

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

HPC Meeting Date: 07-07-2020
Ald. District 4 Ald. Robert Bauman
Staff Reviewer: Carlen Hatala

PROPERTY Koeffler-Baumgarten Double House
817-819 North Marshall Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

OWNER/APPLICANT Julie Kaufmann
Dubbel Dutch LLC
2649 North Bremen Street
Milwaukee, WI 53212

CONSULTANT Michael T. McQuillen, M.S.
McQuillen Historical Consulting, LLC
1900 East Wood Place
Shorewood, WI 53211

PROPOSAL Certified Local Government Review of the National Register
Nomination for the Koeffler-Baumgarten Double House (1898)

STAFF COMMENTS The Koeffler-Baumgarten Double House is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for its significance as an excellent and highly intact example of the German Renaissance Revival style. The style is noted for shaped gables with ball-shaped finials, towers with bell-cast roofs, monochromatic coloration of materials and finely detailed stone or terra cotta trim. This example features the shaped gables with a tower and fine stone trim and a subdued color palate.

The Koeffler-Baumgarten Double House is also an intact example of the double house form (units being built side by side with a common dividing wall) which was not commonly built in Milwaukee. Most have been demolished since the beginning of the 20th century with the remaining examples being located on the city's east side. A few can be found in Walker's Point and the Near West Side.

The architect for the Koeffler-Baumgarten Double House is the prestigious firm of Ferry and Clas. George Bowman Ferry and Alfred Clas were in partnership from 1890 through 1912. Their output included buildings in the Classical Revival/ Beaux Arts style, Tudor revival, and Shingle style among others.. Their many projects include Milwaukee Public Library (Milwaukee Central Library), the Milwaukee Auditorium, numerous residences and civic buildings. Their practice extended beyond Milwaukee and included the State Historical Society Building in Madison. Among their important residential commissions was the house for Captain Frederick Pabst, German Renaissance Revival in style, which was built 1890-1892.

This double house was built for Charles Augustus Koeffler Jr. (1856-1930) and his sister Hermine Koeffler Baumgarten (died 1937).

Charles was an attorney who shifted his career to real estate and at his death left an estate worth over one million dollars. His sister's husband Francis Morris Baumgarten was a chemist.

Charles and his family lived in the south unit and Hermine lived in the north unit with her family. Charles' and Hermine's brother Hugo (1862-1933) lived with Charles and his family. Hugo ran a real estate and loan business. Both families lived in the double house during the fall and winter season then on the Koeffler family estate in Wauwatosa during the summer months. The Baumgartens eventually moved to Los Angeles.

Both the families moved out of the double house in the early 1920s. The property was retained by Charles Koeffler's son Carl into the late 1960s. He converted the property into a rooming house for most of this time with as many as 24 furnished rooms. By 1951 there were 10 units in the building. By 1969 Taxman Properties owned the building and six offices were on the premises. On December 6, 1985, Taxman Properties applied to demolish the property but an interim historic designation was filed and the property was locally designated April 15, 1986.

The building is currently vacant but the developer Julie Kaufmann, architect Patrick Jones and contractor Andy Braatz will be converting the building into a boutique hotel. The project will be making use of the historic tax credits.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that HPC support the nomination.