



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

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HPC meeting date: 1/8/2024
Staff reviewer: Andrew Stern

Ald. Brostoff
CCF # 231332

Property 3233 E. Kenwood Blvd North Point North

Owner/Applicant Milwaukee County Parks
9840 Watertown Plank Rd.
Wauwatosa, WI 53226

Proposal

Repairs to several damaged rustic pedestrian bridges and retaining walls within Lake Park.

The South Lighthouse Ravine pedestrian bridge and associated stone retaining wall have eroded and washed out. This bridge will be relocated approximately 20 feet upstream where contours and erosion patterns are more favorable and rebuilt using ground treated decking, rails, and posts similar in appearance to the existing bridge. Galvanized steel beam span supports will be used, with wood fastened to the sides to retain the existing appearance. The failed stone masonry path embankment will be cleaned up, graded, and stabilized and stone added to the hillside to prevent future erosion.

The Waterfall Path and two North Lighthouse trail pedestrian bridges are showing signs of deterioration. These bridges will undergo material replacement of the wood decking, beams, rails, and posts "in-kind" and will remain in their present locations. Stone masonry abutments will be examined and repaired with mortar, as necessary.

Staff comments

The bridges within Lake Park have been replaced a number of times during the history of the Frederick Law Olmsted-designed park. The replacement materials will match the existing rustic look of the present bridges. While visible pressure-treated lumber is typically not approved, other materials are impractical in this use case of a pedestrian wood bridge. This can be mitigated by following the listed conditions. Staff recommends wood be stained to a more natural color to obscure the green hue after treatment. Any treated lumber would have to be oriented such that the pock-marked appearance of the treatment incisions would not be visible. These conditions were approved with a previous replacement bridge project HPC approved within Lake Park.

Recommendation Recommend HPC Approval with conditions

Conditions

1. Wisconsin Historical Society review is required pursuant to Wis. Stats. §§ 44.42 and 66.1111. County must submit proof of WHS approval before the COA will be issued.
2. Wood should be dry and pressure-treated material may not have a noticeable change in color from natural wood nor may show any of the incisions from the pressure-treating process. The typical green color of chromated copper arsenate treated wood is not appropriate. Wood should be stained with an opaque brown stain.
3. Provide material samples of wood components to staff for approval.
4. New mortar must match the original mortar in terms of color, texture, grain size, joint width, and joint finish/profile. The compressive strength of the repointing mortar shall be equal or less than the compressive strength of the original mortar and surrounding brick or stone. The replacement mortar shall contain approximately the same ingredient proportions of the original mortar. Mortar that is too hard is subject to premature failure and could damage the masonry. See the city's books *As Good As New* or *Good for Business*, Masonry Chapters, for more information. In most cases, this means a lime mortar with natural hydraulic cement rather than Portland cement. No joint of a width less than 3/8" may be cleaned of damaged/decomposed mortar with power disc grinders. No over-cutting of the joints is permitted. Remove decomposed mortar back into the wall 2.5 times the height of the joint before repointing. When installing new flashing at a masonry feature, the flashing must be stepped or cut into the mortar joints. The bricks may not be cut to install flashing at an angle.

New brick/stone/terra cotta must match as closely as possible the color texture, size, and finish of the original.

A sample panel of the masonry materials and their mortar must be reviewed and approved by HPC staff prior to general installation of the material.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHALL UNPAINTED MASONRY BE PAINTED, BE GIVEN A WATERPROOFING TREATMENT, OR CLEANED BY ABRASIVE MEANS; THIS STATEMENT SUPERSEDES ANY OTHER WORDING IN THIS DOCUMENT INDICATING THE CONTRARY.

Previous HPC action

Previous Council action