



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

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HPC meeting date: 7/25/2011
Ald. Nik Kovac District: 3
Staff reviewer: Paul Jakubovich
PTS #69182

Property 2134 N. TERRACE AV., North Point South Historic District

Owner/Applicant MICHAEL WHITE
2134 N TERRACE AVE
MILWAUKEE WI 53202

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Proposal Construct additions on the north, south, east and west elevations.

Staff comments This 1923 Mediterranean Villa style home, designed by architects Brust and Philipp, was recently cleaned of its paint to reveal the original golden cream brick. The applicants are now seeking to add additions to each of the four elevations of the house. They have met with HPC staff and have done considerable redesign of the proposal to make it a better fit with the house. Located on a corner, the two principal street-facing elevations would be changed, although the garage addition on the front of the house and the small hip roofed addition on the north elevation would be relatively difficult to see given the presence of a tall garden wall at the front of the property. The applicant also would extend the garden wall further to the south to help conceal the front addition.

The plans as they stand do not meet zoning codes for the south and east setbacks. Therefore the project would require approval from HPC and the board of zoning appeals in order to move forward. The last project that HPC approved that also required subsequent approval by the Board of Zoning Appeals, was later rejected by BOZA and had to be redesigned to meet the zoning code.

The commission must also consider a fundamental policy issue here on whether significant alterations and additions should be made to street-facing elevations in the district. To date, the commission has allowed only very minor alterations to street-facing elevations such as the extension of a terrace or a minor alteration to a window opening.

According to the local district guidelines, additions should be "Located so as not to [be] visible from the public right-of-way, if at all possible." Neither the State Historical Preservation office (SHPO) nor the National Parks Service is in favor of additions that are on the principal elevations of a historic building. According to federal and state guidelines, any new additions must not be highly visible from the public right of way. Additions to the front and street facing elevations are not allowed. Additions on all four sides of the building would render it a non-contributing building in the district, according to state historical society staff. If multiple houses in the district were to be altered in a similar manner, it could remove the district's National Register historic status, according to state staff.

Recommendation Because this proposal has the potential to set precedent for future new construction and additions in the district, it is vital to carefully consider all ramifications to guidelines, and potential impact to national register status.

Conditions

Previous HPC action

Previous Council action