



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date: 4/2/2018

Ald. Nik Kovac District: 3 PTS #114477

Staff reviewer: Tim Askin CCF #171794

Property	707 E. BRADY ST.	Brady Street HD
Owner/Applicant	ADITI LLC 215 E VINE ST MILWAUKEE WI 53212	Mr. Tom Vavra Vavra Design, LLC PO Box 70087 Milwaukee, WI 53207
Proposal	Remodel and rehabilitate ground floor of two attached buildings. Add second story and balcony on Van Buren Street. Make various repairs, replace most or all windows, and re-clad with historically appropriate materials.	
Staff comments	<p>The applicants are seeking a conceptual approval. They have an option to buy and like other recent proposals before the Commission, are looking for some assurances before committing to the purchase. They acknowledge that their designs are somewhat preliminary.</p> <p>The proposal is a well-thought out use for the building that will create much needed street life at the west entrance to the Brady Street corridor. The applicants are enthusiastic and familiar with the neighborhood, which bodes well for the success of this project.</p> <p>The proposed restoration for the upper floors is faultless. The second story addition to the southern building is also well-aligned with the historic character of the main building, but with simpler trim and a flat roof that identifies it as new work. The balcony railing may be better as a simple wood design rather than the rounded metal design proposed, but that is staff's only critique of the addition.</p> <p>Design for the first level is complicated, as there is only one known historic photo and historic fabric is limited. Finding the right balance of details for compatibility is therefore a challenge. The fenestration and wall treatments could work as proposed, but further refinement of entrances and the cornice is recommended along with taller windows and headblocks rather than regularly spaced brackets. Staff believes a more classical rather than the somewhat Italianate bracket treatment of the first floor cornice would be a more effective design. Pairing the brackets might also be effective. A recessed entry would add character to the Van Buren Street elevation. Adding arch details to entries could make the proposed metal railing more compatible. The shown projecting sign feels too tall, but may be satisfactory depending on the complete design.</p> <p>Staff is happy to keep working with the applicants and is currently working on design alternatives.</p>	
Recommendation	Conceptual Approval/Hold	
Conditions	<p>Archtop windows that match the existing radius and openings in the gable peaks have been agreed to verbally, but not expressly indicated in the drawings or narrative. This should be explicitly required if those windows are to be replaced.</p> <p>A wood balcony railing is recommended.</p>	
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