



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date: 8/1/2022
Ald. Robert Bauman District: 4
Staff reviewer: Jacqueline Drayer
PTS CCF 220383

Property	918 N Vel Philips Avenue	<i>Milwaukee Journal Sentinel</i> Complex
Owner/Applicant	Seeds of Health, Inc. 1445 S 32 nd Street Milwaukee, WI 53215	Eppstein Uhen Architects 333 E Chicago Street Milwaukee, WI 53202
Proposal	<p>1) The Owner is seeking approval to remove the three existing windows on the building's east elevation that are within the existing elevator shaft and infill the openings with masonry to match the existing adjacent masonry. These three windows are clouded in red on the drawing's elevations. The three windows were revealed during the metal screen removal included in the original COA work and were discovered to be boarded up on the inside of the elevator shaft. Infilling these windows will meet the 2-hour shaft rating for this wall of the existing elevator shaft.</p> <p>2) The Owner is seeking approval to remove two existing doors on the south elevation and infill these openings with masonry to match the existing adjacent masonry. The two doors are currently on the third and fourth floors of the building and do not open as they are on the existing exterior wall. Infilling these two door openings will match the design and materiality of similar conditions on the same elevation of the building.</p>	
Staff comments	<p>Both the existing windows and the elevator shaft are original to the building. The windows on the east elevation are located on a secondary elevation, and were previously covered by the metal screen. Retaining original window openings is important to the character of the building, and reversibility of the treatment. By filling in the windows with matching brick that is recessed two inches from the exterior, the original building design can be understood. In addition, the windows could be reopened in the future in the original openings. This is in keeping with Milwaukee's general historic design guidelines, including those detailed in <i>Good for Business</i> and <i>Living with History</i>, all of which emphasize retaining original window openings during any type of window replacement.</p> <p>Similarly, the two doors on the south elevation are on secondary elevation. They already are unable to open, due to the present configuration of the building. Retaining original door openings is important to the character of the building, and reversibility of the treatment. By filling in the doors with matching brick that is recessed two inches, the building's change over time can be understood.</p>	
Recommendation	Recommend HPC approval with conditions.	

Conditions

New masonry is to be recessed two inches from the building's exterior.

Any existing features surrounding the subject doors and windows will remain intact.

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.

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.

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.

Previous HPC action

211657 – March 2022: Approval of storefront design and windows

Previous Council action