

Elmer, Linda

From: Dawn McCarthy <dawnhmcc@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 03, 2020 11:02 AM
To: Historic Preservation Commission; Elmer, Linda; Owczarski, Jim; Bauman, Robert; Sally Peltz; ann@pieperproperties.com; Patti Keating Kahn; Marion Clendenen-Acosta; Matthew T Jarosz; Askin, Tim; Hatala, Carlen; Kovac, Nik
Subject: Object: (#200433) Resolution relating to a COA for the Bradford Beach Pavilion

Historic Preservation Commission

City of Milwaukee

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

August 3, 2020

Re: (#200433) Resolution relating to a Certificate of Appropriateness for constructing a semi-permanent bar and an enclosed seating area, at 2400 N. Lincoln Memorial Drive, the Bradford Beach Pavilion, in the North Point North Historic District, for Milwaukee County and Dock Bradford LLC.

Dear Chair and Commissioners,

I am writing as a resident and owner of a historic house in the North Point North Historic District to object to granting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a bar and enclosed seating area at the Bradford Beach Pavilion. The proposal will destroy the architectural integrity of the Beach House and will have a horrible impact on the historic characteristic of the district.

Stephen Filmanowicz in a 1999 Milwaukee Magazine article (Burning Bridges) wrote that the Bradford Beach House is one of the city's most distinctive landmarks. " ... the Moderne-style structure is considered a significant gem by many experts. Designed by unheralded county architects, its encircling observation deck and sweeping staircases reveal the sculptural possibilities of poured concrete. Probably as well as anything in Milwaukee, they anticipate Calatrava's imaginative concrete work. One stairway flows into a pedestrian bridge that offers safe passage to the beach"

In the same article Filmanowicz quotes former UWM architecture professor Don Hanlon as saying the beach house is one of the best buildings in town.

I couldn't agree more with both descriptions. I have loved seeing the Beach House for decades. The proposed boxy steel containers would obliterate the beauty of the curvilinear, brick structure, a longstanding iconic Milwaukee landmark.

Per the HPC Staff report the guidelines say this about additions:

Make additions that harmonize with the existing building architecturally and are located so as not visible from the public right-of-way, if at all possible. Avoid making additions that are unsympathetic to the original structure and visually intrude upon the principal elevations.

Accordingly, the staff report concludes that an addition that is not visible or which has limited visibility is not possible. In my opinion the proposed design is completely unsympathetic and greatly intrudes upon the principal evaluations. For these reasons, I ask the Commission to deny the COA except for furniture and freestanding umbrellas.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dawn McCarthy

2589 N. Lake Drive

Milwaukee, WI 53211

BURNING BRIDGES *Is the county making a costly break with the past?*

If civic proposals were judged like movie scripts – on how well they sound as 20-second pitches – the county’s plan to turn Lincoln Memorial Drive into a boulevard would be a blockbuster. The new median will give pedestrians a resting place between traffic lanes. And it should look reasonably good as a souped-up approach to Calatrava’s new Art Museum addition.

Things go downhill quickly from there, however. The plan’s main problem is how it treats Frederic Law Olmsted’s historic Lake Park plan. As one of the nation’s preeminent planners, Olmsted knew all about how boulevards bring grace and greenery to urban neighborhoods. His firm sketched plans for Newberry Boulevard, one of the city’s best. But in Lake Park, where there’s no shortage of green space, Olmsted called for less intrusive roads, including something similar to the current Lincoln Memorial Drive. Given that history, the new roadway looks more like “a traffic arterial,” says Harry VanOudenallen, architecture professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Perhaps more alarming is the damage the plan will do to one of the city’s most distinctive landmarks – the Bradford Beach House. At nearly 50 years old, the Moderne-style

structure is considered a significant gem by many experts. Designed by unheralded county architects, its encircling observation deck and sweeping staircases reveal the sculptural possibilities of poured concrete. Probably as well as anything in Milwaukee, they anticipate Calatrava’s imaginative concrete work.

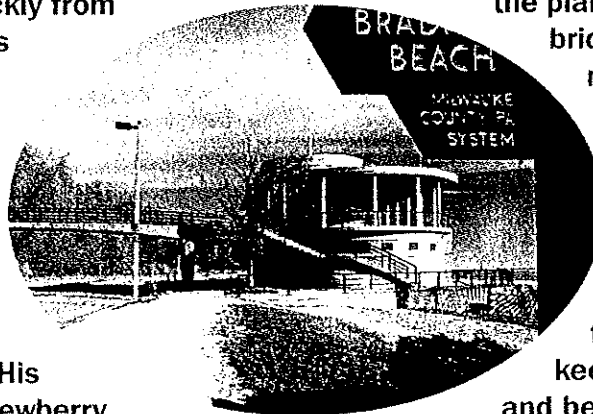
One stairway flows into a pedestrian bridge that offers safe passage to the beach, but the plan will do away with the bridge, primarily because the new road will be six inches higher and clearance is already low enough to make it vulnerable to hits by trucks.

Other solutions include removing some fill beneath the road to keep it at its current height and better enforcing truck

traffic, which is prohibited on the road. Warning bars could even be hung on the drive to alert errant truck drivers that they are entering a low-clearance zone.

Parks Director Susan Baldwin has shown little interest in alternatives, however. And that’s unfortunate, says UWM architecture professor Don Hanlon, who calls the beach house “one of the best buildings in town.” Says Hanlon: “The bridge is an integral part of it. You can’t just lop it off. That’s like cutting off somebody’s nose.”

– *Stephen Filmanowicz*



SCOTT SMETANA, QUAD/PHOTO

