



## Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

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<b>HPC meeting date</b>	<b>6/3/2023</b>	<b>CCF # 231653</b>
<b>Ald. Spiker</b>	Staff reviewer: Tim Askin	
<b>Property</b>	3774 S. 27 <sup>th</sup> Street.	Wildenberg Hotel
<b>Owner/Applicant</b>	Rakesh Rehan	Thomas Stachowiak Stack Design Group

### Proposal

The proposed redevelopment of the property will include a complete restoration of the original architectural features of the building. The original windows were reduced in size with masonry infill added at upper portion of most of the windows. The windows will be brought back to their original size with a new window being installed to replicate the appearance and detailing of the home. All of the visible cream city brick will be repaired and restored including the replacement and reconstruction of the two brick chimneys that have been patched with a brick that does not match the original building. There are portions of the original roof cupola remaining. The renovation includes the complete recreation of this original roof adornment. The existing (non-original) front entry canopy will be removed. The existing grade will be lowered at the front of the building so that the original front porch can be recreated, inclusive of the double wood columns and roof detailing. The footprint of the original structure is approximately 2,800 square feet.

To the rear of the existing building we are proposing the construction of an addition entirely designed to match and compliment the architectural character of the original building. Every material proposed for the addition is one that is also found on the original building. The addition is proposed as 14,452 square feet all on one level and designed to not overpower the stature of the original building. The proposed use of the existing portion of the building is a sit-down restaurant and the addition to the building will add a commercial kitchen, ADA compliant toilet rooms and a 9,800 square foot event center/banquet hall. The original interior formal staircase located directly inside the front door remains relatively intact and will be restored to its original condition. The staircase will lead to the second floor of the building where two additional meeting rooms will be located. An outdoor dining patio will be added to the northwest corner of the building with an access door being added at the location of an existing window opening. The new door opening, which does not face the primary street facade, will be trimmed out in an identical manner as the original and new windows of the home. The patio will have cream city brick piers with limestone caps and a wrought iron railing with a double baluster pattern that compliments the detailing of the front entrance. A secondary entrance will be created on the north facade to allow for an ADA compliant entry that is convenient to the parking. This entrance is designed to mimic the architectural detailing of the main entrance without overpowering the importance of the front facade.

### Staff comments

This is an exceptional restoration project and a needed use in the neighborhood. We must first note that HPC has jurisdiction only over the building and its addition. Other City design and code review processes are in place for the rest of the site and the proposed new building to the north. HPC staff have been participating in these review processes and will continue to do so with regard to various unresolved concerns. HPC has no jurisdiction over the proposed new building to the north and it should be ignored in our review. It is shown only as a matter of transparency with HPC. The new building may also be constructed as part of a separate phase of the project.

There are no significant issues with the restoration or the original structure. The design is well-researched and replicates and restores countless features. Marvin all-wood windows be used to replicate the originals to the extent possible with SDLs.

There are some minor issues with the design that need to be addressed by the Commission and its guidance is requested. The rear addition is larger than we would typically approve on a building of this scale and it is designed to be too similar to the original building. The size of the addition is necessary to the use and its street presence is minimized, so it does not break any firm rules. HPC and DCD staff have raised this issue with the applicants multiple times. Differentiation can be modest, but it must exist. Suggested changes are listed in the conditions section. The new side entry replicates the front too closely and is thus out of scale on a one-story section of the building. The design of the entry should be tweaked. Widening the entry area may be sufficient to reduce the excess vertical emphasis.

The front patio presents some complications. Typically front additions are not approved. This is a minor deck feature that, while not historically accurate, does not detract from the appearance. Details must be provided on how it will be differentiated in appearance from the original structure. It also must be shown to be as structurally independent as possible so that future removal would be possible. A detailed material list for the addition and any roofing remains needed.

The Department of City Development's concerns with grading and site plan appear to have been fully addressed since our last review. As this is a city-owned property, they have extensive authority over site design and will address it competently.

Tax credit financing has been dropped from the project due to difficulties with the state.

## **Recommendation**

Approve with conditions

## **Conditions**

1. Provide complete materials list for addition. Materials for original portion are self-evident and the architect is highly experienced with our standard requirements for historic buildings.
2. Simplify detailing on addition to make visually clear that it is an addition.
  - a. Require new rather than salvage brick for the addition, preferably modular
  - b. We should require two or more of the following:
    - i. Metal clad, all metal, or fiberglass windows for the addition
    - ii. Dated cornerstone
3. Front patio must also show differentiation. New, modular brick may be sufficient differentiation or may be distracting. Work with staff on appropriate differentiation.

4. For the original section of the building only:
  - a. New mortar must match the original mortar in terms of color, texture, grain size, joint width, and joint finish/profile. The compressive strength of the repointing mortar shall be equal or less than the compressive strength of the original mortar and surrounding brick or stone. The replacement mortar shall contain approximately the same ingredient proportions of the original mortar. Mortar that is too hard is subject to premature failure and could damage the masonry. See the city's books *As Good As New* or *Good for Business*, Masonry Chapters, for more information. In most cases, this means a lime mortar with natural hydraulic cement rather than Portland cement. No joint of a width less than 3/8" may be cleaned of damaged/decomposed mortar with power disc grinders. No over-cutting of the joints is permitted. Remove decomposed mortar back into the wall 2.5 times the height of the joint before repointing. When installing new flashing at a masonry feature, the flashing must be stepped or cut into the mortar joints. The bricks may not be cut to install flashing at an angle.
  - b. New brick/stone/terra cotta must match as closely as possible the color texture, size, and finish of the original. A sample panel of the masonry materials and their mortar must be reviewed and approved by HPC staff prior to general installation of the material.
  - c. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHALL UNPAINTED MASONRY BE PAINTED, BE GIVEN A WATERPROOFING TREATMENT, OR CLEANED BY ABRASIVE MEANS; THIS STATEMENT SUPERSEDES ANY OTHER WORDING IN THIS DOCUMENT INDICATING THE CONTRARY.
5. Natural, non-clad wood windows, trim, and shutters for the original building (noted already in application materials, but re-emphasizing here)