

MILWAUKEE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT



Date	11/3/2025	Ald.	Perez
CCF	251021	Reviewer	Tim Askin
Address	501 W. Historic Mitchell	Owner	St Stanislaus Properties LLC
District	Mitchell Street	Applicant	Barrientos Design/St. Stanislaus

PROPOSAL

Rehabilitate the existing commercial building for use as a Parish center. Construct a three-story rear addition, which will provide additional egress, floor space, and access to a new rooftop deck from which to view the church. Rehabilitate primary building based on Landmarks Commission photographs and principles of traditional storefront design.

STAFF COMMENTS

HPC has previously approved new brick veneer for the exterior to replace severely deteriorated brick. The restoration of the exterior consists of removing paint from the remaining stone and metalwork, new solid wood windows, a new aluminum storefront system with transom windows on the Mitchell Street facades, recladding the turret with cedar shingles, and reroofing the turret with copper shingles.

For the rear addition, applicants have provided a sightline study confirming that their placement of rooftop mechanicals will not be visible from the opposite sidewalk on either Mitchell or 5th Street. There will be negligible visibility from the west along Mitchell Street. It is not sufficient visibility to necessitate screening.

Given the level of alteration here and near elimination of historic materials, the Commission must stand firm on retaining some historic windows. There are two second floor windows on the 5th Street façade that have complex lite patterns. They will be difficult to reproduce and are not in particularly poor condition, based on inspection from the sidewalk level.

Landscaping plant choices are reasonable and add visual interest in areas with limited fenestration. Siting of plants along S. 5th Street will require negotiation with the Department of Public Works. Staff recommends deferring to DPW's requirements for that location.

Analysis of guidelines

Mitchell Street guidelines do not separate additions from new construction. Therefore, new construction guidelines apply:

1. Siting. Placing an addition in any other location would cross lot lines or be in the city's right of way. Placement is logical and no other location is possible. A subtle offset is provided at the connection point between the old and the new.
2. Scale. In extensive conversations with the applicants, the design was brought into harmonious scale with the existing building. Fenestration is similar in scale

3. Form.

4. Materials. Materials match those being used for repairs on this historic portion of the building. However, a lamp design other than coach lights needs to be selected for the rear entrance. They are not period appropriate. Something contemporary or a gas globe style fixture would suit the location.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve with conditions.

1. Submit a detailed window schedule for the addition for approval. Windows shall be non-clad wood with simulated divided lights with internal spacer bar.
2. There is one pair of historic, complex sash windows on the 5th Street façade. As these will be highly challenging to reproduce and some original material needs to be retained on the building, these two windows shall be retained and restored.
3. Rear entry lighting shall not be “coach lights.” These are not correct to the period. Select either a contemporary fixture or a gas globe style fixture.
4. Exterior masonry cleaning/paint removal is a separate permit from all other construction. No specific cleaning method for the historic masonry has been proposed in the documents provided so far. This will require separate review and mockups at the relevant time. High pressure abrasive cleaning is prohibited by state law.

PRIOR ACTION

N/A

GUIDELINES

STREETSCAPES

The streetscapes in North Point South are visually cohesive because of the intact building stock and the retention of period street and landscaping features. There are few non-contributing buildings or visually prominent inappropriate additions to historic structures. The traditional landscape treatment of the building lots and the period streetlights contribute to the maintenance of the district's traditional residential character.

1. Maintain the height, scale, mass and materials established by the buildings in the district and the traditional setback and density of the block faces. Avoid introducing elements that are incompatible in terms of siting, materials, height or scale.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

[Few] buildings have been constructed since 1940... It is important that additional new construction be designed so as to harmonize with the character of the district.

1. Siting. New construction must reflect the traditional siting of buildings in North Point South. This includes setback, spacing between buildings, the orientation of openings to the street and neighboring structures, and the relationship between the main building and accessory buildings.
2. Scale. Overall building height and bulk; the expression of major building divisions including foundation, body and roof; and, individual building components such as porches, overhangs and fenestration must be compatible with the surrounding structures.
3. Form. The massing of new construction must be compatible with the surrounding buildings. The profiles of roofs and building elements that project and recede from the main block must express the same continuity established by the historic structures.
4. Materials. The building materials that are visible from the public right-of-way should be consistent with the colors, textures, proportions, and combinations of cladding materials traditionally used in North Point South. The physical composition of the materials may be different from that of the historic materials, but the same appearance should be maintained.