



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

Living with History

HPC meeting date: 11/09/2015
Ald. José Perez District: 12
Staff reviewer: Dean Doerrfeld
PTS

Property	601-605 W. HISTORIC MITCHELL ST. Mitchell St. Historic District
Owner/Applicant	MITCHELL STREET GROUP, LLC c/o TDI Associates GEOFF STONE c/o Randy Hettwer P.O. BOX 511542 NB W22350 Johnson Drive, B4 MILWAUKEE, WI 53203 Waukesha, WI 53185 PHONE: (414) 669-6822 Phone: (262) 409-2530
Proposal	This project includes three components: the repair/restoration of first floor pilasters on the north and east elevations; the installation of two windows in existing, blocked openings; and, the construction of a rear, metal staircase.
Staff Comments	<p>601 to 605 W. Historic Mitchell St. was constructed in 1909. It is a four story, load-bearing masonry building with elements of the Neo-Classical style, primarily exhibited in its entablature with its pierced architrave, molded frieze, and projecting cornice with modillions. The two primary elevations hold windows in inset panels and modern storefronts on the first level. The building is attributed to architect Henry C. Hengel. When constructed, the building was known as the Wabiszewski Block and housed retail on the first level and various uses on the upper level including professional offices and several Polish fraternal and civic organizations. Over time, the building continued to serve multiple tenants including a theater, retail, offices, and residential units. The building is currently undergoing renovation for a mixed-use objective.</p> <p>The Mitchell Street Historic District was granted conditional National Register eligibility and locally designated in 1986.</p> <p>The first element of this project is the repair/rehabilitation of eight pilasters on the north and east elevations. The pilasters are of wood construction with inset panels and all were originally clad with metal. The majority of the pilasters are replacements and either had no metal sheathing, or it has been removed. One surviving metal-clad pilaster displays a detailed capital with a central element; however the metal cladding is severely deteriorated. This portion of the proposal calls for the repair of deteriorated metal cladding, re-cladding of pilasters, and the replication and installation of the decorative capital of the extant pilaster in all locations.</p> <p>The second component is the installation of two windows in existing openings of the south elevation. Both penetrations were blocked at an unknown date. The request is to install two aluminum windows to match existing windows in that elevation of the structure.</p> <p>The final phase is the replacement of a deteriorated brick entry at the southwest corner of the building. Due to an underlying easement, the stairway extends 12.5 feet from the building wall. Construction details include a steel framework covered with composite decking, and rails constructed of steel tube and pipe. The rail is detailed with a floating handrail approximately 8 inches above the tube and pipe composition.</p>

A staff inspection completed on 29 October 2015 discovered that some work was completed prior to the issuance of the COA.

Staff finds that this proposal is within the guidelines and is appropriate for this building and the Historic Mitchel Street Historic District. Re-cladding the pilasters and replication of the capital detail of the north and east elevations is appropriate and is based on surviving, historic elements. Although the Commission has required the installation of replacement wood windows, the extant windows of the south elevation are metal frame and this is a secondary elevation on the opposite side of the building from W. Historic Mitchell Street. The steel and composite wood entry is also appropriate. Located on a secondary elevation, the metal construction is typical of entries not designed for public use.

Recommendation

Renovations of the Wabiszewski Block: Approve as submitted

Conditions

Previous HPC action

Previous Council action