

Hatala, Carlen

From: Molly Booth <molly.booth17@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2015 6:52 PM
To: Historic Preservation Commission
Subject: Historic Plaque Documentation
Attachments: Bio.docx; IMG_1400.JPG; IMG_1394.JPG; IMG_1398.JPG; IMG_1396.JPG; IMG_1397.JPG

Hello,

I submitted an application for consideration of a historic plaque (William Conrad House) and attached are additional documentation and pictures. Any questions, please let me know.

Thanks, Molly Booth

The William Conrad House is located in Historic Brewers Hill at 102 E. Vine Street (previously addressed as 174 Sherman Street). The house is part of the Vine-Reservoir Historic District which was locally and federally designated in the early 1980's. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin survey identified the house as a contributing structure, in good condition, with the architectural statement noting "a 2 ½ story Cream City brick structure with multiple gables containing paired sash windows, hipped roof, plain stone window lintels, an oriel window at stairs landing between the first and second floors, and rockface dolomitic limestone base". The City Designation Report identified the house amongst the popular American Queen Anne style, noting the continued popularity of cream brick as a building material. The house sits on a 100' – 0" x 62' – 6" corner lot, with the south-facing front elevation along Vine Street and the west-facing corner side elevation along 1st Street. The west facing elevation serves as the front entry to the house, with the focal point being a 3-columned, 19' – 0" x 7' – 0" wood front porch.

The building history was researched by a former owner, Gary R. Goyette. He found that an application for permit to build was issued to William Conrad on April 21, 1880. The building was to be a "brick cased dwelling, costing \$3,000, having stone foundation walls, the general dimensions were to be 32' – 0" x 50' – 0" with a 1st story height of 10' – 0" and the second floor at 9' – 0", 1st floor joists were to be 2" x 12" – 16" on center, 2nd floor joists 2" x 12' – 16" on center, 3rd floor 2" x 6" – 16" on center". John Kramm is listed as the architect. As no name is given for the builder, it is highly likely Kramm served as architect-builder for the original house.

John Kramm first appears in the 1881 issue of Milwaukee City Directories. He is listed from 1881 to 1885 as a carpenter residing at 907 6th Street. 1886 and 1887 list Kramm as a carpenter and contractor at same address. From 1888 to 1909, he is listed as an architect. He appears to have retired in 1910 and pass away on September 16, 1912 at the age of 72.

On October 25, 1904, permit to make alterations was issued to Paul Picsen for an 8' – 0" x 16' – 0" – 20 feet high addition onto the west-facing elevation for an enclosed stairway with partly new roof, costing \$1,000. Henry C. Lotter is listed as the architect.

Henry Lotter first appears as a student/draftsman 1893-1896. 1897 lists the firm of Mollerus and Lotter at 427 Milwaukee Street. 1898 to 1905 lists H.G. Lotter at 427 Milwaukee. 1906 lists Fisher and Lotter at same address. From 1907 to 1929 the listing is H.G. Lotter architect, with addresses changing. H.G. Lotter died in 1932. The builder, Paul Riesen, was one of Milwaukee's most prolific early contractors. His firm, Paul Riesens and Sons, constructed among others, the Goldsmith Building, the Sentinel Building, the Pabst Building, Riverside High School, the Pfister Hotel and the Milwaukee City Hall. Paul Riesen died on September 5, 1914 at the age of 62.

William Conrad was born in Rahmrad, Germany in 1845. He came to Wisconsin in 1858 settling on a farm with his parents in Washington County. He moved to Milwaukee in 1860 to learn the tanning business and served a 10 year apprenticeship. At the age of 25, he became one of the organizers and partners of Peiffer, Conrad and Co., operating under that name until 1874 when it became Conrad Brothers, Tanners. Conrad Brothers Tannery was located on Commerce Street, at the foot of Sherman (now Vine) and Holton, in what is now the parking lot of the Brewers Point apartments.

In 1917, Conrad took over as president and treasurer serving in that capacity until 1920 when company was sold to Phoenix Leather Co of Chicago. Conrad resided at the 1st & Sherman (Vine) house for 21 years, having sold it on October 24, 1911. At the time of his death, on February 12, 1930 at the age of 84, he was director of the US Glue Co, an active member of the Old Settlers Club of Milwaukee, and had resided at 461 Newberry Boulevard.

In the 1940's, permit records indicate the single family house was converted to a five unit rooming house/efficiency apartment. The house remained as a multi-family structure until the early 1980's when a joint ventureship between Peter Cooper, Thomas Rebholz and Gary Goyette executed a faithful restoration back to the 1904 single family residence floor plan. All subsequent owners have maintained the structure as a single family residence.

The William Conrad House is the largest house for one block in any direction on either Vine Street or 1st Street, giving the house a high visibility profile along the southern edge of the historic district boundary. The prominent 2 ½ story massing is further pronounced along the roadways, with its setback being less than 9 feet from the public sidewalks. The location of the house, at the crest of a hill, also offers views of Downtown Milwaukee, which few single family residences can offer in the City. The house is deserving of this landmark status not for its size but in recognition of its location. Being near the once-thriving Milwaukee River industrial corridor, a mere five blocks from Mr. Conrad's tannery business, the house's location is quintessential Brewers Hill, a neighborhood which formed as a residential enclave sandwiched between factories that lined Commerce Street and retail centers that lined then-Third Street and North Avenue, with business owners living next to laborers in a mixture of grand houses and cottage style houses. While his tannery business declined, the house that Conrad built continues to remain a prominent fixture in a still thriving residential neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.



