



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date: 8/1/2022
Ald. District: 3
Staff reviewer: Tim Askin
PTS #115298

Property 1669 N. FARWELL AV.

Owner/Applicant THE EXCLUSIVE COMPANY CORP TANNER MUSGROVE
318 N MAIN ST LILLIPUT RECORDS
OSHKOSH WI 54901 1669 N FARWELL

Proposal Wall sign to be painted directly on the brick of the Brady Street façade.

Staff comments Sign design is not at issue here, merely the placement and materials. Applicant has been informed that putting this design on a board and attaching the board to the wall in the same location would be acceptable and would not have required a HPC hearing.

Applicant notes that this area of the Brady Street District is prone to graffiti. Staff does not dispute this, it is known from previous conversations with the BID Director and former Ald. Kovac. While wall art is known to be a deterrent to graffiti and the desired aesthetic effect of painting directly on brick is understandable, allowing signage to be directly painted on brick would go against our standards and precedents. (*Brady Street Guideline 2.a.i* "Unpainted brick or stone should not be painted or covered.")

The Commission may choose to allow a one-time experiment with wheat paste signage. It is essentially traditional 19th century technique for posting advertisements on walls. A paste is made of literal wheat and water and it used to adhere signage on basic printer paper to just about any surface. Expected lifespan is roughly one year in an exposed environment like this. See <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/09/magazine/how-to-wheat-paste-posters.html>

The cities of Cincinnati, OH and Covington, KY have found wheat paste installations acceptable and harmless on brick. They can be annoying to remove, but it is possible with chemical means and without the high-powered abrasive techniques prohibited under Wisconsin law.

Recommendation Recommend HPC Denial

Conditions

Previous HPC action

Previous Council action