Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission
Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date: 12/5/2022
Ald. Robert Bauman District: 4
Staff reviewer: Tim Askin
CCF 221070

Property	785 N Jefferson Street	N Jefferson Street Historic District
Owner/Applicant	Zetjeff LLC 8870 N Port Washington Road Milwaukee, WI 53217	Tom Vavra 1905 S 1st Street Milwaukee, WI 53204

Proposal   Replace egress staircase at rear with railings at the 42" height required for commercial new construction. Our endorsement is requested to use 32" height for railings at the front in line with historic building code.

Staff comments   In April 2022 HPC approved a two-story steel staircase at this location. Discussions with plan exam and a desire to reduce costs have resulted in this new design. Conceptual approval was also granted for a new railing around the front English basement area with referral to staff for final design.

The new proposal is essentially a replica of the existing rear staircase in new stained, pressure-treated wood and a railing design that meets our standards. Per prior similar approvals, the staircase is acceptable with the condition that injection marks in the lumber should not be visible on rails or balusters. Their visual effect should be minimized to the extent possible on treads, risers, and stringers.

As to the front railing, staff supports the reduced railing height proposed as historically appropriate and adequately based on photographic evidence. Staff is still negotiating exact design with applicant and architect. The reduced height makes it easier to use architectural salvage. Staff also recommends the Commission support the idea, noting that we can only offer support. HPC's support is not binding on a building code issue (2015 IEBC Chapter 12) and it is subject to and independent decision by the Department of Neighborhood Services.

Recommendation   Recommend HPC approval.

Conditions   Minimize visibility of injection marks in treated wood per above.

Previous HPC action   **211821, April 2022**

Previous Council action