



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report: CLG National Register Review

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date: 11/1/2021
Ald. Nik Kovac District: 3
Staff reviewer: Tim Askin
CCF # 210830

Property 2216 – 2230 N. Farwell Avenue, Oriental Theater

Staff comments Staff embraces this exciting opportunity to document the finest movie palace in the state. It is additionally an important piece of Milwaukee's history and a rare example of South Asian-influenced architecture. The nomination is effective in making the case for the designation

Staff recommends some slight changes to the documentation:

1. In the interest of cultural equity, this rare opportunity to discuss the South Asian and Islamicist architecture in Wisconsin. While the representations in the theater are largely a fantasy, their meaning and origins have not been adequately explored in the text.
2. The Commission believes future research would be better served with any architectural classification that is not "other." The term exotic revival is used in the text and sufficiently described within it; this is the classification that should be used. This request would only require minor alterations to Section 7. We recommend this phrasing for the header page of Section 7 "LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: OTHER: EXOTIC REVIVAL".
3. The National Register regulations clearly state that only "fee simple" owners are to be listed as owners of a property (36 CFR 60.3(k)). Staff have conducted additional research on property ownership and determined that the city is not a fee simple owner of any property affected by the nomination. Therefore, accordingly we request to be struck from the list of owners.

Recommendation Recommend Support of the nomination with the three caveats noted above