



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

Living with History

HPC meeting date: 8/10/2015

Ald. District: 0

Staff reviewer: Carlen Hatala

PTS #104828

Property 2115 E. LAFAYETTE PLACE North Point South Historic District

Owner/Applicant DAVID QUADRACCI Deep River Partners, LTD.
2105 E LAFAYETTE PL 338 N. Milwaukee Street
MILWAUKEE WI 53202 Milwaukee, WI 53202
Phone: (414) 276-8550

Proposal The applicant proposes to build a new house on the currently vacant lot at 2115 East Lafayette Place in the North Point South Historic District. A prior proposal to build on this lot was approved by the Historic Preservation Commission in 2005 but never constructed.

A frame house once stood on this site, built in the late 1880's for Moses H. Brand. By 1895 the house belonged to Dr. Silas J. Sawyer who with his wife Jennie studied under Mary Baker Eddy and introduced Christian Science to Milwaukee. The house was later owned by the Riebs. They sold the house to the Milwaukee County Park system in 1959 and it was subsequently demolished. It was the intent of the park system to create a bluff top park and remove all of the mansions on the east side of East Lafayette Place and North Terrace Avenue but that was never fully executed although a number of houses were demolished.

The lot has been vacant since that time. It has remained a separate tax key parcel but has been owned by the owners of 2105 East Lafayette Place for some time.

Staff comments

The proposed new house will be traditional in character with features that tie into architectural forms within the neighborhood. There is a cross gabled roof, dormers, wall dormers, twin dormers and a variety of projecting bays and recessed areas as well as a variety of materials. Details like the gables, label mouldings at the windows, banks of multipaned windows and decorative metal railings all give the exterior an English revival character. The plan takes some design cues from the house next door at 2121 East Lafayette Place (built 1907 and designed for Emil Ott by Frey & Clas) but is not a copy. The lakefront elevation is mostly glass, set into vertically oriented windows and has both a box bay and curved bay. This elevation appears as four stories. The other three elevations appear as three stories.

The below grade garage with its pent roof overhang is a good solution for preserving the lake view from the house and allowing a vista to the lake between 2105 and 2115 East Lafayette Place.

One feature that differs from the otherwise traditional character of the house is the rear or lakefront-facing railings that are made of glass.

The preservation guidelines for North Point South list four criteria to by which to assess the appropriateness of new construction.

1. SITING—New construction must reflect the traditional siting of buildings in North Point South. In this instance the setback and spacing between the existing houses has been maintained and the openings are oriented toward the street and neighboring structures as the present historic buildings.

2. SCALE—The proposed building's height and bulk, division into traditional base, body and roof and individual building components are compatible with surrounding structures

3. FORM—The proposed building's massing, profiles, elements that recede and project do express the continuity established by the historic structures

4. MATERIALS—The guidelines read: *The building materials that are visible from the public right-of-way should be consistent with the colors, textures, proportions, and combinations of cladding materials traditionally used in North Point South. The physical composition of the materials may be different from that of the historic materials, but the same appearance should be maintained.*

In this proposal, the applicant proposes to use some traditional materials as hand moulded brick, copper gutters and downspouts, and metal railings. New materials proposed included cast stone, simulated slate roof, aluminum clad wood windows, composite wood trim and panels.

Use of traditional materials is preferable to some of the newer substitute materials that are proposed in this application.

- The HPC has examined slate like roofing in the past and had not found a product that is convincing in appearance or has longevity.
- Cast stone products vary in quality and appearance. Cast stone was being used by the 1920s and can be considered a historic material. However custom shapes, sizes and finishes may be more limited than actual stone products. It will be important to avoid the appearance of concrete block at the base of the building,
- The HPC has not allowed aluminum clad, aluminum, vinyl, fiberglass or other new window types due to the problems associated with the products and appearance. The most recent new house project in North Point South approved by HPC in 2014 made use of wood windows and limestone trim at 2131 North Terrace Avenue.
- Composite wood products as well as cement board products have been shown to fail prematurely. Decay resistant wood species have a long documented track record of good performance.
- The cast stone product that will line the driveway and retaining walls is depicted arranged as fieldstone pattern. The HPC has recently denied the use of man-made block for landscaping.

Recommendation

Approve with some modifications in materials

Conditions

The house is to be built as designed along with any modifications required by the commission.

Sections drawings of the exterior elevations should be supplied

Details of various elements should be reviewed before construction starts including cast stone profiles (beltcourses, label mouldings, trim), window profiles and bulkheads, final selection of garage door style, and ornamental metal railings

The current fencing is actual salvaged 19th century fencing installed by the Holton's (previous owners) and should be preserved.

Previous HPC action**Previous Council action**