



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

Living with History

HPC meeting date: 9/15/2015
Ald. Robert Bauman District: 4
Staff reviewer: Dean Doerrfeld
PTS

Property	3138 W. KILBOURN AVE. Concordia Historic District	
Owner/Applicant	FOREST COUNTY POTAWATOMI COMMUNITY c/o WGEMA LEASING 3215 W. STATE ST. STE. 300 MILWAUKEE, WI 53233	Quorum Architects 3112 W. Highland Blvd. Milwaukee, WI 53208 Phone: (414) 265-9465
Proposal	<p>This project involves two major modifications to the existing building of the former Concordia College campus: the removal of the stair and entry vestibule located between Albrecht Hall and the Rincker Library addition to the west, and the repair/replacement of all windows. Other proposed activities include the reconstruction of the concrete stair on the east elevation of the Library and the installation of mechanical equipment on the roof set back from the south elevation.</p>	
Staff Comments	<p>Albrecht Hall, the College's original classroom building, was constructed in 1900 incorporating elements of the Neo-Classical style. This eleven-bay, two-story brick building rests on an ashlar foundation. The projecting central 5 bays of the south elevation feature elongated arched-top windows in the upper level, and the primary entrance on the lower. The entryway incorporates double-leaf, half-light doors topped by a cut stone lintel with a meander motif. A wood divided-light transom tops the door. The entrance is framed by free-standing Tuscan columns supporting a full entablature with triglyphs, medallions, and brackets. The 1941 library addition parallels the older building in mass, scale, form, fenestration, and stylistic treatment. A monumental portico fills the west elevation with four attached pilasters and full pediment. The double-leaf door with transom is sheltered by a pediment hood, and the entry is flanked by elongated arched-top windows.</p> <p>The stair and entry vestibule were likely constructed with the new library addition in the early 1940s. Standing two stories tall and constructed of brick, the vestibule has a projecting, shed-roof greenhouse to the south and a recessed entry on the north. The applicant proposes to remove this connecting element and replace it with a two story glass and aluminum curtain wall structure. The curtain wall will lie flush with the building plane of the south elevation and project slightly to the north. The new construction will house a stair tower and elevator shaft servicing both sections of the building. This location avoids the introduction of similar elements into the core of the historic structure. The existing connector is not an architecturally significant feature of the building and its removal will not diminish the integrity of building. The new section, while utilizing contemporary materials is in keeping with the overall scale, mass, and form of the building. The dominant feature of the south elevation is the entry and classically inspired portico. The proposed new construction does not detract from this feature by introducing a conflicting stylistic interpretation of classical forms.</p> <p>The largest element of this undertaking is the repair/replacement of all windows. Over time, numerous changes were made to the windows and openings of the buildings. Modifications include aluminum replacement windows, infill of original arched-top openings, installation of glass block, and casing of historic elements in modern materials. The applicant states that all windows are in various levels of deterioration, contain glazing compounds and caulk containing asbestos, do not meet current code requirements for egress, and hold single pane glass. A complete</p>	

schedule for the replacement and repair of various elements are detailed in the technical and graphic materials submitted by the applicant. In summary, the proposal calls for the repair of character-defining elements such as stained glass and doors with true divided lite transoms, and the replacement of deteriorated asbestos-containing units with energy efficient, metal-clad wood windows. Previous infill of window arches, existing aluminum window units, and modern casing currently masking historic architectural features will be removed. Windows in Albrecht Hall are specified as single pane while those in the Library are proposed as simulated divided-lite. All windows will fit existing openings requiring repairs to wood blocking and masonry, but no additional modification. The Historic Preservation Commission has generally not approved metal-clad windows or simulated divided lite.

Reconstructing the concrete stair of the east elevation will require the demolition of the existing stair and stone retaining wall. Reconstruction will rely on physical and documentary evidence of the original shape, configuration, and appearance of the staircase.

Details of the mechanical installation were not provided; however, low profile units could easily be installed on the flat-roofed library and concealed behind the parapet wall.

Recommendation

Demolition of existing connector and construction of glass curtain wall structure: Approve
Repair/Replacement of windows or doors: Approve with modifications
Reconstruction of concrete stair of east elevation: Approve
Installation of mechanical units on roof of Library: Approve with modifications

Conditions

Replacement windows shall be all wood construction with all molding details, mullions, and dimensions to match existing materials. Metal or synthetic cladding shall not be used. Simulated divided lites shall not be used on any replacement window.

Final details for reconstructed concrete steps including any handrails shall be submitted to staff for approval.

Final details on type and location of rooftop mechanicals shall be submitted to staff for approval.

Previous HPC action

Previous Council action