

June 26th, 2026

Bristol Historic District Commission
10 Court Street
Bristol, Rhode Island 02809

Dear Bristol Historic District Commission Members,

During a recent review of the historic district commission meeting minutes from the meeting on June 4th 2026, I noticed that my company, Pacific-Visions Studio LLC, was mentioned on page 13 in relation to application 26-53 224 Hope Street. I am one of the principal Architects at this office located at 39 State Street Unit 1N in Bristol and I would like to state for the record that our office has no relation to this project and has not given their professional opinion on the matter.

I personally have met Mr. Leonetti in passing and have learned about his project through casual conversations and listening to the historic district commission public hearings. Early on I recommended a number of local window restoration companies that would be valuable to speak with to get quotes on full restoration of the windows. I did have the opportunity to view the window sashes before they were removed and I did state that to the best of my knowledge of historic window sashes, I believed that more than half of the sashes were original to the home but also believe that a decent amount of the sashes do appear to be early replacements. From what I observed, all of the windows were wooden sashes that were putty glazed. I noticed two different muntin profiles throughout all of the windows. A very thin muntin profile was observed on what I believe were the windows that were original to the building. This muntin profile can be seen around Bristol on homes of roughly a similar age. These sashes appeared to consist of at least half intact cylinder glass, more commonly known as "wavy glass". The other sashes that I believe are early replacements, appeared to have a slightly thicker muntin profile and had all modern flat glass. The windows appeared to have chipping paint and cracked glazing compound which was a maintenance issue. I observed roughly 2-6 sashes that had severely rotted wood components, but the majority of the sashes were in restorable condition with tight fitting mortise connections and solid wood throughout. It is my understanding that the historic district commission performed a site visit and came to the conclusion that the sashes were in rough shape and approved replacement windows for all openings.

I recommended to Mr. Leonetti that he should explore restoring the windows on the building which would be the best opinion and probably more cost effective, but if he chooses not to and is approved, I would appreciate it if he contacts me because I would be interested in the window sashes, as I work to salvage windows to reuse on other restoration projects and for the restoring of missing cylinder glass. The meeting minutes state on page 7 that some of the windows were given to a local Architect, which is myself. I truly appreciate that Mr. Leonetti chose the route of giving the windows away as an opinion instead of disposal. Over the few weeks that the windows were slowly removed I was able to view each and every sash that came out of the house. If I thought these windows were in terrible shape I would not have spent my time carefully collecting them to bring over to our workshop to be restored. I appreciate the care with handling that was done as the contractor removed each sash and put them aside for me.

In the meeting minutes an individual stated that they wished the applicant had kept the windows. Between myself and my window restoration colleague, I believe we have just more than half of the sashes from the building retained in our workshops, which are the sashes that I feel are original to the 1803 building. We would be more than happy to gift any or all of the sashes back to Mr. Leonetti if he chooses to restore and reinstall them back into the building. All of the sashes are in the same condition and none of the glass has been removed.

I was not at the past few meetings to listen to the discussion on the window trim but I would like to voice my concerns as well regarding the trim being applied to the face of the building instead of being recessed into the brick opening. As an Architect, I understand that water is one of the most difficult elements to keep out of a building and I feel as if the current trim applied to 224 Hope Street facade will fail. For the good of the applicant's project and the longevity of the building, I also feel as if the trim should be corrected. I would like to offer a couple precedent buildings within just a few blocks that I believe the applicant and contractor should look at to see how the trim on these buildings look. 126 Thames Street, 15 Church Street, 417 Hope Street and 39 State Street. All four of these buildings are masonry, are of similar age, and all have the same window detail that would be appropriate for 224 Hope Street. I am one of the Architects working on the 417 Hope Street restoration and would be happy to show the applicant and contractor how we recreated the inset trim and various other similar masonry details that the applicant may be facing on their project. Working with masonry buildings is very different from working with timber framed buildings and we have learned a ton from our job.

In response to Mr. Leonetti's suggestion of having a neutral party do an assessment of the windows I believe is a wonderful idea, something I would like to see happen going forward, and something I personally discussed with him. Over just the past few years I have witnessed dozens of historic windows being removed from our historic district which should have never been approved. As we all know, windows are one of the most character defining elements of a historic building, and unanimous approvals to replace are becoming all too common. I believe that many of the windows that have been approved over the years to be replaced were not based on real knowledge of how historic windows work and how to correctly grade the condition of a wooden sash. I would be happy to be part of the conversation on how to best implement a strategy that both saves historic fabric, and gives the applicant a fair process to go through when asking for window replacements. It is my understanding that the board votes on window treatment based on knowledge of current window conditions, site visits to observe first hand, and compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards; not personal preference, applicant financial strategy, or a reason due to maintenance. I believe replacing the windows at 224 Hope Street was a mistake and should have never been approved.

Best,

Vincent Pacifico, AIA