



## Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

**HPC meeting date**

**5/1/2023**

**CCF #221376**

**Ald. Perez**

Staff reviewer: Tim Askin

**Property**

723 - 725 W. Historic Mitchell Street

**Owner/Applicant  
Proposal**

Shane McAdams Studio

Stack Design Group

Simulated restoration of the Art Moderne upper façade of the 723 building. Storefront and window alterations to the 725 building.

### **Staff comments**

After several rounds of changes and review by the Commission, the proposal seems ready to move forward for approval with conditions.

### 723

The Trespa panels are an honest attempt at mimicking the form and grid-like character of the original Vitrolite. The sole supplier of vintage material has gone incommunicado, so there is no option but to attempt an aesthetic match. The Commission found in April that the panels, in a two color arrangement (of applicant's choice), but matching the original panel layout would be aesthetically satisfactory. A glossy finish was the Commission's stated preference.

The proposal is a rain screen system. The wall was not designed with a rain screen in mind, but much of the brick was previously exposed to the weather before the Vitrolite was glued onto it. It is therefore suspected that the wall will perform satisfactorily if installed correctly with the all necessary detailing. However, there are exposed steel lintels in the wall surface. Staff would recommend requiring that appropriate waterproofing be applied to the steel prior to the installation of the rain screen. This condition can be waived at the discretion of Neighborhood Services if for some reason this would violate any relevant codes.

The round windows do not currently have glass. No specific proposal is made for their replacement. The central column of glass block will be restored. Specifications remain required for the round windows. George Zagel's original drawings call for wooden framed round windows with red trim. However, metal frame is appropriate to the Art Moderne style and should be accepted as an option.

Detail concerns about the connection between the two buildings have been addressed by continuing the rain screen to the ground level bulkhead.

### 725

A viable, full height storefront that fills the original opening has been drawn. This can be accepted as drawn. Further information was requested as to whether thinset brick veneer was necessary and why full size brick was not an option. This has not yet been provided. Thinset veneer may be considered, provided that is not a sheet product and is laid individually with historically appropriate joints less than 3/8 inch. Mortar review is not required as the original design is not known. The upper floor windows were rejected for not meeting standards for consideration of clad windows. Applicant can work with staff to select a suitable non-clad wood window SDL with spacer bar.

**Recommendation**

Approve 723 building with conditions.

Approve storefront construction on 725 as drawn. Work with staff on upper level windows and brick veneer unless both matters are suitably answered in today's hearing.

**Conditions***723 Building*

1. Work with staff on final product selection for the round windows. Wood or metal would be acceptable.
2. Require waterproofing of exposed steel lintels unless prohibited by code. Neighborhood Services may waive this condition per their own determination of code requirements.
3. Supports for the rain screen shall be drilled into mortar joints and not into the face of any brick. This condition does not apply to the concrete block portion of the façade.

*725 Building*

1. Provide explanation of necessity for thinset veneer or change to full size brick
2. Work with staff on non-clad wood windows for upper floor.