

September 10, 2021

VIA EMAIL ([hpc@milwaukee.gov](mailto:hpc@milwaukee.gov); [lelmer@milwaukee.gov](mailto:lelmer@milwaukee.gov))

Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission  
Zeidler Municipal Building  
841 N. Broadway, Room B-1  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

RE: Petition for Historic Designation 2275 and 2279 N. Summit Avenue

Dear Commissioners:

We are counsel for E North, LLC ("E North"), the current property owners of those certain parcels located at 2275 and 2279 N. Summit Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (the "Properties"). The Properties are part of the Glidden and Lockwood's Addition district and located just south of North Avenue. As you are aware, the Properties, and specifically the structures included thereon, are subject to that certain Petition for Historic Designation submitted by Dawn McCarthy on July 22, 2021 (the "Petition") to include the Properties as part of the North Point South Historic District (the "District"). We respectfully request that this Commission deny the Petition for the reasons set forth herein. This letter supplements E North's prior submission to the Commission on August 12, 2021. We also reserve the right to further supplement E North's submission during the hearing to occur on September 13, 2021.

The Petition argues that historic designation for the Properties is appropriate for two (2) reasons: (1) the Properties should have been included in the District due to their location near the District boundary; and (2) the Properties should have been included in the District due to style and character, in particular the modest size and materials utilized, of the structures. Neither of these reasons are validated by the actual condition and location of the Properties and surrounding areas.

First, as it relates to the location of the Properties, the Properties are essentially an island - buffered on all sides from the District by significant non-contributing structures - and, thus, are not contributing to the District. Across street from the Properties on the east side of N. Summit Avenue is larger, multi-family apartment complex which is not within the District. In addition, the parcels to north and northeast of the Properties are two (2) 4-unit and other larger multi-family structures. The parcel to south contains an alley-way and off-street parking with other similar structures to the south on N. Summit Avenue and Ivanhoe Place. This separation can be seen from the current map of the District, which we include with this letter as Exhibit A.

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Second, the Petition itself highlights these “intrusion” structures. The site plan included with the Petition – a copy of which is included with this letter as Exhibit B - was taken from Shirley de Fresne McArthur’s 1981 publication, *North Point Historic Districts* and shows the clear demarcation line and development pattern. In reviewing that site plan, it becomes clear that the Properties are separated from the District by multiple multi-family complexes and commercial uses that do not contribute to the District. Given the existence and proximity of these “intrusion” structures, the Properties do not contribute to the District or the area’s character and should not be designated as historic.

Third, if the Properties were historically significant, the original 2002 Historic Designation Study Report for the District would have included them. The current Historic Designation Study Report in support of the Petition relied, in part, on McArthur’s *North Point Historic Districts* publication and McArthur’s 1978 publication, *North Point Historic Districts – Milwaukee Inventory*. However, such publications, which the original 2002 Historic Designation Study Report for the District also heavily relied on, addressed the western half of N. Summit Avenue and decided categorically that such structures did not meet the elements and requirements to be included in the newly established historic district. The character of the 2200 block of N. Summit Avenue has not changed since the original 2002 Historic Designation Study Report and, thus, there is no reason to reverse the experts prior decision to not include these Properties, and/or the entirety of western half of N. Summit Avenue, as part of the District.

As it relates to the style and character of the Properties, the reality is that these Properties are not unique examples of the Glidden and Lockwood’s Addition district variation in residential buildings nor should be the Properties be included to preserve the City’s historic working class housing stock. Not only are the Properties already cut-off from the District by significant “intrusion” structures as detailed above, these Properties are not unique for the area. There are numerous similar structures to the immediate vicinity north and west which are significantly in better condition and are contiguous with other single-family or two-family homes that reflect this type of architectural style. There include, but are not limited to, structures on the following blocks:

- 2500 block of N. Murry Avenue
- 2012 and 2123 E. Bradford
- 2500 block of E. Webster Place
- 2500 block of E. Webster Place
- 2400 block of E. Belleview Place
- 2500 block of N. Stowell Avenue
- 2600 block of N. Stowell Avenue

Moreover, unlike the Puddler’s Cottages in Bay View, these two Properties are neither well preserved nor exemplary examples of Milwaukee’s working class housing stock. Despite some contentions otherwise, the condition of the Properties are less than desirable and any protracted process will, unfortunately, only contribute to blight in the neighborhood. Due to the current condition of the Properties, returning these structures to an appropriate level of restoration is an economic burden this Commission should not impose on anybody, no matter the property owner. In fact, even if the two Properties were indeed added to the District, given the current condition,

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there is no economical feasible future for these Properties other than demolition. Included with this letter as Exhibit C are just some photos of the Properties' condition as of May 2021.

In addition to the points addressed in the Petition, during the August 12, 2021 hearing on temporary historic designation, there were several questions and concerns related to the Properties' future and potential development of same. We would like to address same now.

It is true that E North acquired the Properties to potentially include them in a larger development with 2231 E. North Avenue and 2239 E. North Avenue. Given the shape and size of the parcels on North Avenue, the initial proposed plan was to include the Properties to "square off" the development site in order to gain enough land area to yield a footprint that would both provide for adequate parking below grade and provide easier access to below grade parking from N. Summit Avenue. An initial re-zoning petition was filed on January 28, 2020. Since that initial petition, there has been some back-and-forth with both Alderman Kovac and with Department of City Development in relation to the initial proposed design and plan. To date, E North has attempted to address specific concerns raised. That being said, E North understands that it may not have heard or been able to address all comments from the neighborhood and would invite another round table or listening session to ensure they understand the needs and concerns of the neighborhood as it relates to any future or potential development. However, the responsibility of this Commission and the point of the hearing to occur on September 13, 2021 is - only is - to address the Petition for historic designation. To that end, while the potential development is relevant in that the Commission can consider and balance the interests of the community's need for development with the desire to preserve historically significant and contributing structures generally, it should not be the sole or primary reason to approve of the Petition. Note, the initial re-zoning petition is currently stalled - meaning that there will be ample opportunity for the neighborhood and any interested parties to have their voices heard and provide input on any future development.

In sum, these structures are islands clearly separated and delineated from more appropriate designated areas, are not unique or well-preserved examples of working class housing stock within the area, and ultimately do not contribute to the District's character. While we understand deeply that there remain questions on any future development on these Properties -such questions will be addressed through future public hearings, meetings and venues and those processes should be allowed to continue as they are intended. As such, we respectfully request that this Commission deny the Petition.

Regards,

Michelle W. Ebben, Esq.  
Partner

EXHIBIT A  
Map of North Point South Historic District

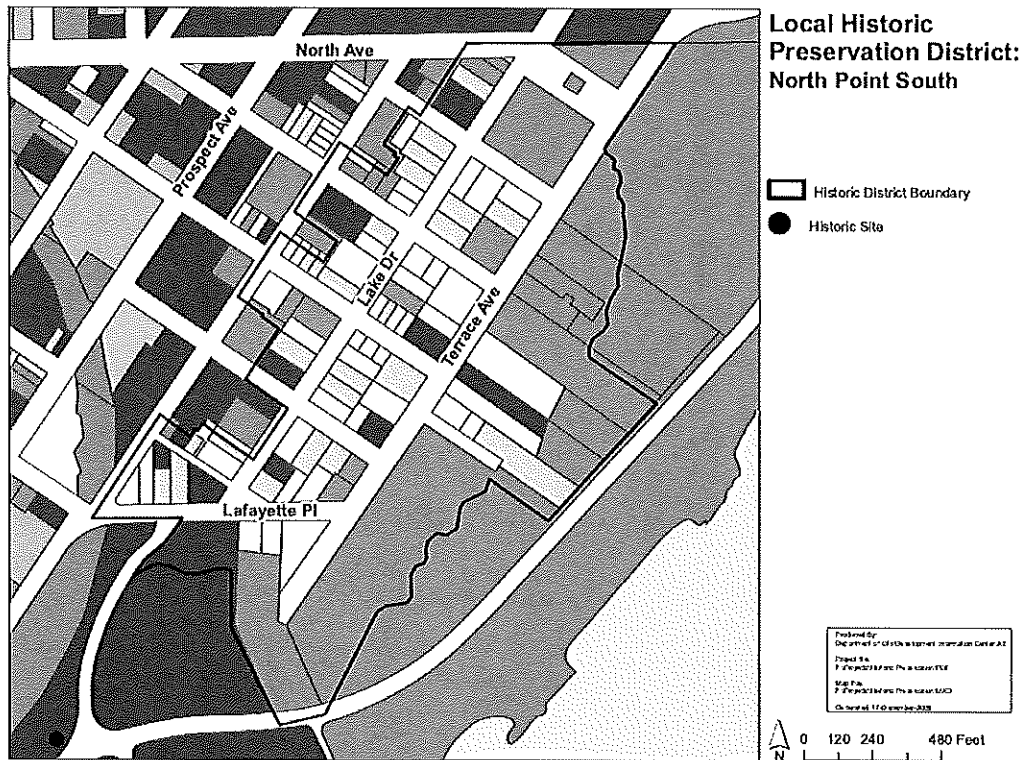


EXHIBIT B  
Site Plan included with the Petition

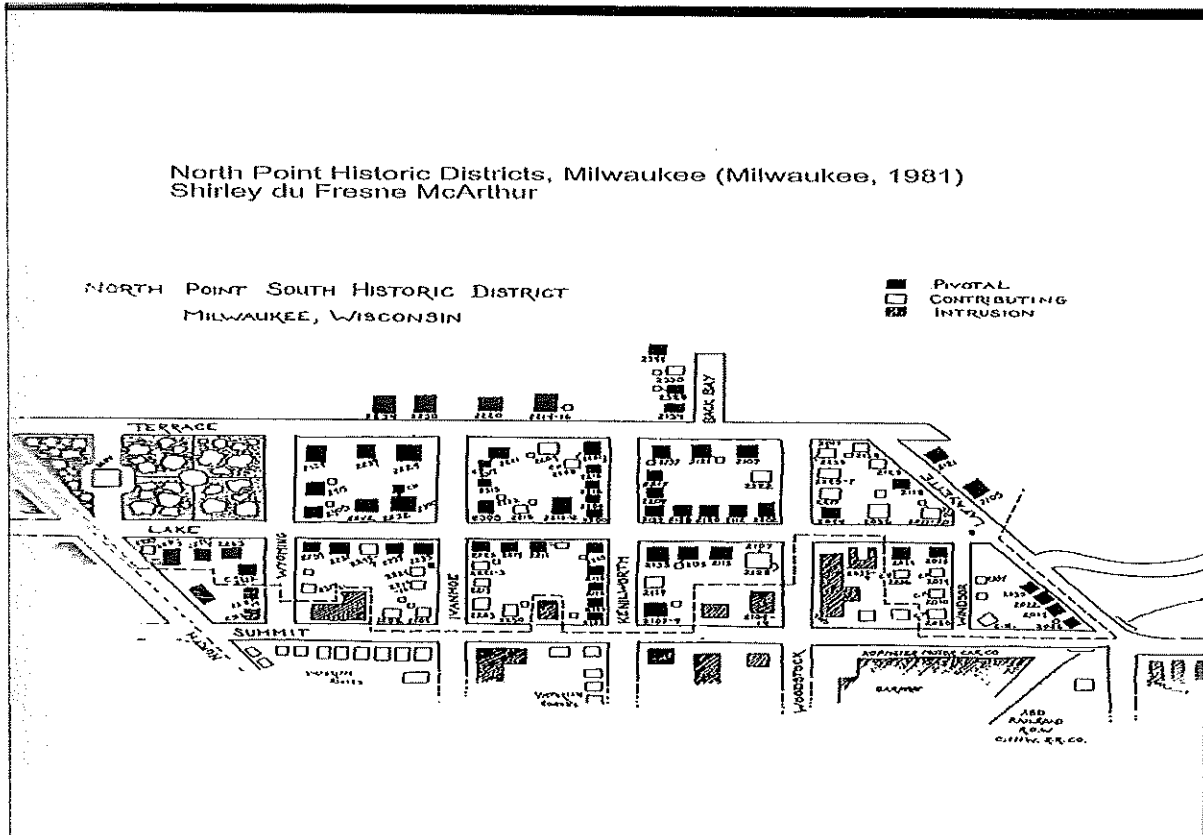


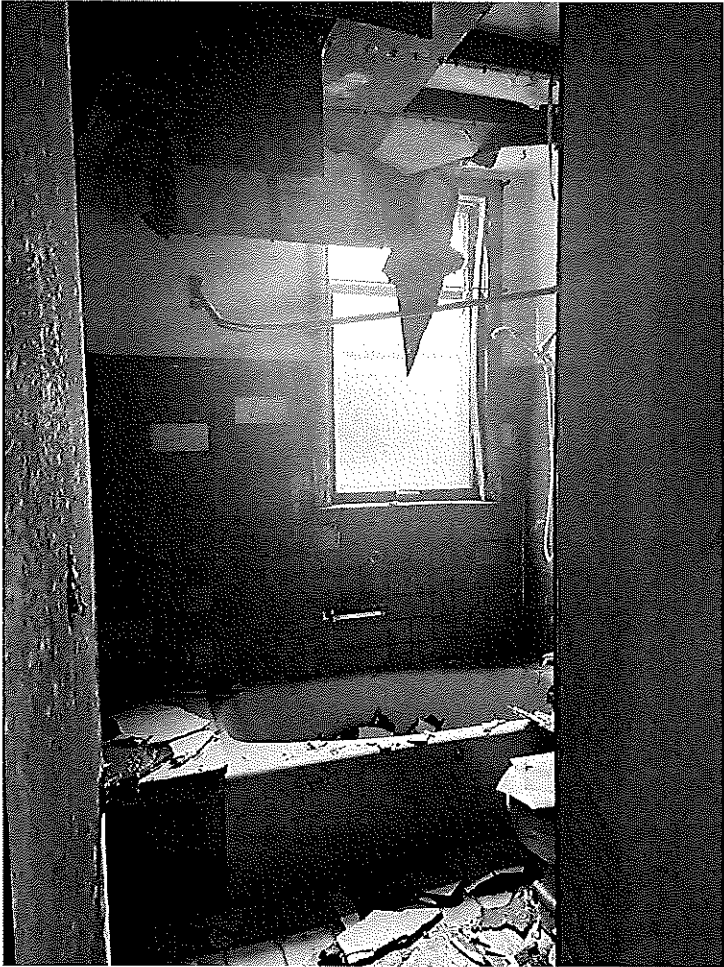
EXHIBIT C  
Condition of 2275 and 2279 N. Summit

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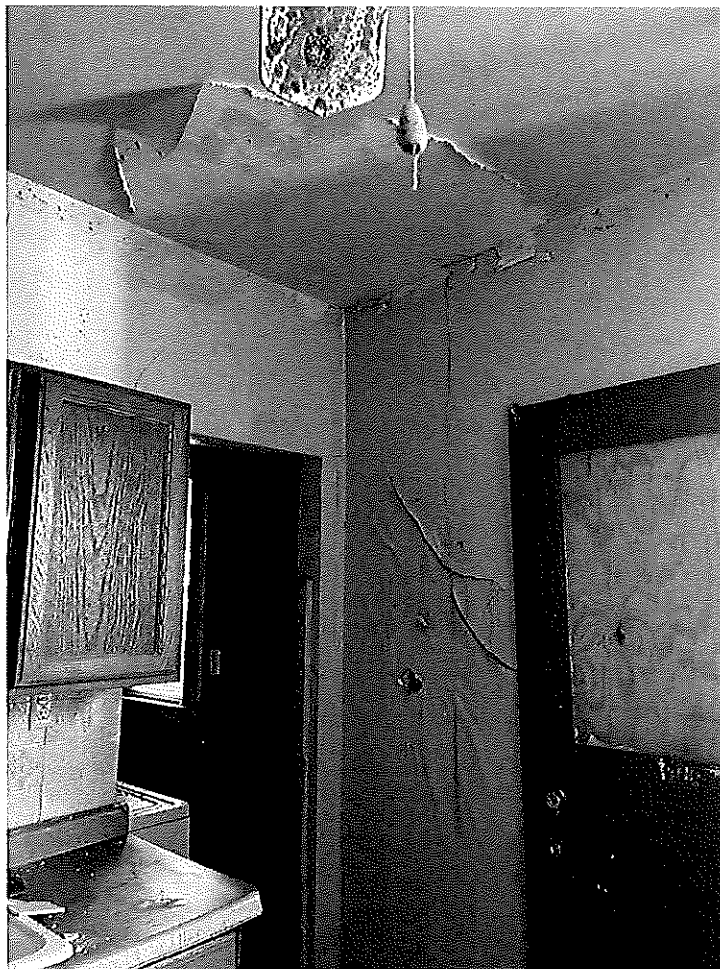
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