

<b>COA #</b> <b>2014-COA-059</b> <b>(ONS)</b>	<b>INDIANAPOLIS HISTORIC PRESERVATION</b> <b>COMMISSION</b> <b>STAFF REPORT</b>	Hearing Date <b>APRIL 2, 2014</b>
<b>231 E. 16<sup>th</sup> STREET</b> <b>OLD NORTHSIDE</b>		New Case   Center Twp. Council District 9 Joseph Simpson
<b>Applicant</b> <b>WILLIAM W. BROWN</b> mailing address: 1528 N. Alabama Street Indianapolis, IN 46202		
<b>Owner: SAME AS ABOVE</b>		
<b>CASE</b>		
<b>IHPC COA: 2014-COA-059 (ONS)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove existing transom windows; install new windows in multiple sections</li> <li>• Install beam above storefront windows and below transom windows</li> <li>• Install new frames around storefront windows</li> <li>• Remove existing bulkheads; install bulkheads made of Azek trim and fiber-cement panels</li> </ul>	
<b>STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of a Certificate of Authorization</b>		

**STAFF COMMENTS**

**Background of the Property**

This commercial building was constructed in 1897 by Augustine Kiefer, who also built the Victorian building at 1538 N. Alabama Street. Various tenants occupied the building, including a doctor’s office, laundry, a restaurant, and stores. This portion of the building is now occupied entirely by a bar. It is a traditional storefront building. There are four recessed entries, with each storefront bay divided by a brick pier. There are large plate glass and wooden bulkhead storefront systems. The transoms are set flush above each storefront bay, and these range from 9-11 lights. Above the storefronts is an iron beam with decorative rosettes. The building was entirely rehabbed in 1985, at which time the storefronts were uncovered. It is believed that the transoms may be original, storefront window frames and bulkhead panels were probably built rebuilt to mimic what was existing.

There is a smaller building attached to the west side of the historic storefront strip. This building was constructed between 1916 and 1927. At some point, wood lap siding was added to the west façade, likely after the neighboring building was torn down between 1962 and 1972. The rest of the building is masonry and has replacement storefronts.

**Storefront modification**

***Transoms***

The owner wishes to rebuild the transoms over four storefront bays because there are structural deficiencies with the way they are presently built. The transom over each bay is built as one unit and rests on a 2 x 4 wood beam, which is meant to carry the weight. However, the beams were installed horizontally and are not sufficient to carry the weight. Over time they have flexed and the weight is being transferred to the storefront window frames below. This is causing serious problems such as gaps developing between the frame and the plate glass windows below.



The solution being proposed is to remove the four large transom window units and replace the deficient beam with a new wood beam made of two 2 x 4s laid vertically, which would have significantly more strength. New molding would cover the wider beam. In order to accommodate the wider beam, slightly shorter transom windows would be built and installed above the new beam. They will be built to look very similar to what is there today, but in multiple sections rather than one large piece. New wood frames would be installed for the large plate glass storefront windows below the transoms.

Staff explored several other courses of action for the storefront and transom systems, including shoring up the area underneath by modifying the storefront windows themselves with a muntin bar. However, this alternative requires the owner to replace the plate glass which he wants to avoid due to cost.

Based on the limited options that are available to deal with this unique issue, staff feels that the proposal deals acceptably with the structural deficiencies while attempting to match the current configuration as best as possible.

### ***Base Panel Bulkheads***

Under each plate glass storefront window is a simple wood and plywood bulkhead panel probably constructed in 1985. The owner experiences a lot of rot along the bulkheads due to vehicle splash up during rain and snow piling up after 16<sup>th</sup> St. is plowed during the winter. The contractor is proposing to replace the existing bulkheads with new bulkheads that duplicate the dimensions and trim profile of the existing bulkheads. However, due to the unavoidable problems with water and snow, he is proposing to build them out of Azek trim and fiber cement panels.

The mock-up supplied to staff lacks the trimwork found on the existing bulkheads, and staff will need to see a panel once installed to make certain that the work has a finished appearance and appropriate moldings. The trim looks very much like wood, with the same finish and feel. Staff's biggest concern lies with the finish on the fiber-cement. It is rough-textured, and unless a smoother product is available, will need to be treated with a smoothing agent such as an elastomeric compound to smooth out the rough texture.

### **Fiber cement lap siding**

The applicant would like to install smooth-finish fiber-cement siding on the west wall of westernmost building. There is wood siding there now, and it regularly experiences rot and paint failure.

Staff supports this request because the existing siding was added to cover up damage caused to the wall when the neighboring building was demolished. It is not original to the building, and will have little to no visual impact.

### **Old Northside Area Preservation Plan**

The Old Northside Plan provides some guidance for reviewing this project:

- *Respect “the stylistic period or periods a building represents. If replacement of window sash or doors is necessary, the replacement should duplicate the material, design, and the hardware of the original window sash or door.”*
- *Avoid resurfacing “with new material which was unavailable when the building was constructed such as artificial stone, brick veneer, asbestos or asphalt shingles, plastic or aluminum siding.”*

### **Certificate of Authorization – Justification for Approval**

The State statute states: “... *the commission shall issue a certificate of authorization...*” if finds one of the following to be the case:

**A request is inappropriate, but its denial would deprive the owner of all reasonable use and benefit of the property.**

There is no evidence supporting this conclusion.

**A request is inappropriate, but its denial would result in substantial hardship.**

Although the owner has not claimed “hardship,” staff does find that denial of at least a portion of this request would constitute a legitimate hardship. Specifically, denial of the use of substitute materials for new bulkheads would, in this case, force the owner to use a material that has proven to be short-lived because of circumstances beyond his control (water, snow and salt from 16<sup>th</sup> St.)

**The effect of approval upon the historic area would be insubstantial.**

Staff believes this is the major justification for granting this certificate of authorization.

1. Changing the size of the transoms will have an effect, but the transoms are large enough that this should be limited.
2. This is a change to address the overall structural problems associated with the way the storefronts were constructed.
3. Rebuilding to reflect what is there, but in a different manner is consistent with the existing appearance.
4. Using an alternative material to replace the rebuilt bulkheads where they repeatedly experience rot due water damage is acceptable as long as the finished appearance mimics existing conditions and finishes.
5. Using new lap siding to replace the existing lap siding on the western building will not change the appearance.

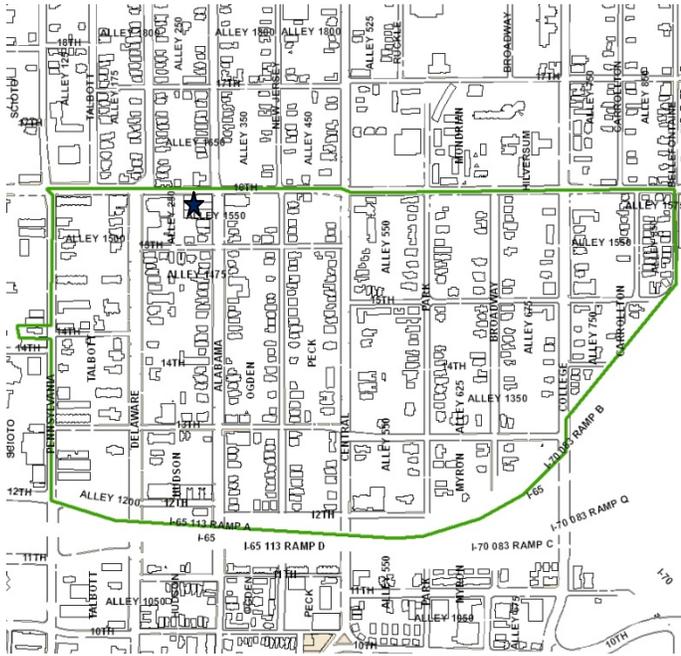
**STAFF RECOMMENDED MOTION**

**2014-COA-059 (ONS):**

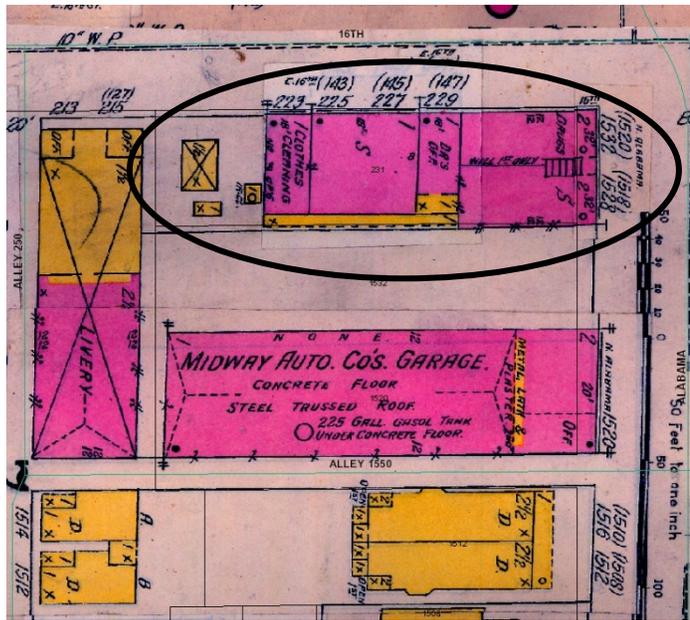
- **To approve a Certificate of Authorization to remove existing transom windows; install new windows in multiple sections; install beam above storefront windows and below transom windows; install new frames around storefront window; remove existing bulkheads; install bulkheads made of Azek trim and fiber-cement panels per the submitted documentation and subject to the following stipulations:**
  1. **IHPC staff shall sign off on bulkhead and storefront window frame after first unit has been installed. *Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_***
  2. **Glass shall be clear; any addition of beveling, frosting, etching, coming, or stained glass is NOT permitted under this approval.**
  3. **All new, repaired, and/or rebuilt elements shall replicate the documented historic appearance of the windows per IHPC photographs.**
  4. **New materials shall have a smooth finish and contain minimal knots or other imperfections. Any knots or surface imperfections shall be filled to achieve a smooth appearance. Rough finishes are not permitted.**
  5. **All exposed finishes shall be stained or primed and painted. Colors shall match the color scheme on the building.**
  6. **No changes to the proposed design, location, configuration, or method of installation are permitted without prior consultation with IHPC staff.**

**NOTE: Owner is responsible for complying with all applicable codes.**

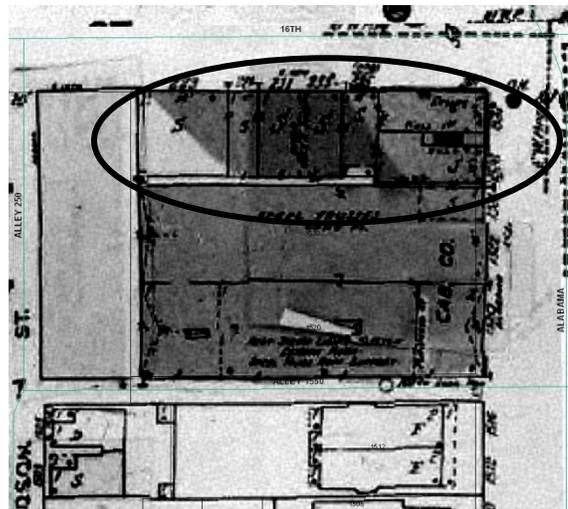
**Staff Reviewer: Emily Jarzen**



Map of subject property



1898 Sanborn map



1956 Sanborn

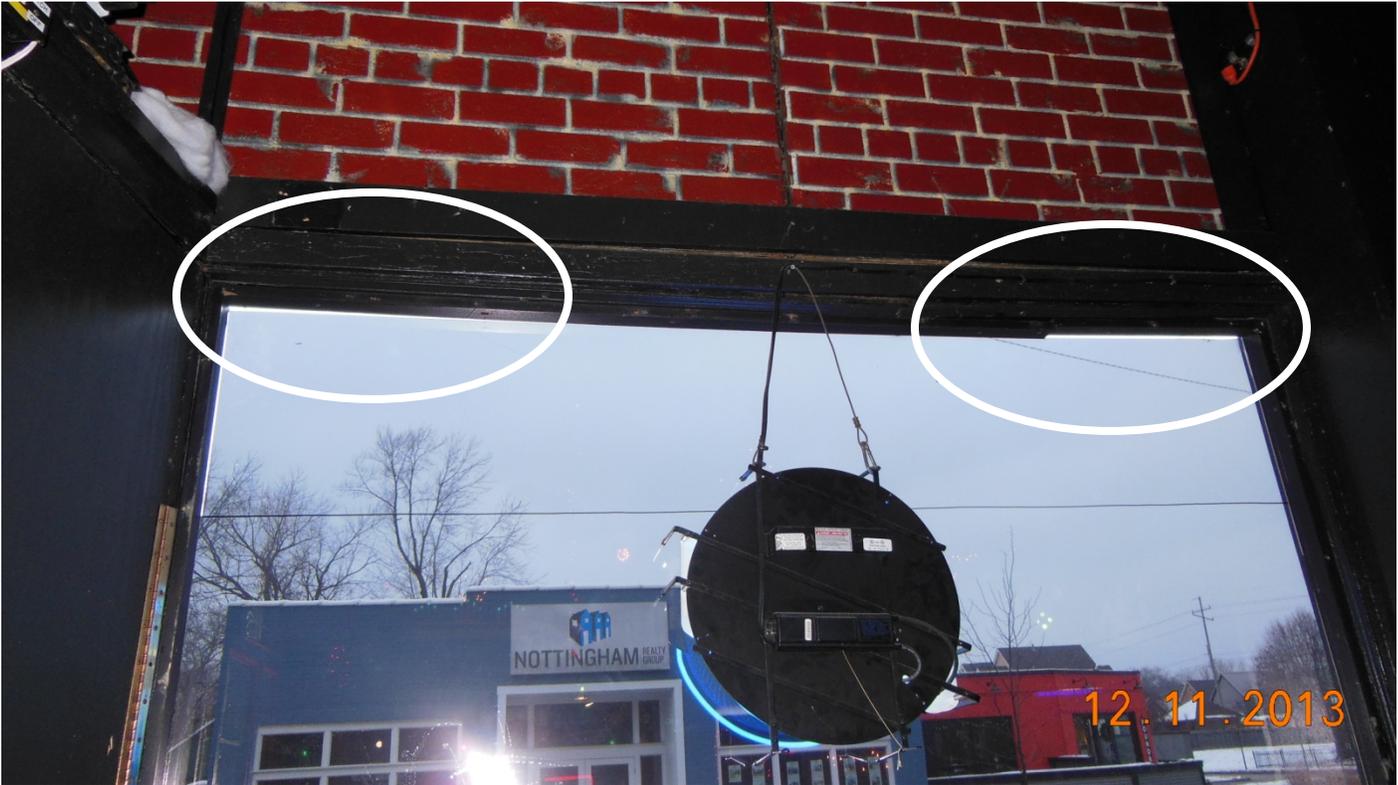


**Aerial view of subject property**





**Multi-light transoms**

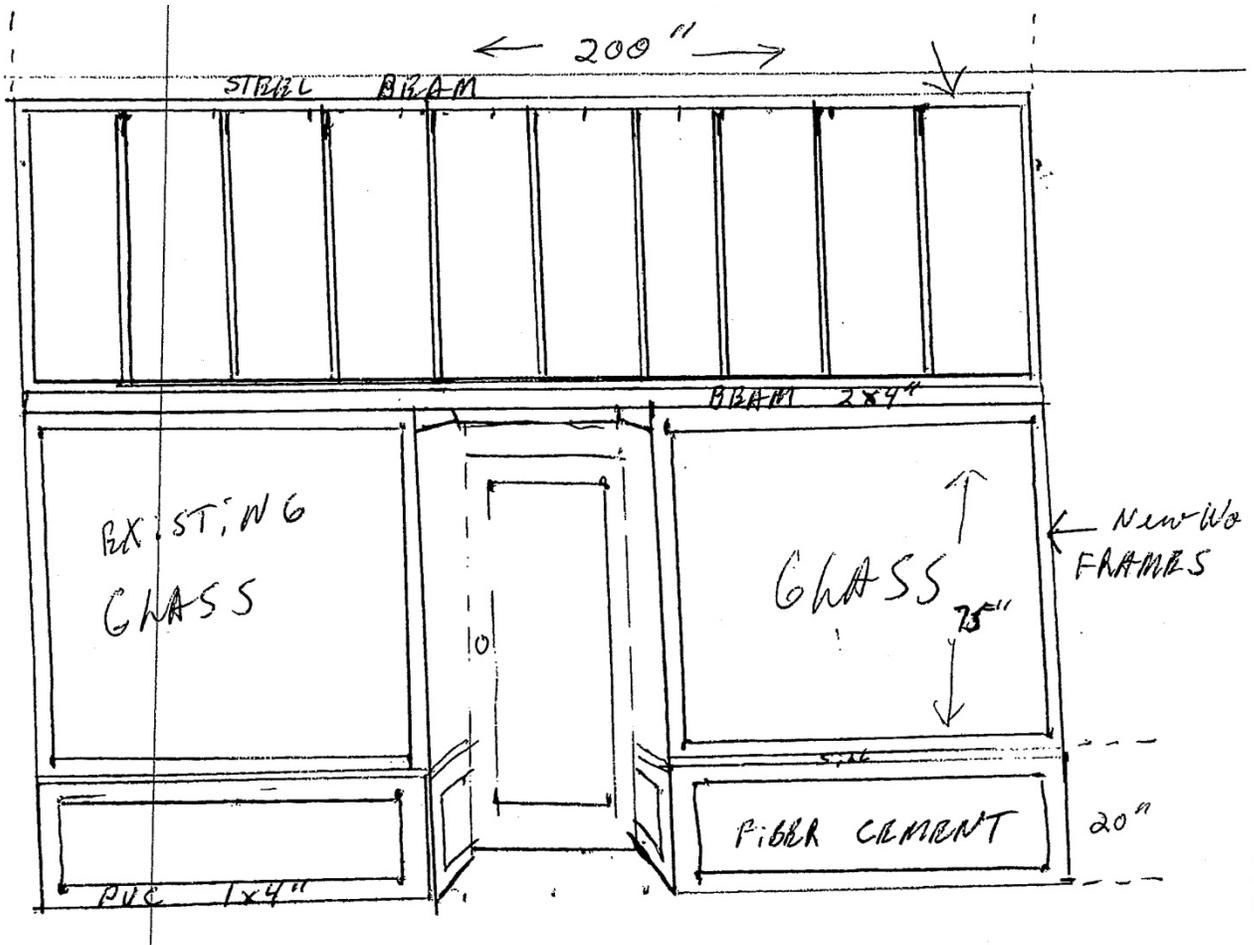


**Gaps appearing in between storefront window and lintel**



**Bulkhead details**





Contractor's sketch of proposed storefront work



West wall of "new" building showing existing wood siding