



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date **4/1/2023** **CCF #231727**

Ald. Coggs **Staff reviewer:** Tim Askin

Property 626 E North Avenue Reservoir Park

Owner/Applicant City of Milwaukee Custom Tower, LLC

Proposal

Replace existing city owned and operated communications tower with new one of 300 feet in height. Site will be immediately adjacent to existing. New tower must be complete and operation before the old can be removed.

Staff comments

The City wishes to replace its existing communications tower in the park. While the age of the tower was not readily determined, it predates the historic designation in 1999. As to demolition, the tower is not at all significant to the historic character of the park. Demolition is easily approved.

New construction criteria seem to have been phrased with this replacement scenario in mind.

1. Siting

New construction must respect the historic siting of the existing buildings. It should be accomplished so as to maintain the appearance of the existing buildings from the street as freestanding structures.

2. Scale

Overall building height and bulk, the expression of major building divisions including foundation, body and roof, and individual building components, such as overhangs and fenestration that are in close proximity to a historic building must be compatible to and sympathetic with the design of the existing buildings.

3. Form

The massing of the new construction must be compatible with the goal of maintaining the integrity of the buildings as freestanding structures. The profiles of roofs and building elements that project and receded from the main block should express the same continuity established by the historic building if they are in close proximity to it.

4. Materials

The building materials that are visible from the public right-of-way and in close proximity to the historic buildings should be consistent with the colors, textures, proportions, and combinations of cladding materials used on the building. The physical composition of the materials may be different from that of the historic materials, but the same appearance should be maintained.

Nothing is strictly violated, considering that this replaces an existing structure at close to its existing site. The aesthetic effect is substantially neutral with respect to existing conditions. If this had been proposed as a first tower in the park or an additional tower in the park, denial would have been the staff recommendation.

Recommendation

Approve as submitted.

Conditions

N/A