

# HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION APPLICATION

## 1. Name

Historic: Sylvester Pettibone House

and/or Common: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

Street & number 2051 West Wisconsin Avenue

Aldersperson: Ald. Robert Bauman

District(s): 4th Aldermanic District

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Present Use			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> park	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> cemetery	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> other
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> religious	<input type="checkbox"/> military	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> private-residence	<input type="checkbox"/> museum	

## 4. Owner of Property

Name: Marnas Mansion LLC

Street & number: 2051 West Wisconsin Avenue

City: Milwaukee

State WI

Zip 53233

## 5. Representation Existing Surveys

Inventory: Reconnaissance Survey of the City of Milwaukee; Intensive Survey of the West Side

Date: 1979, 1983

☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☒ local

Depository for survey records:

Organization City of Milwaukee Historic Preservation

Street & number 200 East Wells Street Room B-4

City Milwaukee

State WI

Zip 53202

Previous historic designation:

☐ National Register Date \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ City of Milwaukee Landmark Date \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Other  
Name of Program \_\_\_\_\_ Date designated \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. DESCRIPTION

Condition:

Check one:

☒ excellent  
☐ good  
☐ fair  
☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins

☒ original site  
☐ moved date  
☒ altered  
☐ unaltered

Building form:

Number of stories 3

Foundation:

☐ stone ☒ brick ☐ concrete block ☐ concrete  
☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

Roof:

gable ( ☐ flank ☐ end ☒ cross )  
gambrel ( ☐ flank ☐ end ☐ cross )  
☐ hip ☐ mansard ☐ flat  
☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

Walls:

☐ clapboard ☒ brick ☐ stucco ☐ stone ☐ wood shingle ☐ slate ☐ terra cotta  
☐ asphalt siding ☐ asbestos tile ☐ aluminum siding ☐ artificial stone ☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

Written description: (Continue on a separate sheet, if necessary)

See Attached

The Pettibone / White House is an Italianate/Classical Revival Style house that is located along West Wisconsin Avenue just west of North 20<sup>th</sup> Street. The three story masonry building has a brick foundation and cross gable roof clad in asphalt shingles. A short brick chimney rises from the apex of the east-west gabled portion of the roof.

The building is set back some feet from Wisconsin Avenue behind a front grassy lawn and foundation plantings. The house is flanked to either side by garden style apartment buildings constructed in the teens or early 1920s. A paved driveway occupies the property between the house and the east lot line and leads to a rear parking area. There is a chain link fence between the house and the apartment building to the west and only a few feet separate the buildings.

The three-story three-bay entry portion of the house features a pedimented front gable ornamented with modillions. Short square windows with stone sills are located at the attic level. The second story features three round arched window openings with hoods that are filled with 9-over-1 rectangular sash that have arched transoms. Two windows on the first story are rectangular in shape with pedimented hoods supported by shallow brackets. Below these windows are rectangular wooden panels. The main entrance to the house is located in the easternmost bay on the first story and is highlighted by a columned, pedimented portico. The Ionic column capitals are now gone and the pediment is supported by 2 x 4's.

To the east and set back from the entry bay is a three story wing said to have been constructed in the 1870s. The pediment of its gable roof fronts to the east. At the attic story are the same square windows as seen on the entry bay. On the second story is a large arched opening that holds two sash windows with transoms. The same design is seen at the first story but this window opening also has a rectangular panel that matches those on the entry bay.

The east elevation repeats the square windows at the attic story and two round arched windows are stacked above each other on the second and first story.

A T-shaped addition is located to the rear, built in 1965. The remainder of the rear is devoted to paved, surface parking. The rear portion of the lot extends to West Michigan Street.

Italianate Style detail is shown in the arched windows of the exterior. Classical Revival detail is shown in the pedimented gable ends that are enriched with modillions. The front entrance porch, a product of 1961, has a pedimented front gable supported by columns that had ionic columns. Interior elements survive from the period of the major alterations. Alterations over the years have consisted of a three-story east wing, and the addition and removal of a front porch across the entire entry bay, an iron balcony in front of the east wing's first story window, a cupola, a window's walk, two corbeled chimneys and a two-story monumental, columned porch that extended across the entry bay to the west and curved around to the east joining the entry to the three-story wing. The current appearance of the building shows the remnants of those past eras and illustrates how the building has been adapted for contemporary use.

## 7. SIGNIFICANCE

### Areas of significance:

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> economics              | <input type="checkbox"/> law                 | <input type="checkbox"/> science             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education              | <input type="checkbox"/> literature          | <input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> military            | <input type="checkbox"/> theater             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> music               | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy          | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> community planning      | <input type="checkbox"/> invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> conservation            | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion            |  |

Date built or altered: c. 1854, 1870s, 1902, 1946, 1961

Builder/architect: Unknown (1854)

### Written statement of significance: (continue on a separate sheet, if necessary)

The Sylvester Pettibone House is significant as the oldest extant mansion remaining on West Wisconsin Avenue. Studying the house provides a capsule history of the development of West Wisconsin Avenue. Early land holders in the 1850s held large estates on which they built country estates. As the properties were sold off for development, Grand Avenue as it was then known, became the showplace of the west side with many large mansions being constructed on smaller parcels. The house built by Sylvester Pettibone was enlarged and enhanced by later owner George C. White with Italianate detail including a three-story east wing, cupola and front porch. At this time the avenue was attracting Milwaukee's movers and shakers and modest houses were being enlarged such as Alexander Mitchell's 1840s house at 900 West Wisconsin Avenue and John Plankinton's house near 15th and Wisconsin (no longer extant). Other modifications were made to the Pettibone House in 1902 that added a two-story portico with classical columns. By the 1920s, the city new zoning laws allowed the construction of multi-family buildings and the character of the avenue changed significantly as houses were being replaced by large apartment buildings. More commercialization occurred after World War II and the old Pettibone House was "dumbed down" in 1961, giving the house its present appearance with the removal of the stately portico and substitution of of a modest pedimented porch. By this time it was being used for offices.

The Pettibone / White house has survived through these various stages of development along West Wisconsin Avenue and is one of a small number of remaining residences along the avenue.

## 8. Major Bibliographical References

Zimmermann, H. Russell. "Pioneer's Homestead." Milwaukee Journal. June 9, 1968  
Ogden, Marion. The Homes of Old Spring Street. 2nd. ed. Milwaukee: Hammersmith-Kortmeyer Co., 1946.

## 9. Property Description

Acreage: .6686

Legal property description:

ASSESSMENT SUBD NO 51 IN SW 1/4 SEC 30-7-22 BLOCK 1 E 70.13' OF N 200 OF LOT 20 & LOTS 21-22 & 23 BID #10

## 10. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Carlen Hatala, Senior Planner Historic Presevation, on behalf of Ald. Robert Bauman

Organization: City of Milwaukee

Street: 200 East Wells Street Room B-4

City: Milwaukee

State: WI

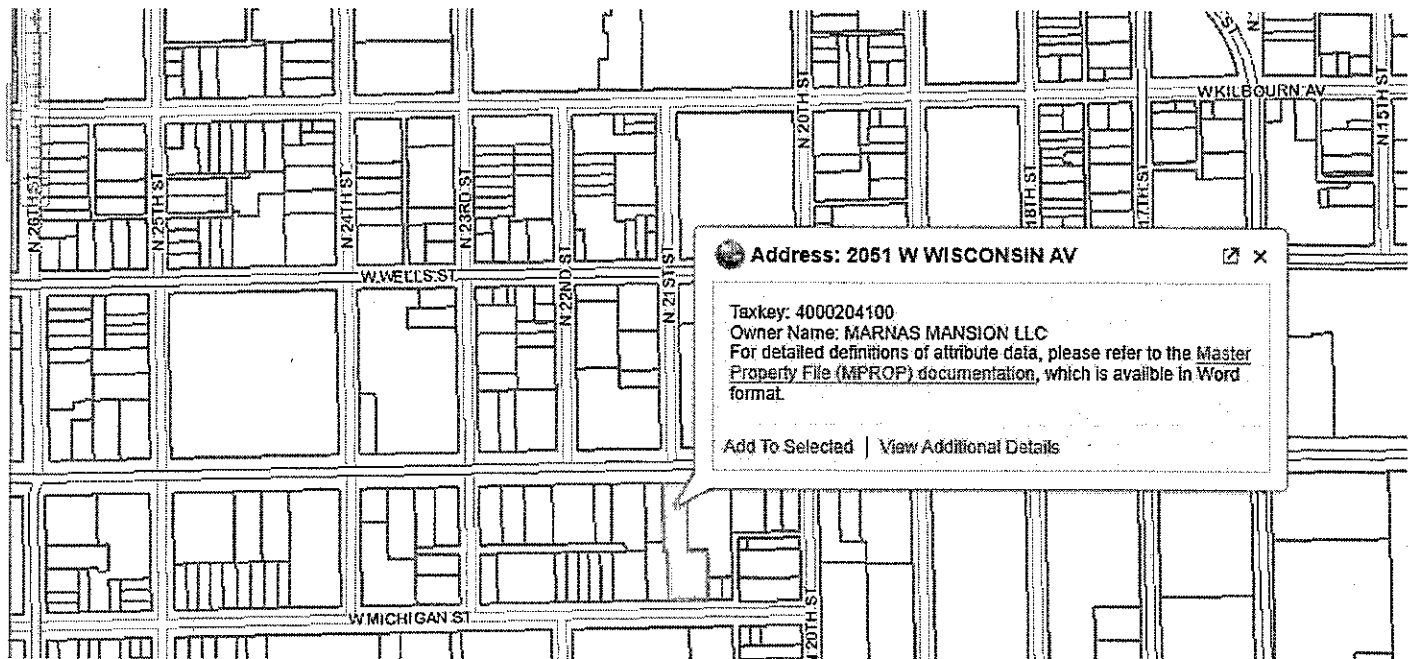
Zip: 553202

Telephone (days) (414) 286-5722

(evenings) \_\_\_\_\_

Date: September 18, 2014

Return to: Historic Preservation  
City Clerk's Office  
200 E. Wells St.  
Room B-4  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
  
(414) 286-5722



Address: 2051 W WISCONSIN AV



Taxkey: 4000204100

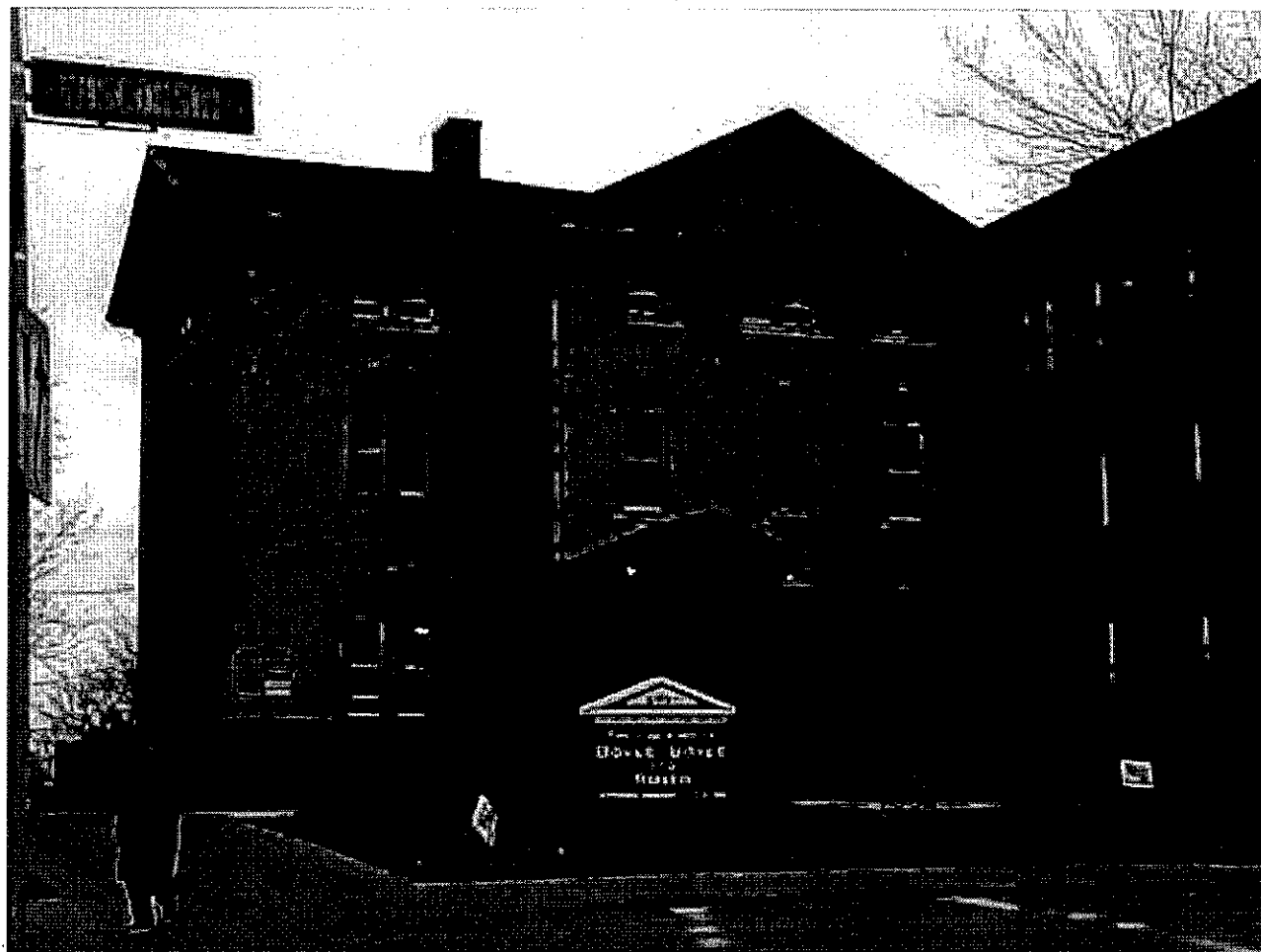
Owner Name: MARNAS MANSION LLC

For detailed definitions of attribute data, please refer to the Master Property File (MPROP) documentation, which is available in Word format.

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Image For Taxkey 400020410



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Data Provided By Assessor Query From: 199.196.70.210





The first major remodeling of the Sylvester Pettibone house (present address: 2051 W. Wisconsin av.) was done by its second owner, George C. White, sometime after 1869. White supposedly added a three-story wing at the left and decorated it in the then popular Italian villa style. Reportedly, White also added the porch and the cupola on the roof. This picture was taken sometime between 1893 and 1902, a period when the home was up for rent.

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Taken between 1905 and 1920, this picture shows the old Pettibone home as remodelled by a relative of the second owner in an attempt (not too well done, some say) to follow the resurgence of the Classical style popular at the time. The result is somewhat reminiscent of a southern plantation house.

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL

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