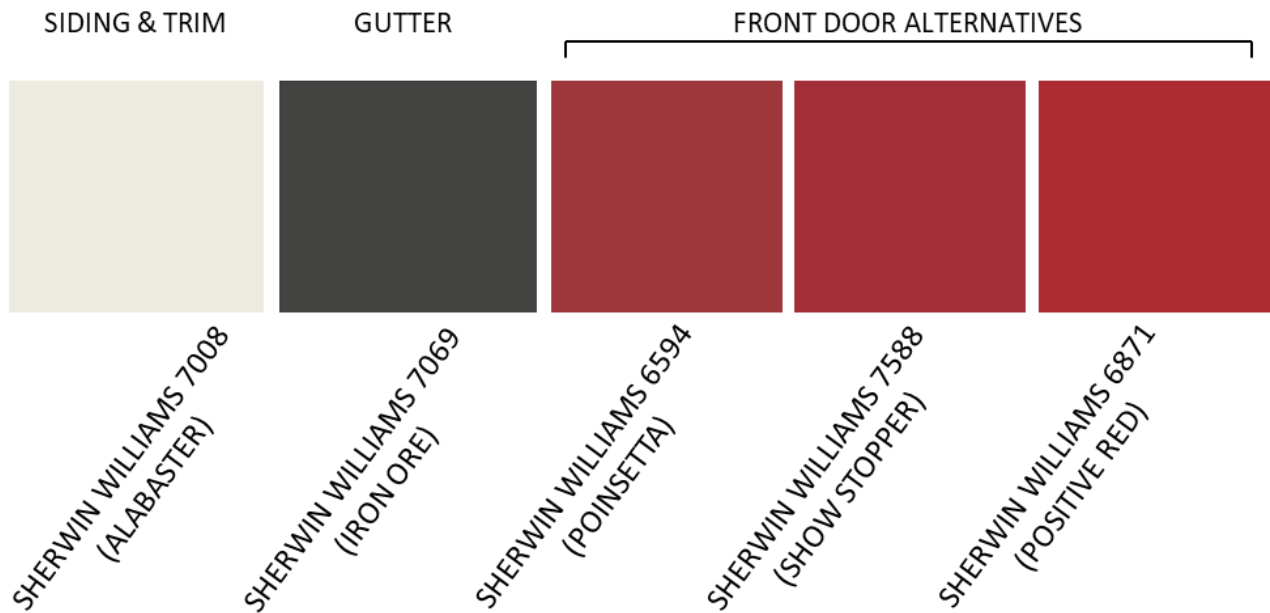


Figure 4. Proposed Windows



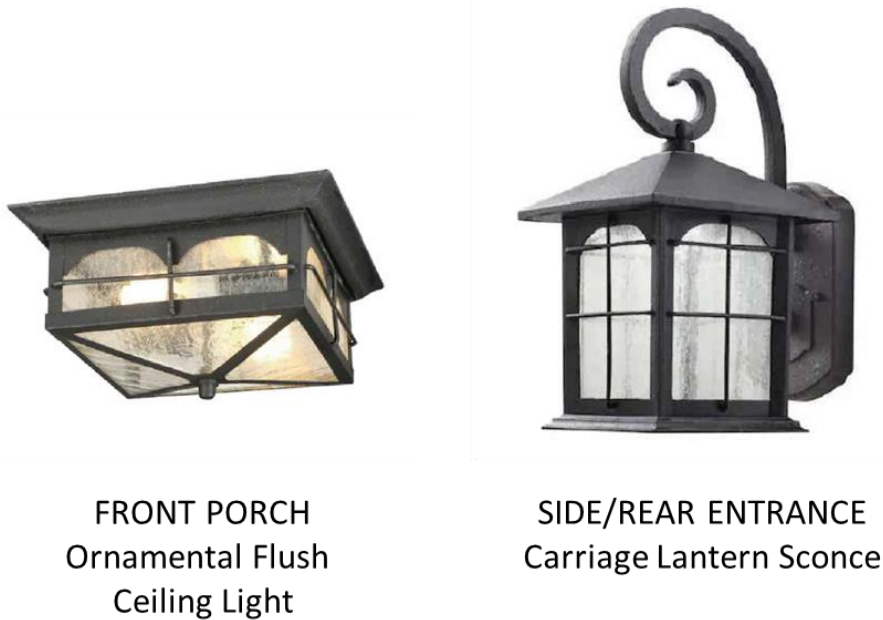
The project also includes the painting of the exterior siding and trim with Sherwin Williams Sherwin Williams 7008 (Alabaster), painting the gutter along the roofline 7069 (Iron Ore), and painting the front door. The applicant submitted three color alternatives, Sherwin Williams 6594 (Poinsettia), Sherwin Williams 7588 (Show Stopper), or Sherwin Williams 6871 (Positive Red). The proposed colors are shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Proposed Color Scheme



New lighting fixtures are proposed for the front and rear of the house. As shown in Figure 6, the fixture proposed for the front of the structure is square with black details. The fixture proposed for the side of the structure (rear entrance) is lantern-style sconce, also with black details.

Figure 6. Proposed Exterior Lighting Fixtures



Additional information is located in Attachment 1 (Applicant Submittal Package) of this Staff Report.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

The following section provides an overview of relevant City of Placerville General Plan Goals, Zoning Ordinance(s), and Development Guide. Staff responses are provided below each italicized Goal, Ordinance, and Guideline.

General Plan Consistency:

Part II – Section VII: Community Design

Goal C: To protect and enhance to the visual quality and neighborhood integrity of residential areas.

- 2. New construction shall be architecturally compatible with the surrounding and/or adjacent neighborhoods. This policy shall be strictly enforced in designated Historic Neighborhoods.*
- 6. The City shall encourage proper maintenance of homes, buildings, and yards to provide the best possible visual quality in each neighborhood.*

The project appears consistent with the Goal C Policy 6, as the proposed project would make improvements to a home to improve the visual character of the home from the street. However the proposed new vinyl windows as analyzed in the following sections are not recommended under the Standards and Guidelines for character defining features and are therefore inconsistent as presented with the historic review criteria under Zoning Ordinance Section 10-4-10(B).

Zoning Classification and Regulation Consistency:

Section 10-4-9: Site Plan Review

Under subsections (C) 6 and (H), exterior alterations of a building located in a Historic District and visible from the street require Planning Commission review and approval prior to undertaking such activity. Further analysis is provided below.

Section 10-4-10: Historical Buildings in the City

Under subsection (B) Historical Criteria, the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (SOI Standards and Guidelines) is the criteria to be used by the Commission in reviewing a Site Plan Review within a City Historic District. Per subsection (F) Construction and Repairs, alterations to the exterior appearance of buildings within Historic Districts, where the alteration architecture is visible from the street, must conform to the historical criteria under subsection (B). Per subsection (H), no construction permit may be issued for an alteration to a building within a Historic District until the plans have been approved the Planning Commission.

Staff has evaluated this request with respect to the compatibility with the modifications with the building and the Historic District. This analysis is provided below.

1. *A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal changes to its distinctive materials, spaces, and spatial relationships.*

The proposed project would not alter the historic use of the home, maintaining the single-family residential use.

2. *The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and special relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*

While not listed in the State or National Register of Historic Places, the parcel falls within the boundaries of the Cedar Ravine Historic District. The single-family home falls within the architectural style of ‘Ranch House,’ a style that debuted in the United States in the 1920s and became the preferred choice for residential design following the end of World War II¹. Ranch style architecture was primarily expressed in the form of single-family houses and rapid postwar suburbanization² and characterizes a time in United States history of economic prosperity and population explosion unequal to any other time in the U.S.

‘Ranch House’ predominately refers to single-story, single-family residence with a rambling foot print, low-pitched roofs, deep set eaves, asymmetric facades, picture windows, and decorative stone or brick³. The project is proposed for a dwelling with numerous ‘Ranch House’ features, including a low-pitched gable roof, deep set eaves, asymmetric façade, decorative stone along the base of the front, picture window, and wrought iron ornamental fencing.

The SOI Standards and Guidelines state that *“the character of a historic building may be defined by the form and detailing of exterior materials, such as masonry, wood, and metal; exterior features, such as roofs, porches, and windows.”* As previously mentioned, development of the parcel occurred in the early 1950s and the windows proposed for replacement look to be original in appearance; however, the proposed windows are vinyl as opposed to wood. Character-defining windows of this style of house were meant to provide ample natural light for the interior.

¹ Period of significance for Ranch House style architecture was between 1945-1975.

² The Ranch House is the most prolific residential housing type in the United States ([National Center for Preservation and Technology and Training \(NCPTT\). 2015. Identifying the 1950s Ranch House Interior as a Cultural Resource. Posted by Mary Striegel.](#))

³ [Los Angeles Historic Resource Survey. 2015. Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement. Prepared for City of Los Angeles.](#)

The dwelling is approximately 71 years of age and appears to maintain distinctive features of the 'Ranch House' style. It should be noted that, while the Historic Districts within the City were established in the 1980s with a goal to focus primarily on structures built pre-1930s, the overall purpose of the district is to protect, enhance, and perpetuate historic-type architecture which includes a wide range of styles and time periods. All parcels within the Historic District are subject to comply with Zoning Ordinance Section 10-4-10.

It is Staff's opinion that replacement of the existing windows with vinyl is inconsistent with actions recommended by the SOI Standards and Guidelines and reduces the historic integrity of the building, becoming less historic. The SOI Standards and Guidelines recommend that historic windows should be repaired when possible and, when too deteriorated to repair, replaced with windows meeting Standard 6, where the replacement windows shall match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials (wood for wood).

Staff has included as Attachment 3 and 4 of this Staff Report information on vinyl versus wood windows.

The Planning Commission has the authority to make its own determination regarding the building's visual character and consistency of proposed work with City goals, policies, criteria, and regulations.

3. *Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.*

The proposed lighting fixtures are contemporary in nature and would replace similar contemporary fixtures. The proposed exterior lighting fixtures to be added to the front and side of the existing single-family dwelling are shown in Figure 6 and the existing below in Figure 7. The fixture proposed for the front would have a low profile and would have limited visibility from the Cedar Ravine Road. The fixture proposed for the side of the structure is a lantern style sconce that is similar to other structures located within the historic district.

Figure 7. Existing Lighting Fixtures



EXISTING SIDE
EXTERIOR LIGHTING

EXISTING FRONT
EXTERIOR LIGHTING

4. *Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.*

As described under Standard 2, it is Staff's opinion that replacement of the existing windows with vinyl is inconsistent with actions recommended by the SOI Standards and Guidelines and would result in a change in the historic character of the house.

5. *Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*

As described under Standard 2, it is Staff's opinion that replacement of the existing windows with vinyl is inconsistent with actions recommended by the SOI Standards and Guidelines and would result in a change in the historic character of the house.

6. *Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*

The existing windows are single pane and wood framed. Per the property owner, a majority of the windows do not seal properly. Additionally, some of the windows have either broken or cracked glass and others are crooked.

The proposed project would not repair the existing windows or replace the windows with matching design, color, texture and materials.

7. *Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.*

Chemical and/or physical treatments to the building's exterior include painting of the exterior siding, trim, gutters, and front door (Figure 5). This treatment would not cause harm to historic materials.

8. *Archaeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.*

There are no known archaeological resources associated with the site.

9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*

The proposed project does not include new additions or new construction on the subject parcel. All work would occur on the primary dwelling.

10. *New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment will be unimpaired.*

No external additions are proposed as part of the project. All work proposed would occur on the primary dwelling. As previously described, it is Staff's opinion that replacement of the existing windows with vinyl is inconsistent with actions recommended by the SOI Standards and Guidelines and would result in a change in the historic character of the house.

Placerville Development Guide Consistency:

Section IV. Architectural Design Guidelines

C. Design Factors

3. *Façade Treatments and Exterior Elements*
- e. *Building facades adjacent to the right-of-way must demonstrate a pedestrian orientation, with a well-defined entry, windows, decorative elements, and appropriate ornamentation regardless of zoning classifications.*

As previously discussed, it is Staff's opinion that replacement of the existing windows with vinyl is inconsistent with actions recommended by the SOI Standards and Guidelines and would result in a change in the historic character of the house.

It is Staff's opinion that the proposed exterior lighting fixture for the front porch would not detract from the historic character of the house. The fixture proposed for the side of the structure is a lantern style sconce that is similar to other structures located within the historic district. It is Staff's opinion that the style is more closely related to that found on Victorian style homes in the vicinity. However, the proposed fixture would replace a similar contemporary fixture. Both proposed locations are visible from the public right of way. However, the lantern would stand out against the proposed white exterior. Staff recommends the property owner consider a less ornamental lantern sconce.

Staff would note that the Planning Commission has the authority to make its own determination regarding the building's visual character and consistency of proposed work with City goals, policies, criteria, and regulations.

5. Color Selections

- a. *Color schemes should be relatively simple. Use of a single base color for a building is preferred. Use of only one or two major accent colors is encouraged, except where precedent has been set for using more than two colors as in some architectural styles. The complexity of the accent color scheme should be appropriate to the architectural style and period of the building.*
- b. *Color schemes should be developed that coordinate and unify all façade and roofline elements such as signs, ornamentation, vents, chimneys, gutters, downspouts, cornices, awnings, windows, entrances, etc.*

As proposed, there is one base color for the exterior of the structure (Sherwin Williams 7008 – Alabaster), including siding and trim. A secondary color is proposed for the gutter (Sherwin Williams 7069 – Iron Ore) to blend with the roofline, as shown in Figure 5. The property owner has also provided three (3) color alternatives for the front door which is visible from the public right of way. These colors are Sherwin Williams 6594 (Poinsettia), Sherwin Williams 7588 (Show Stopper), or Sherwin Williams 6871 (Positive Red). It is Staff's opinion that the proposed exterior paint colors would visually enhance the structure.

Environmental Review: City Staff has determined that the project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as a categorical exemption “*shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.*” The project as described would replace the original wood windows with vinyl. The SOI Standards and Guidelines recommend that historic windows should be repaired when possible and, when too deteriorated to repair, replaced with windows meeting Standard 6, where the replacement

windows shall match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials (wood for wood). Should Planning Commission request the project move forward, Staff finds that an environmental analysis of the impact to the historic resource would be required.

If the Planning Commission denies the request, per Staff Recommendation, the project would be found exempt from CEQA per CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(4).

RECOMMENDED PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

Staff is recommending denial of the request as the proposed modifications to the windows is not recommended under the SOI Standards and Guidelines, is inconsistent with the goals and policies within Zoning Ordinance Section 10-4-10, and are inconsistent with the guidelines within the Development Guide for structures within Historic Districts. Staff recommends the Commission take the following action to disapprove the request to replace the existing wood windows with vinyl, to install new exterior lighting, and to paint the exterior as submitted:

- I. The Planning Commission finds as follows in accordance with its authority granted to it under Placerville Zoning Ordinance Sections 10-3-1 (C), 10-4-9 (C), and 10-4-10 (H):
 1. An application has been received from Paul Coggiola (applicant and property owner) for consideration of Site Plan Review 23-05, requesting approval to replace the existing wood windows with vinyl, paint the exterior, and add new lighting fixtures to the existing single-storied single-family residence located at 3176 Cedar Ravine Road (APN 003-252-004), in the R-1, 6,000 Single-Family Residential Zone (R1-6), and within the Cedar Ravine Historic District; and
 2. A staff report for the Site Plan Review 23-05 request was prepared and considered by the Planning Commission prior to its decision regarding the request; and
 3. Character defining features visible from the street of the subject residence located at 3176 Cedar Ravine Road are its low-pitched gable roof, its deep set eaves, its asymmetric façade, its decorative stone along the base of the front, original wood windows including the picture window, and its wrought iron ornamental fencing; and
 4. The proposed window changes are not replacements in kind of the existing window material. The request is therefore inconsistent with the City's Historical Criteria, the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (Zoning Ordinance Section 10-4-10(B)). The request does not meet Zoning Ordinance Section 10-4-10(F) that requires conformance with the Historical Criteria; and
 5. The proposed modification to the windows is inconsistent with Goal C, Policy C-6, Goal I and Policy I of the Community Design Element of the General Plan, and Guideline IV.C3b of the Development Guide, as this work does not maintain or restore character defining features of the home; and

6. A project that is disapproved is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15061(b)(4) of the California Environmental Quality Act.

Based on the findings, and information in the public record (Applicant Submittal Package and Staff Report dated April 18, 2023) the Planning Commission disapproves Site Plan Review 23-05, involving proposed modifications to the windows, exterior color scheme, and exterior lighting fixtures of the existing single-family dwelling (structure) located at 3176 Cedar Ravine Road, APN: 003-252-004, within the Cedar Ravine Historic Residential District.

ATTACHMENT

[Applicant Submittal Package](#)

[Applicant Letter to Planning Commission \(April 12, 2023\)](#)

[Wood or Vinyl Window Comparison Guide: Pros, Cons, and Costs](#)

[The Spruce: Vinyl vs Wood Windows: Compare and Contrast](#)