

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW REPORT

Referral by City Planner to Historic District Commission
Meeting of February 19, 2026

Permit: Door/Window Permit #26-118

Location: 1 Kings Highway NE, Dover
Single Family Detached Dwelling on north side of Kings Hwy/NE

Tax Parcel: ED-05-077.05-02-54.00-000

File Number: HI-26-01

Present Zoning: RG-1 (General Residence Zone)
H (Historic District Zone)

Referral of Permit:

The following application Fence Permit #26-118 for 1 Kings Highway NE is referred by the City Planner to the Historic District Commission for consultation regarding the issuance of the Architectural Review Certificate for a Door/Window project. Applications for certain types of construction activity within the Historic District Zone (H) are reviewed by the City Planner (or Staff as designated) for Architectural Review Certification as part of the Building Permit application review process. Staff is referring the Permit for review under the provisions of *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 10 Section 3.22(A) and (B). See below.

Section 3.22 Architectural review certification by the city planner.

- (A) An architectural review certificate for specific classes of building permits, including Fences, signs, siding, window and door replacement, roofing, the addition or replacement of decorative features, minor demolition, residential additions, and other construction of a minor nature, may be issued by the city planner, after a review and determination that the proposed construction is in general accordance with the standards set forth in subsection 3.25.
- (B) The city planner may refer any permit application for demolition or construction in the historic district for consultation with commission.

Permit Information:

Door/Window Permit #26-118 was filed on January 23, 2026 for a door and window project at 1 Kings Highway NE in Dover, Delaware. This is a three-story single family detached dwelling with a mansard roof, front porch, bay windows, and decorative detailing at cornice and trimwork. The project listed in the Permit submission consists of the removal and replacement of four (4) windows and the removal and replacement of the entry door. The specifics for the windows were not identified as to location and window format. Additional correspondence with the contractor shows the existing double entry doors with transom above are proposed to be replaced with a single panel door with a side light and a transom above.

Property Information:

The project site is located within the local Historic District Zone (H) and subject to the provisions of the *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 3 §21 and referenced sections. This building is also located within the boundaries of a National Register Historic District, specifically the Victorian Dover Historic District (K-00396.452). The following is the inventory description from the Victorian Dover Historic District nomination:

K-00396.452

1 Kings Highway East – c. 1875 with back wing c.1825, 3-story, frame dwelling; clapboard siding; convex mansard roof, gable-roofed Renaissance dormers on all sides, double-bracketed cornice; cornice with dentil moulding at top of lower pitch of mansard; bay windows flanking door on 1st floor, paired 1/1 sash with hood molds on 2nd floor; rear wing, 6/9 sash on 1st floor, 6/6 sash on 2nd floor; double door with transom; façade porch, square posts, square balusters.

Staff Review of Permit for Architectural Review Certification:

Project activities are reviewed for compliance with the *Zoning Ordinance* and the *Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone* as stated in *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 10 Section 3.25(A).

Article 10 Section 3.25 *Architectural review standards.*

(A) An architectural review certificate may be issued if it is found that the architectural style, general design, height, bulk and setbacks, arrangement, location and materials and structures affecting the exterior appearance are generally in harmony with neighboring structures and complementary to the traditional architectural standards of the historic district as set forth in the historic district design guidelines and standards adopted by the planning commission and as set forth in the United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The element must be in the “public view.” The “public view” is defined in the *Zoning Ordinance* as “that which can be seen readily from a public street, public building or public property, excluding views from alley rights-of-way.” The location of the windows is not identified, but the entry door is visible from the street (Kings Highway/Division Street).

In reviewing the proposed project for Architectural Review Certification, Staff referenced various sections of Chapter 3: Maintenance, Repair, Preservation and Restoration of Existing Historic Buildings of the *Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone* which presents the Recommended, Not Recommended, and Inappropriate approaches to construction of various elements in the Historic District.

This Request should be reviewed for conformity with the design criteria and development guidelines found in the *Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone*. Chapter 3 presents the information on the appropriate formats and materials for use in the Historic District. Specifically, Chapter 3 pages 3-1 through 3-8 discuss the philosophy of the *Design Standards and Guidelines* and then discusses the Recommended, Not Recommended, and Inappropriate practices associated with Doors and Windows.

The *Design Standards and Guidelines* focus on repair of building elements or replacement of the building elements in-kind to match existing conditions. For windows, this generally means windows with the same size, operating function, and light pane format. For doors, this means the

same size opening, door format (single or double), and light configuration. More information is needed on the window project as to the location and format of the replacement windows. The proposed replacement door as a single door with side light rather than the narrow double doors does not comply with the recommended practices of the *Design Standards and Guidelines*.

Historic District Commission Action

The Historic District Commission should consider the Door and Window project and take action in regard to the Architectural Review Certification for the Door/Window Permit #26-118. The Historic District Commission may add conditions for the Door project and Window project in order to comply with the character of the property within the Historic District.

Staff Findings from Review of Door/Window Permit:

Staff findings and recommendations are summarized as follows for the Door and Window project as presented in Permit #26-118 and accompanying documents.

1. Window Location and Format: No information was provided on the location of the four windows being replaced or their format. The Permit notes only the window U-Factor and SHGC (Solar Heat Gain Coefficient) and that no structural changes are planned. An email from the contactor notes that the replacement windows (vinyl) will be like in style, color, and grid pattern.
2. Door Location: The entry door is proposed for replacement and it's the primary entry door to the dwelling which faces Kings Highway/Division Street. It is protected by the front porch. It is visible from the public way (sidewalk and street) especially since the removal of vegetation previously found in the front yard.
3. Door Format and Material: The current door format is a double door consisting of two narrow paneled doors that appear to be wood with a transom window over the door. The door also includes a separate double storm door set of primarily glass. The existing door format does not have sidelights. This double door format was often utilized in the late 1800s-early 1900s in this architectural style.

Recommendations:

1. Window Location and Format: The applicant/contractor should provide information on the location of the windows being replaced including the current configuration and specifications for the new replacement windows. This will then be evaluated for compliance with the *Design Standards and Guidelines*.
2. Door Format and Material: Staff finds that the single door with sidelight is inappropriate as a replacement for the double doors. Staff recommends repair of the existing doors i.e. repair/improvements to surface, weatherstripping, etc. If full replacement is selected then the door should be the double door (paired doors) format with the separate transom above. The use of additional storm doors in the double door set format and consisting of predominately glass is appropriate.

Advisory Comments:

1. The applicant shall be aware that issuance of a Door/Window Permit is required prior to the commencement of construction. The Door/Window Permit Application will be subject to the conditions of approval established and may be required to be updated, if necessary, to comply with these conditions established through the Architectural Review Certification process.

Attachments:

- Letter of Referral Notice to Applicant dated February 11, 2026.
- Door/Window Permit #26-118 Application Form and related emails
- *Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone*, Chapter 3, page 3-1 to 3-8.
- Photo of door by Planning Office