



## Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

**HPC meeting date: 4/1/2019**  
**Ald. Robert Bauman District: 4**  
**Staff reviewer: Tim Askin**  
**PTS #114699 CCF #181800**

**Property** 600 N. BROADWAY East Side Commercial Historic District

**Owner/Applicant** 600 NORTH BROADWAY LLC John Vetter  
225 E MICHIGAN ST #110 614 North Milwaukee  
MILWAUKEE WI 53202 Milwaukee, WI 53202  
Phone: (414) 223-3388  
Fax: (414) 223-4825

**Proposal** Project consists of an overall rehabilitation of the property with conversion to a hotel. Alterations to the historic building are limited to a canopy over the Broadway storefronts, new paint, and new windows.

A three-story addition is proposed for the rooftop in a contemporary design. This has been downsized from the 5-story version originally submitted.

**Staff comments** Disregarding the addition for the moment, the changes proposed for the historic core of the building are sensitive and appropriate. The canopy is thoughtfully designed and the storefronts are brought back to a historically-inspired appearance without being an exact replica at the main entry. There appear to be no surviving original windows and none of the current windows would be approved by this body. Therefore new, operable windows, if they are to be wood, would be a welcome change. The decision to repaint the masonry is unfortunate, but allowable and understandable. The applicant has correctly noted that attempting to remove the present paint has the possibility of adding substantial costs to the project.

Staff finds that the alterations proposed for the historic portion of the building to be within the guidelines. The entry presents a minor complication. It is acceptable as designed, but as there is documentary evidence of the original entry, an exact replica should be allowed as an option, as this may be required as part of a historic preservation tax credit approval or be a possible preferred alternative.

**Staff comments**

*Addition*

Staff is unaware of any precedent for such a project within this historic district. The applicant's cited precedents are all within the Third Ward, which is regulated by its own review body under different standards of review.

The standards for review are as follows

A.1. Roofs Retain the original roof shape. Dormers, skylights and solar collector panels may be added to roof surfaces if they are not visible from the street. Avoid making changes to the roof shape that would alter the building height, roofline or pitch. This includes parapets, pediments and cornices.

A. 5. Additions Make additions that harmonize with the existing building architecturally and are located so as not to be visible from the public right-of-way, if at all possible. Avoid making additions that are unsympathetic to the original structure and visually intrude upon the principal elevations.

B. Guidelines for Streetscapes The visual character of the streetscapes in the district is maintained by the general consistency of the block faces in terms of height, scale, siting and density. This has resulted in a compact, cohesive building stock with few intrusions that detract from the district's historic 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.

The addition would be change to the roofline that is visible from the public right of way and would change the height, as indicated in the applicant's renderings. The design is a high quality effort at being compatible and sympathetic addition. It is executed with attention to the form, massing, and lines of the building and the overall district. Nonetheless, the height is anomaly for this block face within the district. The even side of 600 block of N. Broadway has consistent heights creating a rhythm that is rarely found elsewhere.

A letter of objection to this project has noted that the rooftop addition will place the adjacent rooftop deck in near permanent shadow with 3 stories to its south. It would also set a precedent allowing for the current clean and even rooflines to be further disrupted.

Further setback from the Broadway elevation would be desirable, but it would require additional setback from the alley side of the building, which is not practical or desirable. Setting back only the Broadway side would harm the rhythm of the present design.

Staff believes the addition is well designed, but it that is excessive compared to the existing heights on the same block face.

**Recommendation** HOLD for redesign with a maximum of one-story addition or DENY

**Conditions**

If approved:

1. Masonry that is currently unpainted, must remain unpainted, this includes, but is not limited to stone trim and keystones at the windows.
2. Replacement windows will be all wood both inside and out. No vinyl, vinyl-clad, aluminum, aluminum-clad or fiberglass windows are permitted. New glass size must match the original glass size. Muntin profiles and sash heights must match originals.
3. Bricks on rooftop addition to have the same face dimensions as historic bricks.
4. Signage and lighting to be reviewed separately.

**Previous HPC action**

**Previous Council action**