



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date: 6/13/2016
Ald. Jose Perez District: 12
Staff reviewer: Carlen Hatala
PTS #111011

Property	1201 W. HISTORIC MITCHELL ST.	Mitchell Street Historic District
Owner/Applicant	JOMELA BUTTERS LLC 5601 W NORTH AVE MILWAUKEE WI 53208	Hank Zuwala DZA Associates, Inc 2625 Butterfield Rd Ste 233N Oak Brook, IL 60523 Phone: (630) 230-1020

Proposal

As at many sites along today's Historic Mitchell Street, there has been a succession of buildings on this property. A 2-story brick-veneered building stood at the corner and a two story frame store stood next door to the west. They were enlarged over time. Those buildings were demolished in 1937.

What looks like separate buildings today actually was constructed as a one story, three-storefront commercial block built in 1937 and designed by architect J. P. Bruecker for the Burmeister Holding Company. The building was simple in design with some cast stone belt courses and blocks featuring Art Deco patterns.

The largest of the three spaces was remodeled into the Big Boy restaurant before 1970 and features the chain restaurant's distinctive gabled front. The restaurant occupied the building for many years.

The two storefronts to the west have had a number of occupants. The space immediately adjacent to the former Bog Boy was most recently occupied by a social service agency that removed the storefront since the interior was connected to the former Big Boy. The storefront beyond that has been occupied by a Dollar Bazaar.

The current proposal is to unify the entire group of three storefronts for a Family Dollar store. The Big Boy portion of the building will remain much the same. The changes there will consist of closing up the Mitchell Street entry and converting that to a window. A new glass entry will be created out of the former social service agency front immediately to the west. The full light double entry doors will feature glass sidelights and transoms.

The third storefront now holding Dollar Bazaar will lose the entry door and storefront windows, and feature smaller windows above which will be awnings. The brick will be painted to create a unified facade.

The east elevation will remain the same but signage will be installed above the cornice.

A yellow, removable film will be placed over the windows on the east elevation and some of the Mitchell Street windows.

Staff comments

Generally the HPC and staff have not recommended the remodeling of an existing historic building where the original features will be removed. In this instance, half of the original 1937 building was altered before 1970 and the brick painted and Lannon Stone applied, and the storefront to the west was altered with HPC approval in 1992. The original building's details are minimal where they do exist.

Staff finds the alteration acceptable although it may look a bit too suburban for the street. Staff has concerns about the film covering the windows. The yellow film is part of the company identification. It is removable but blocks any visibility into the store, something that Mitchell Street has been opposed to as it is trying to draw more customers to the area. Blocking the windows allows for more display space on the interior but does not allow shoppers to see inside.

Recommendation

Recommend HPC Approval with conditions

Conditions

The yellow window film (or possibly an opaque film) will be acceptable on the east elevation along South 12th Street (only 4 windows are now open there). The windows fronting Mitchell street should remain transparent.

Previous HPC action**Previous Council action**