



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date: 6/2/2025
Staff reviewer: Andrew Stern

CCF #250156
Ald. Stamper

Property	2424 N. Grant Blvd.	Grant Boulevard Historic District
Owner/Applicant	K. Isabel Sternberg 2424 N. Grant Blvd. Milwaukee, WI 53210	

Proposal

The applicant is seeking a Certificate of Repose for a faux-stone, vinyl fence that is installed in the front and rear of her property.

Staff comments

The Theodore and Elizabeth School House is a Mediterranean Revival style house constructed in 1915. The property owners received a violation order on April 1, 2025, for a fence installed without permits or a COA. The 6' solid, faux-stone vinyl fence was installed sometime between 2016 and 2019. The property owners purchased the property in 2023. The applicant would like a Certificate of Repose for the lifetime of the fence to allow the fence to remain while she addresses more pressing issues with the property.

The historic preservation ordinance amendment passed in 2023 to allow Certificates of Repose set specific criteria that need to be satisfied for granting of a Certificate of Repose:

- A minimum of one deed of transfer as an arm's length transaction shall have occurred prior to service of an order to correct the violation under ch. 200.
One deed of transfer as an arm's length transaction did occur in 2023.
- The current owner provides proof that a minimum of 3 years has elapsed since the work that violated this section was performed.
The fence was installed sometime between 2016-2019, well beyond three years.
- The violation of this section does not violate ch. 200 or 275 of the code and presents no safety hazards as determined by the department of neighborhood services.
The fence does not violate ch. 200 or 275 and does not present a safety hazard.
- The current owner is able to demonstrate that the cost to remedy the violation exceeds \$1,000, provided the remedy requires materials beyond paint.
The current owner has provided a quote showing a cost of \$7,000-\$7,500 for removal of the existing fence and replacement with a 6' dog ear cedar fence with gates.
- No citation relating to the work without a certificate of appropriateness under sub. 11 and in violation of this section has been issued against the prior owner.
No violation was issued to the prior owner regarding the fence.
- Unresolved, previous violations of this section brought against the previous owner shall be eligible for consideration under sub. 15.
There are no unresolved, previous violations of this section brought against the previous owner.

The fence exceeds the 4' solid height allowed in the side yard of the property and staff recommends the fence be lowered to 4' or be lowered to 4' and an additional 2' of at least 50% open design be installed on top. They may also apply for a Board of Zoning Appeals (BOZA) waiver to maintain the existing height. The owners will also need to apply

for a retroactive permit for the fence. Staff suggests that when the property owner has the financial means, they replace the more visible Grant Boulevard section of the fence with an appropriate wood fence first.

Recommendation

Recommend HPC Approval of the Certificate of Repose with conditions:

1. The fence in the side yard be lowered to 4' solid or 4' solid with up to 2' with at least 50% open design on top or BOZA approval of a solid fence.

Conditions

Previous HPC action

Previous Council action