

Preservation Points  
 Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS)  
 By Randy Horton

Windows: Restoring or Replacing?  
 Third in a series

Preceding articles on “Windows; Restoring or Replacing” have focused on the esthetics and energy efficiency of existing vs. replacement windows. This month replacement window costs will be discussed.

Preservation Point: Replace original windows only when there is no possibility the window can be repaired.

Retention of original windows is encouraged; however, there is a point when replacement is the only alternative. When selecting replacement windows the process should not start with contemporary windows available but, with matching as close as possible, the original windows. When selecting replacement windows consider the contribution the original window has to the appearance to the facade of the structure. Criteria for selection should include: 1) the pattern of their openings and size; 2) proportions of the sash and frame; 3) configuration of window panes; 4) grid profiles; 5) type of wood; 6) paint color; 7) characteristics of the glass; and 8) details such as arched tops. Understand how the window reflects the period, style and characteristic of the building.

Preservation Point: In kind replacement of original wood windows is usually cheaper than vinyl or aluminum and preserves the building’s architectural integrity.

The following are some examples of the cost of wood, vinyl and aluminum windows available from local suppliers. These suppliers are only a small sample of those available and are not a recommendation or endorsement by AAPS. Pricing was obtained by telephone and do not represent the cheapest available prices or the price of a window with special characteristics. Vinyl and aluminum window prices are believed to be the cheapest available price. As you will see in the table, the cheapest replacement wood windows from S.A.Russo in Oakland are **less expensive** than the cheapest vinyl or aluminum window.

<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Size of Opening (width x height)</u>		
<u>Wood (single glazed)</u>	32”x 59” (1 over 1)	32”x 59” (6 over 6)	34” x 84” (1 over 1)
S.A. Russo (unprimed)*	\$126.50	\$186.50	\$165.50
Frameworks (primed)	\$218.00	\$359.00	\$218.00
* Double glazing is available at an additional cost of \$8-\$9 per sq. ft. of glass			
<u>Aluminum (double glazed)</u>			
Home Depot (Atrium)	\$173.21	\$185.64	Not Available
<u>Vinyl (double glazed)</u>			
Home Depot (Viking)	\$209.00	\$229.84	\$237.00
Milgard Ashby Lumber	\$314.00	Not Available	\$499.00
Certainteed	\$440.00	\$480.00	\$900.00

Prices do not include installation.

It is also important to note that window replacement requires a permit from the City of Alameda.

Original windows should be retained and repaired whenever possible. As discussed in previous columns, repair and weatherization of existing wood windows is more practical than many people realize. Properly maintained windows will greatly extend the service life of the window and retain the original characteristic and elements of the facade. However, when repair of the original windows is not feasible, the new window should match the original as closely as possible to ensure that the historic appearance of the structure is not jeopardized.

The Alameda Architectural Preservation Society is dedicated to the preservation of Alameda's historic structures and neighborhoods. For further information on AAPS, phone 986-9232; write P.O. Box 1677, Alameda, CA. 94501 or visit [www.alameda-preservation.org](http://www.alameda-preservation.org).