



# Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

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**HPC meeting date: 1/10/2022**  
**Ald. Nik Kovac District: 3**  
**Staff reviewer: Jacqueline Drayer**  
**PTS CCF 211237**

**Property** 2605 N Summit Avenue North Point North Historic District

**Owner/Applicant** James Sterns  
2605 N Summit Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53211

**Proposal** Replacement of three basement windows with glass block.

Previously approved: Remove sidewalk where necessary for excavation. Support house. Excavate down to footing approximately 16-feet of the north wall from the west corner and 10-feet of the west wall from the north wall. Remove approximately 15-feet 9-inches of the north wall from the west corner and 9-feet 6-inches of the west wall from the north corner. Save and relay face brick above grade at corner. Replace three existing basement windows in-kind, maintain existing muntin grid, and install security rods (see correspondence). Remove existing footings and replace with new concrete footing per VM Engineering report in excavated areas. Build new concrete block walls where existing walls were removed. Install new treated lumber mud sill if necessary. Install steel reinforcing rods and fill cores of block with concrete per VM Engineering report. Install sonnet tubes and fill with concrete on the outside next to new wall to support sidewalk. Install new inside drain tile and replace floor where removed. Install sump crock, pump and the electrical circuit. Replace concrete sidewalk where removed for excavation and pitch to driveway.

## Staff comments

This applicant was previously issued a COA that included basement window security as well as excavation work. The original application included a request for replacement of three original basement windows with glass block windows. The applicant was told via email on November 17, 2021 that glass block would require an HPC hearing, and might not be approved. The applicant expressed a desire for approval as soon as possible, without needing to wait to an HPC hearing. Therefore, steel rod security bars were recommended. The applicant consented to this change.

On November 18, 2021, the applicant was issued a COA for his application to do basement excavation on this house, and similar related work. Steel rod security bars on the basement windows were also approved. At the December 13, 2021 hearing, this COA was ratified by the HPC.

The applicant attended and expressed a desire for glass block basement windows. This was discouraged by HPC members at the meeting, but per applicant request, is now before the HPC for review.

The applicant has repeatedly expressed that the three windows are not visible from the street. Although the windows are not on the primary elevation, based on photos submitted to staff it is unclear whether or not the windows are truly invisible from the street.

Even so, glass block window replacement on basement windows that are not visible from the street is at the HPC's discretion. Given that a suitable alternative was already presented that retained the original wood window configuration and met security needs, and the fact that the HPC expressed concerns about glass block, denial is recommended.

**Recommendation**

Recommend HPC denial.

**Conditions**

**Previous HPC action**

**Previous Council action**