

AHISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

HPC Meeting Date: 12/05/2022
Ald. District 3, Jonathan Brostoff
Staff Reviewer: Carlen Hatala
CCF# 221001

PROPERTY	Milwaukee Protestant Home for the Aged Eastcastle Place 2449 N. Downer Avenue Milwaukee, WI 53211
OWNER/APPLICANT	Michael Brever (representative) Eastcastle Place 2505 East Bradford Avenue Milwaukee, WI 53211
CONSULTANT	Jen Davel Heritage Consulting Group 10 E. Doty Street Madison, WI 53703
PROPOSAL	Certified Local Government Review of the National Register Nomination for the Milwaukee Protestant Home for the Aged
STAFF COMMENTS	<p>The Milwaukee Protestant Home for the Aged was constructed in 1892 with later additions in 1899, 1926, 1953, and 1963 within the period of significance (c. 1892-1971). The 1892 section was designed by Henry C. Koch. The 1899 addition was designed by Henry C. Koch and Herman J. Esser. The 1926 addition was designed by Fitzhugh Scott and MacDonald Mayer Architects who also redesigned the main, southeast facing elevation of 1892 to better complement the 1897 and 1926 sections. William Wenzler was responsible for the 1963 modern addition. Contemporary additions were built in 2000 and 2006.</p> <p>The property is being nominated for its Social History, representing the growth and advancement in care of the elderly between the late 19th and early 21st centuries. From the original mission of providing food and shelter the institution has expanded to provide physical and mental care, occupational therapy and other services.</p> <p>The home was originally constructed as elderly housing and remains so today. Protestant women organized in 1884 to provide housing for the destitute elderly women of the city, women who were unable to care or provide for themselves. Men were later admitted and over time residents paid to live in the building. As the original rented duplex grew too small, a purpose built facility became necessary and the first portion of the current building was constructed in 1892.</p> <p>The National Register nomination tells the story of how the institution came to be through the efforts of the The Working Band of Summerfield Methodist Church to assist an elderly widow facing eviction for failure to pay rent in 1884. They endeavored to aid other elderly persons in similar circumstances.</p>

An initial meeting of the group drew attendance from various protestant churches and soon the group rented half of a side-by-side duplex but expanded into the second half within six months. Unable to raise money for both property and a building, the members petitioned the City of Milwaukee to donate land. The City donated city property at the current location. Adjacent land was beginning to fill in with costly residences. The city property was held for the use of benevolent institutions and over time St. Mary's Hospital, the Protestant Orphan Asylum, the Milwaukee Catholic Home, and the Protestant Home for the Aged, St. Rose's Orphan Asylum, and the Milwaukee Industrial School for Girls all came to be built here. Most of these are no longer extant.

The Protestant Home for the Aged was designed by Henry Koch, architect of Milwaukee City Hall and completed in 1892. The building initially held rooms for 50 residents and staff. It was planned for future additions and discussions on this were taking place by 1896. In 1897 a new section was built through the generosity of the John W. Hinton's in honor of their son. It was also designed by Henry Koch with partner/associate Herman J. Esser and was harmonious with the original building.

This report will not go into all the expansion over the decades as it is chronicled in the National Register nomination itself. The fact that the institution retains its historic integrity through its integrity of Location, Association and Feeling, and Design through the number of expert architects who worked on the building over the years, and retains a high degree of materials and workmanship all add to its significance.

The Milwaukee Protestant Home is locally significant under Criterion A in the category of Social History.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that HPC support the nomination.