



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date	10/7/2024	CCF # 240609
Ald. DiAndre Jackson	Staff reviewer: Tim Askin Updated language for October meeting in red.	
Property	3360 N Sherman Boulevard	Sherman Boulevard HD
Owner/Applicant	Milwaukee Public Schools	Christopher Kidd and Associates, LLC

Proposal

Complete window replacement with new thermally broken aluminum windows by Graham Architectural Products. Manufacturer has committed to reproducing the exact original brickmould and has shown the ability to do so.

Staff comments

The windows at Townsend have been in an appalling state for some time. It is easily demonstrated that many of the windows, particularly the double hung windows are beyond any economically feasible repair. Temporary fixes have been applied, including replacing select panes with acrylic and polycarbonate instead of glass. Ground level windows are presently glass block and most of the boiler room windows have been filled. It is believed nearly all others are original from 1928.

Milwaukee Public Schools has challenges unique among our property owners. MPS notes their extreme energy costs at this facility due to the condition of the windows. Maintenance and energy costs are chief among their concerns. In a prior project in from 2017, HPC rejected a window replacement proposal with a different aluminum window system and included preservation and restoration of the front windows.

The windows proposed this time are a much better match to the originals and essentially the same Graham product line as the HPC approved for the University Club earlier this year. In this case the windows will be custom profiles as there are surviving original windows which can be duplicated.

The ground floor windows, blocked up windows, and glass block windows should be approved for replacement with this proposal as is. Simple double-hung windows consisting of only two sashes should also be approved. Staff would like to see more information on the larger window configurations such as in the north elevation of the gymnasium and the front stair towers. It is HPC's remit to preserve as much original fabric as possible and if a window is not intended to be operable, it is much more reasonable to enclose it with fixed storm windows on the interior and exterior, which can themselves be double-pane and obtain equal or better energy efficiency and equal elimination of maintenance. There is not sufficient information at this time to deem the large and complex windows beyond repair and with potential for a form of encapsulated preservation.

October comments

The requested condition report for the windows in the stair towers has been completed and received. Unfortunately staff does not concur with the architect's findings that these windows are beyond repair. In any other situation, HPC would consider them highly repairable with minor carpentry needs. Some may need a new bottom rail, but muntins are highly intact, hardware can be reinstalled or repaired, broken sash cords can be replaced with chains for long-term durability. Areas featuring lead paint are all exterior surfaces. Permanent exterior storm windows, which can be made in double-pane will solve the majority of the maintenance issue for these stair tower windows.

Proper restoration of the stair tower windows and installation of permanent, high R-value storm windows will maintain the building's integrity. The windows notably already feature bronze, channeled weather stripping which is extremely effective at controlling drafts.

Attic level windows are of minor concern and have more visible damage even in long views and can be replaced with an appropriate Graham window.

Recommendation

Approve replacement of all ordinary, two-sash double-hung windows, all glass block windows, filled-in windows, ground floor windows, and attic windows. Stair tower windows can be cost effectively repaired and brought up to energy efficiency standards.