



May 7th, 2025

**Historic Preservation Commission**  
City Clerk's Office  
841 N. Broadway, Room B-1  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

RE: Project Name: Vliet Street Lofts – Former Coggs Building  
1220 W. Vliet Street, Milwaukee, WI 53205  
Quorum Architect's Project Number: 10031.07

**Description of Project:**

This project consists of exterior renovations, site redevelopment and interior renovations of the systems and spaces in the former Schuster's Department Store / Milwaukee County Department of Welfare Building. The building is located in Milwaukee's Near West Side between 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets on Vliet Street.

The building was constructed in 2 phases between 1910-1923 as the Schuster's Department Store. The building operated as a department store until 1963, when Milwaukee County purchased the building, as it was a prime location for their welfare services in the community.

Although the City of Milwaukee recognizes the building's period of significance as 1910 to 1923, when it functioned as the Schuster's Department Store, we would like to acknowledge the era in which the Milwaukee County Welfare Department moved into the building and began their services and welfare reform in Wisconsin in 1963. The building was incredibly significant as it was the location of the largest expansion of social services in Milwaukee's history. The building housed a vital government economic aid office for citizens of the county during an important period of social change in Milwaukee. It led to a significant growth of welfare and social services in not only the city of Milwaukee, but the United States as a whole.

As a part of this project, we are submitting to and National Parks Service (NPS) and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for historic tax credits with the period of significance starting at 1963 and ending in 1986. The Part 1 application acknowledging this era has been approved by NPS/SHPO and a Part 2 application has been submitted. The work described in this COA application is consistent with what is concurrently being reviewed by the NPS/SHPO.

The intent of this scope of work is identified in the drawings dated 05/07/2025. The work consists of:

## Exterior Renovations

### Masonry

#### Existing Conditions:

- The **south, east, and west elevations** feature a mix of brick and limestone cladding.
- Precast concrete panels are found at the base of the storefronts on the **south, east, and west elevations**.
- The **north elevation** is clad with an EIFS finish system.
- Window openings feature limestone sills and exposed steel lintels.
- Details such as the storefront surrounds, relief pilasters, capitals, entablatures, medallions, and cornices are all constructed of limestone.

#### Proposed Work:

- A limited amount of exterior masonry and associated EIFS will need to be removed from the **north elevation** to install three new windows. All three windows will be installed at the first floor level.
- Varying amounts of brickwork will require repointing. Specifically, 100% of brick on the **east elevation**, 20% of brick on the **west elevation**, and 50% of brick on the **south elevation** will require repointing.
- Empty, damaged, or loose mortar will be raked from the joints, avoiding damaging surrounding masonry. Mortar will be removed to a depth of 2½ times the width of the joint to sound mortar. New mortar will be installed in the joints that matches the texture, color, composition, and joint profile of the historic mortar. Areas with cracks will be repaired as necessary. Any masonry units that are deteriorated beyond repair will be replaced with new units that match existing in size, color, and texture. Repointing and repair work will be performed in accordance with Preservation Brief 2.
- Missing or damaged bricks will be replaced using bricks to match the historic brick.
- All steel door and window lintels will be wire wheeled to remove surface rust and a coating will be applied to prevent future rust-jacking. Any lintels deteriorated beyond repair will be replaced in kind. Locations are indicated on the drawings.
- All upward facing sealant joints will be cut out and replaced at all window sills and other projected masonry.
- All structural cracks will be ground out and caulked.

## Entrances and Storefront

### Existing Conditions:

- At the **south, east and west ground level elevations**, non-historic storefronts span the entire elevation. Storefronts are comprised of a precast concrete panel at the base below glass panels with painted metal transom panels above.
- The **south elevation** features three historic entrance locations identified with pronounced limestone surrounds. The central (primary) entry is infilled with a historic (c. 1986) aluminum framed (anodized finish) entry system featuring two sets of full light glass doors. A non-historic metal canopy is located above these entry doors. Both the eastern and western entry points have been infilled with brick below a painted EIFS soffit. Historic flush double leaf metal (painted) doors with hollow metal frames sit within the brick infill.
- The **east elevation** features one historic entrance location identified with pronounced limestone surrounds. This centrally located entrance has been infilled with brick below a painted EIFS soffit. Within the brick is a historic (c. 1986) aluminum framed (anodized finish) entry system featuring double leaf full light doors infilled with FRP panels.
- The **west elevation** features one historic entrance location identified with pronounced limestone surrounds. This centrally located entrance has been infilled with brick below a painted EIFS soffit. Within the brick is a historic (c. 1986) aluminum framed (anodized finish) entry system featuring double leaf full light glass doors.
- The **north elevation** features a loading entrance located in the western half of the north elevation and includes a raised concrete loading dock with a metal canopy above. A flush single leaf metal access door provides interior access from the loading dock. A flush single leaf door provides a means of egress from a stair on the north elevation.

### Proposed Work:

- At the first floor, any storefront glass that had a coating applied on the exterior side (to make the glass non-translucent) will be replaced with glass to match the existing storefront glass. Locations are indicated on the drawings.
- At the first floor, any storefront glass that had a coating applied on the interior side, that is peeling will be replaced with glass to match the existing storefront glass. Locations are indicated on the drawings.
- The metal panels (and artwork panels) within the transom will be removed and replaced with glass to match the existing storefront glass. The owner will retain all artwork panels for reinstallation on the building's interior.
- The existing storefront doors on the **south elevation** will be retained. New hardware will be installed to comply with ADA. The non-historic metal and glass sloped canopy located above these entry doors will be removed. Adjacent brick on the east and west sides of the recessed entry, affected by removal of the canopy will be replaced to match the existing brown brick.

- The existing storefront doors on the **west elevation** will be removed and replaced with new anodized aluminum storefront.
- The existing storefront doors on the **east elevation** will be removed and replaced with new anodized aluminum storefront.
- The existing flush double and single leaf metal doors on the **south, east, and west elevations** will remain. The hollow metal doors and frames will be repainted.
- At the **north elevation**, the doors associated with the loading dock will be removed. The single leaf flush door exiting the stairwell (between grid lines 6 and 7) will be replaced with an aluminum framed storefront with a side light and a single leaf full glass light door. The decorative brick pilaster and limestone pediment above will be retained.
- As part of the proposed entry vestibule to be constructed on the **north elevation**, a metal and glass paneled overhead door will be installed on the **west elevation**, an aluminum and glass storefront with a single leaf full glass light door will be installed on the **north elevation**, and an aluminum and glass storefront will be installed on the **east elevation**.

## Windows

### Existing Conditions:

- The **south, east and west elevations** feature non-historic aluminum fixed window units divided into four glass lights.
- The **north elevation** is void of any window openings except at the rooftop penthouse level. At this level, the windows are small, fixed units divided into four glass lights.

### Proposed Work:

- Three new windows will be installed on the **north elevation** at the first-floor level. The windows will be fixed units with anodized aluminum frames.
- All existing windows will be retained.
- Glass that had a coating applied on the interior side (to make the glass non-translucent) will be replaced with glass to match the existing glass on the other windows.

## Exterior Signage

### Existing Conditions:

- Four metal signs are installed on the limestone band above the storefront: one on the **east and west elevations** and two installed on the **south elevation**. All four signs are the same, listing the name of the building: Marcia P. Coggs Human Services Center. The signs are not illuminated.
- Vinyl letters are applied to the primary storefront entrance on the **south elevation**. The letters spell out the name of the building: Marcia P. Coggs Human Services Center.

### Proposed Work:

- All existing signs will be removed.

## Roof

### Existing Conditions:

- The roof is flat and clad in a rolled membrane roof system.
- Parapets (of various heights) are found on all four sides of the roof.
- A rooftop penthouse is situated along the north elevation. The rooftop penthouse is clad in cast concrete panels at the **north elevation** and corrugated metal panels on the remaining elevations. A chimney extends from the roof of the penthouse.
- There is a mechanical unit along the south elevation of the rooftop penthouse and includes various vents and roof penetrations throughout.

### Proposed Work:

- The roof system will be removed between gridlines D and G and 5 and 6. A low profile skylight (Super Sky – ridge with gable) will be installed.
- Roof top air condensers will be installed a minimum of one bay back from the parapets to avoid being visible from the public right of way.
- The existing chimney will be retained.
- The roof of the proposed entry vestibule addition will be finished with an EPDM system.

## Site Redevelopment

### North Site Plan

#### Existing Conditions:

- An existing entry vestibule is located on the **north elevation** between gridlines 6 and 7.
- A concrete loading dock is located on the **north elevation** between gridlines 3 and 6. A canopy is located above the loading dock.
- A generator, cooling tower, duct bank and related piping sits on a concrete pad with concrete screening north of the building.
- The site is void of any landscaping.
- An alley runs along the **north elevation** on the eastern half of the building. At gridline 10, the alley turns 90 degrees to the north.
- An asphalt parking lot is located northwest of the building. A black metal fence with a gate runs along the west side of the parking lot.
- A concrete sidewalk borders the site on the south, east and west elevations.

#### Proposed Work:

- The existing entry vestibule located on the **north elevation** will be removed except for the decorative brick pilaster and limestone pediment.
- The concrete loading dock located on the **north elevation** and the canopy will be removed.
- The concrete pad, concrete screening and all equipment will be removed.
- An entry vestibule addition will be constructed on the **north elevation** featuring a precast concrete base and brick cladding.

- A vehicular ramp will be created north of the building between gridlines I and J and between gridlines 2 and 9. The ramp will be accessed from a new north-south alley between gridlines 9 and 10. A gate will be installed between the alley and the ramp that will be operated with a card reader.
- A painted metal guardrail will be installed on top of a concrete retaining wall at the perimeter of the north, west and south sides of the ramp that leads into the lower level.
- An outdoor plaza will be created north and west of the proposed ramp. The surface will be concrete, with a portion consisting of stamped and stained concrete. The furniture will be fixed to the plaza, with concrete planters. Plantings will consist of low maintenance perennials on the north side of the plaza.
- To comply with municipal stormwater management, a small rain garden will be located to the north of the proposed ramp.
- Pergola structures with fixed seating will be incorporated into the plaza / outdoor space to promote outdoor placemaking.
- The existing black fence and gate on the west side will be replaced with a mostly opaque metal fence with a painted finish.
- A trash and recycling enclosure will be constructed north of the building between gridlines 7 and 9. This enclosure will be constructed of a mostly opaque metal fence with a painted finish.
- A generator and transformer will be installed on a concrete pad north of the building. This equipment will be enclosed with a mostly opaque metal fence with a painted finish. The final location of the transformer and generator will be coordinated with the local utility company.

### Interior Renovations

While we understand the HPC does not have purview over the interior scope of the project, below is a summary of interior renovations so that HPC understand the overall scope of the project.

#### Central Circulation Spaces:

The existing interior central circulation spaces will retain their finishes per the NPS/SHPO 1963-1986 period of significance. The quarry floor tile, ACT ceilings, and interior brick wall finishes will all remain.

#### Milwaukee County Build-Out:

At the eastern portion of the first floor, we have designed space for the Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Department. Their space includes offices, conference rooms, exam and medication rooms, collaboration space, and other functions for their department needs.

#### Residential Units:

There will be 62 apartment units.



Lower-level Parking Garage:

There will be new parking provided at the lower level to serve the tenants of the building.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions.

Respectively submitted,

Allyson Nemec, AIA, NCARB, LEED® AP | Principal  
**Quorum Architects, Inc.**

Attached:

- COA Application
- Architectural Drawing Set
- COA Overall Photos