



## Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

**HPC meeting date: 5/9/2022**  
**Ald. Nik Kovac District: 3**  
**Staff reviewer: Jacqueline Drayer**  
**PTS CCF 211937**

<b>Property</b>	2542 N Terrace Avenue	North Point North Historic District
<b>Owner/Applicant</b>	Michele and Jay Berman 2542 N Terrace Avenue Milwaukee, WI 53211	
<b>Proposal</b>	Landscape renovation work will include:  Front yard: Garden redesign to create a more tidy and uniform appearance while adding color and evergreen interest to the landscape. Additionally, 4 uplights will be added to accentuate the masonry detail on the home.  Back yard: Addition of a wood deck will include built in planters, built in bench, and room for furniture and grill. The decking, steps, skirting, handrails and framing will all be constructed with treated wood, while the spindles of the railings will be aluminum. There will be step lights incorporated into the steps for safety. Additionally there will be a paver patio with gas fire feature added to the back yard. Perimeter fencing and fencing around the A/C units will control views, and trellis will be added to soften the garage. Plantings will help to soften the hardscapes.	
<b>Staff comments</b>	<p>The proposed front yard landscaping is tidy, and while more substantial than other landscaping on the street, complements the house's character and is acceptable. The four uplights will be hidden from view by plantings and are also acceptable. The proposed brick border (flush along the primary elevation and raised along the driveway) is a new feature that is not seen nearby in the historic district, nor was evidence of a past brick border found at this property. The proposed border is lower profile from the public right of way than a retaining wall. <i>Living with History</i> page 102 says, "Building a retaining wall where none ever existed is generally discouraged. However, in some instances, it may be permissible." Unless the landscaping is not possible without construction of this border, staff recommends against construction of the border, which while not especially intrusive, is out of character with the property.</p> <p>The proposed back yard deck, while not particularly compatible with the house or historic district, is not visible from the street and likely minimally visible from adjacent houses. It is elevated from the ground by 4-5 steps. The paver patio is appropriately screened, and the step lights and planting features are also acceptable. The trellis and 4-foot fence and gate are acceptable.</p>	
<b>Recommendation</b>	Recommend HPC approval with conditions.	

**Conditions**

Front yard brick border is not approved.

**Porch railings**

Graspable railings must be mounted flush with the top railing, not below it and visible between balusters. Additionally, balusters must be mounted so that they rest on the bottom rail and the top rail rests atop the balusters. Attaching the balusters to the sides of the top and bottom rails is not acceptable.

**Wood—except fences**

All finish wood must be smooth and free of knots and must be painted or treated with an opaque stain upon completion. Note: when new, bare wood is left exposed to the exterior elements for a period of only a week or two, the life the of the paint job subsequently applied to it will be decreased. The use of a naturally decay-resistant wood species for exterior finish applications is required for porch areas. Using western white pine or Ponderosa pine is “at your own risk” because this wood has no natural decay resistance and can deteriorate in some exterior settings in just a few years.

**Fences**

All wood must be smooth and equivalent to #1 grade cedar or better for use in rear and side yards. Sections of fence forward of or in line with the primary building’s front setback must be clear grain. Wood fences must be painted or stained with an opaque stain upon completion. Note: when new, bare wood is left exposed to the exterior elements for a period of only a week or two, the life the of the paint job subsequently applied to it will be decreased.

**Previous HPC action****Previous Council action**