



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

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HPC meeting date: 6/9/2016
Ald. Nik Kovac District: 3
Staff reviewer: Carlen Hatala
PTS #111411

Property 2555 N. LAKE DR. North Point North Historic District

Owner/Applicant Lake Drive TownHomes (a condominium) Solid State Architecture
600 W. Virginia Street Suite 102
Milwaukee, WI 53204
Phone: (414) 231-3801

Proposal The Lake Drive TownHomes were constructed in 1982 in a contemporary design that nevertheless works well with the gabled houses throughout the neighborhood. Exterior renovations to the Lake Drive TownHomes first went before the HPC on June 15, 2009.

The original cladding material on the TownHomes consisted of artificial stucco or EIFS as well as wood trim at various locations on the facade. The EIFS was deteriorating and the proposal at that time was to clad the exterior with cement board clapboards and cement board shingles in the gables. The commission did not approve the clapboards as they gave a horizontal emphasis to what are essentially vertically-oriented units.

There was some discussion at that meeting about the use of traditional stucco that would be a lifetime material. The HPC ruled out the cement board material and directed the applicant to work with Historic Preservation staff. They also agreed that if traditional stucco were to be used, the matter did not have to return to the HPC but would have to return if other materials were proposed. The applicant did not return to work with staff.

The current proposal is to re-clad the building with the same material that was used at the time of construction, EIFS. There will also be repairs to the existing cedar trim. The front (Lake Drive side) half walls and entry gate will be renovated. There will also be window replacement to match the originals as well as replacement of the sliding patio doors.

Please see attached correspondence from 2009.

Staff comments

The HPC has not approved the use of EIFS as a substitute or replacement for true stucco on a historic property. In this instance, however, the building was of later construction, built outside of the period when the majority of the houses were constructed. Its original cladding was EIFS.

EIFS has had a problematic past with class action lawsuits resulting from decay occurring behind the cladding material due to water infiltration and insufficient flashings. The applicant is confident in today's updated product and installation methods.

So the primary considerations are:

- 1) Should the TownHomes be re-clad in a material that was original to its construction? The HPC would want that on earlier historic properties.
- 2) Should EIFS be ruled out because of its aesthetic appearance and its past performance problems?
- 3) Would true stucco be cost prohibitive and infeasible for the large expenses to be clad?

Recommendation

Although the HPC recommended the use of true stucco on the exterior in 2009, staff looks at the matter from a historical perspective and feels that the current proposal is staying true to its original design and material intent. Staff recommends approval.

Conditions

Any renovations to the front half-wall and entry gate that change the appearance, size, shape or material will need to be reviewed by staff. Window replacement has been ongoing and the new windows match the originals.

Previous HPC action**Previous Council action**