



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date	1/8/2024	CCF #231199
Ald. Coggs	Staff reviewer: Tim Askin	
Property	114 – 116 E Brown Street	Brewers Hill HD
Owner/Applicant	Brandon Currie URBRAND LLC	Emer Martinez, contractor Dream Builders, designer

Proposal

Retroactive approval for demolition of non-historic porch. Replace front entry porch with historic reconstruction design.

Staff comments

This home was sold twice in 2023 and neighbors reported several problems. A presumably never legal radio tower was removed by the first buyer. The second buyer noted that the non-historic porch was structurally unsound and removed it shortly after purchase and then began building a new porch. Neither had the required permits or COAs.

There is no documentation of the original porch design on this house. The removed porch may have been a heavily altered original or been a mid-century replacement. The porch had no historic or aesthetic value.

The new porch design is mostly appropriate in scale and design to the original state of the house. While the secondary siding has given the exterior a vaguely Arts & Crafts character, the ongoing partial removal of it is revealing the original Queen Anne design.

The Brewers Hill overlay will require some changes.

- Minimum plan dimensions are not compliant. Usually this is waived when matching an original footprint. However, this can be met by extending the porch by 2". This should be encouraged unless existing footings require matching the footprint exactly.
- Skirting is substantially compliant. Board spacing may need minor adjustment
- Newels and columns need to be increased in size to 6x6 minimum
- Top rails must be minimum of 3" high.

Finally, HPC has not accepted 2x4s as top rails and discourages them as bottom rails. A design that sheds water is required for functionality and historical accuracy. Per the overlay, they must also be a minimum of 3" high. See *Living With History* pp. 52-53 for examples.

Recommendation

- Recommend retroactive approval of demolition
- Recommend approval of new porch design with conditions

Conditions

1. Verify spacing of skirting panels to be 3/8" minimum.
2. Enlarge newels, posts, and columns to 6x6.
3. Top rail shall be a water-shedding design and at least 3" high.
4. Extend porch to full 6' if feasible.
5. All exposed wood to be painted or stained upon completion of work or within 120 days if pressure-treated.
6. No visible injection marks on any pressure-treated material.
7. Verify any other issues with overlay design standards and consult with staff on any other necessary changes.
<https://city.milwaukee.gov/ImageLibrary/Groups/cityDCD/planning/plans/NC/BrewersHillHarambee/C.pdf>