



## Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

**HPC meeting date: 9/13/2016**  
**Ald. Robert Bauman District: 4**  
**Staff reviewer: Carlen Hatala**  
**PTS #113428**

<b>Property</b>	959 N. 34 <sup>th</sup> Street	Concordia Historic District
<b>Owner/Applicant</b>	JEFFREY D WALDORF 959 N 34TH ST MILWAUKEE WI 53208	Luis Barbosa BMR Design Group, Inc. 503 W. Lincoln Avenue Milwaukee, WI 53207

### Proposal

This proposal involves the historic Conrad Kraemer House, built in 1891 and designed by the prominent architectural firm of Ferry & Clas.

The 1894 Sanborn fire insurance map shows that the house once had a flat facade and that the entrance was at the north end of the facade, sheltered by a small porch. The 1910 Sanborn map shows that a large bay had been constructed at the front of the facade and that a new full length porch had been constructed. There are no permit records to document specifically when these alterations took place between 1894 and 1910.

The current proposal is to extend the porch roof to cover the north end of the porch, to remove the square posts and replace with round columns and remove a second story window on the facade.

**Staff comments**

The porch as we see it today is over 100 years old and has acquired its own historic significance. The current porch posts have been on the house longer than any previous supports.

**The PORCH ROOF**

There are at least several porches like this in the city, having large stone block walls and a rounded end. (Adler House 1533 N. Prospect Avenue (1888)—architect Alfred Clas; Victor Schlitz House 2004 W. Highland Avenue (1890)—architect Charles Gombert; the towered house at 2303 W. Galena) All three of these houses have porches similar to that of our subject house; all three are masonry. Often a porch like this is built with scuppers for the drainage of water and sometimes the deck of the porch itself is constructed of concrete. In this instance on North 34<sup>th</sup> Street, the porch was not constructed with drainage and the wood decking is deteriorating. Interestingly, the Victor Schlitz House did not have a porch extending over the rounded west end of the porch. That was added later per historic photographs.

The current owner would like to extend the porch roof over the north, rounded end of the porch. Currently, there is no place for the rainwater to drain at this location and the decking has experienced deterioration.

Staff sees one complication to this proposal. The roof had not extended out to the edge of the porch due to presence of a window to the right or north of the entry door. Also, constructing the roof to the edge of the house will intersect with the flared course of shingles that are designed to shed water away from the wall. Either the window would have to be modified or the roof structure would have to be raised up. In addition, the rendering makes the roof appear flat. This may be a factor of the software used but in any case the roof will need to have a pitch to drain water from the structure. Locations and placement of gutters and downspouts for the porch need to be shown.

**The PORCH COLUMNS**

Currently, the supports for the porch consist of squared posts with recessed panels. They are consistent and match the engaged post at the south end of the porch. There is no documentation for the existence of round columns. At the October 19, 2016 meeting of the HPC, the HPC denied a COA for the substitution of round columns for the original square porch posts at 2908 W. McKinley Boulevard.

**REMOVAL OF FRONT WINDOW**

The applicant has also requested the removal of the small rectangular window to the north or right of the bay. This detail is prominent on the façade. No justification for the removal of this window has been supplied to the HPC staff.

**Recommendation**

Approve project with conditions.

**Conditions**

1. The issue with the height of the porch and the north window will need to be resolved as well as how the porch roof will intersect the flared upper wall.
2. Current porch posts be retained and repaired as needed with additional new posts to match. They have been on the house over 100 years.
3. The architect and owner need to work with staff on how drainage issues will be resolved. Perhaps a scupper can be incorporated into the north end of the porch.
4. If round columns are approved by the HPC, they must be wood and the style will need to be reviewed by staff.
5. The small second story window on the front façade can be removed only if the owner provides sufficient documentation that it is a later feature added within the last 50 years.

**Previous HPC action**

**Previous Council action**