



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

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HPC meeting date: 12/12/2016
Ald. Jose Perez District: 12
Staff reviewer: Carlen Hatala
PTS #111576

Property 507-515 W. HISTORIC MITCHELL ST.

Owner/Applicant MITCHELL 551 LLC
529 W HISTORIC MITCHELL ST
MILWAUKEE WI 53204
BMR Design Group, Inc.
503 W. Lincoln Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53207
Phone: (414) 384-2996

Proposal The project consists of moving the building at 515 W. Historic Mitchell Street to a vacant lot at 507 W. Historic Mitchell Street. The property in between, addressed as 511 W. Historic Mitchell Street is currently vacant and city-owned. This lot will be sold to the owner and has already passed through the city's approval process. A rear addition, constructed perpendicular to the moved building, will provide for an assembly hall. In front of the assembly space will be an outdoor plaza, landscaped and fenced. This project is being proposed to add a gathering space and assembly space for funerals conducted at the adjacent Witkowiak Funeral Home addressed at 529 W. historic Mitchell Street.

Staff comments

The 2-story wood frame commercial building at 515 W. Historic Mitchell Street was built c. 1884. It is part of a grouping of small scale commercial structures that remained in the 500 block of W. Historic Mitchell Street (some no longer extant) and represent the pre-twentieth century appearance of the street. Blocks to west experienced much more redevelopment and ever larger buildings were constructed, climaxing in the Schuster-Gimbel Building and the Sears Building.

Currently No. 515 stands alone between a vacant lot and a parking lot. Moving No. 515 two lots over to the vacant lot at No. 507 is appropriate for the historic district and provides more context alongside the two masonry buildings at the corner of South 5th and W. Historic Mitchell Streets. No. 515 will be rehabilitated and be tenanted by a floral shop.

No. 515 already has a one-story addition at the rear. New construction will be added to this. Typically, new construction in a commercial district is sited so as to be up to the street edge and continue the street wall. In this instance, the new construction is an addition at the rear that will create an L-shaped building and parallel Mitchell Street. The open space between the street and the addition will form a plaza.

The addition will consist of an assembly hall or community hall, one story in height with a gabled roof that parallels W. Historic Mitchell Street. The main entry will project from the center of the Mitchell Street elevation and feature a gabled roof. Double doors with sidelights and transom will define the entry. To either side are pairs of tall windows with transoms. Cladding is cedar siding with a brick base.

The west elevation facing the funeral home will likewise feature pairs of tall windows with transoms.

The east elevation consists of CMU blocks without windows to meet fire code.

The rear or south elevation is utilitarian in character with two entrances and small clerestory windows high in the wall.

The front plaza will feature pavers, benches and a landscape buffer on its west side, separating it from the surface parking. Fencing along Mitchell Street will consist of brick piers and metal pickets like that already installed next to the original location of No. 515. Landscape shrubs will be planted in front of the fencing.

A new handicap entrance will be constructed along the west side of the historic 1880s building. Its wall appears to be constructed of brick.

Recommendation

Recommend HPC Approval with conditions

Conditions

Windows maybe double glazed and Low-e but with a clear finish and not tinted.

Brick sample to be reviewed by staff before a Certificate of Appropriateness is issued.

The cedar siding must be painted upon completion.

Previous HPC action**Previous Council action**