



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date	8/2/2026	CCF # 260404
Ald. Coggs	Staff reviewer: Andrew Stern	
Property	107 W. Brown Street	Brewers Hill Historic District
Owner/Applicant	BrewCityBNB Company 2108 N. Dr. William Finlayson Milwaukee, WI 53212	

Proposal

Enlarge an existing window opening to accommodate a new sliding patio door and build a new deck off the enlarged doorway in the side yard.

Staff comments

The house at 107 W. Brown is a Queen Anne-style residence constructed circa 1891. The current owner is undertaking a rehabilitation of the house. The asbestos siding has been removed and original clapboard siding is being restored. A staff-level COA approval has been issued for that work.

The owner is requesting to enlarge an existing window opening located within the bay on the east façade. This façade faces N. 1st Street and is the side yard for the property. The new opening would be 86" wide by 83" tall. New sliding patio doors are proposed for the opening, though the exact specifications and materials for the door have not been provided.

The owner is also proposing to build a new 15'-6" deep by 13'-6" wide wood deck off the new enlarged opening. The deck would consist of pressure treated decking, 4x4 posts with 2x2 spindles. The deck would stand 24" tall with 36" tall railings.

The preservation guidelines for Brewers Hill for windows state to:

Retain existing window and door openings that are visible from the public right-of-way. Retain the original configurations of panes, sash, lintels, keystones, sills, architraves, pediments, hoods, doors, shutters and hardware. Avoid making additional openings or changes in the principal elevations by enlarging or reducing window or door openings to fit new stock window sash or new stock door panes or sash. Avoid discarding original doors and door hardware when they can be repaired or reused.

The guidelines for new construction state:

It is important that additional new construction be designed so as to harmonize with the character of the district.

1. Siting: New construction must reflect the traditional siting of buildings in Brewer's Hill. This includes setback, spacing between buildings, the orientation of openings to the street and neighboring structures, and the relationship between the main building and accessory buildings. New buildings should not obstruct the vistas from the street to the house.

2. Scale: Overall building height and bulk; the expression of major building divisions including foundation, body and roof; and, individual building components such as porches, overhangs and fenestration must be compatible with the surrounding structures.

3. Form: The massing of new construction must be compatible with the surrounding buildings. The profiles of roofs and building elements that project and recede from the main block must express the same continuity established by the historic structures.

4. Materials: 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 Brewer's Hill. The physical composition of the materials may be different from that of the historic materials, but the same appearance should be maintained.

The proposed deck and enlarged opening do not comply with the preservation guidelines for the historic district. The preservation guidelines state to avoid enlarging openings that are on principal elevations. The enlarged sliding patio door would be too prominent on the highly visible corner lot. No specs were provided for the proposed door but a sliding patio door is not a style historically found in the district.

The deck would also be too large and prominent for the highly visible side yard. Adding such a large deck at that location would detract from the actual front façade and make it appear as though the side elevation was the actual front elevation.

Staff recommends if a deck is desired, to add a doorway opening to the rear-facing window at the corner and adding a smaller-scale deck in the ell portion of the rear façade where the rear meets the one-story addition. The deck could have stairs that connect to both the rear sidewalk and side yard sidewalk.

Recommendation

Recommend denial of the enlarged opening, sliding patio doors, and deck.

Conditions