



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date: 6/14/2021
Ald. Milele Coggs District: 6
Staff reviewer: Tim Askin
PTS #115154 CCF # 210192

Property	116 W. VINE ST.	Brewers Hill
Owner/Applicant	Mike Warecki	Mike Warecki

Proposal

The applicants propose to construct a new home at 116 W. Vine St.

The proposed home is 2.5 stories and has an attached garage that will be accessible via the public alley along the west property line. The home will be oriented facing South toward Vine Street with an attached garage facing the alley. The footprint of the main mass of the house is 41.5' x 28'. The attached garage extends the footprint northward for a total of approximately 81', excluding the projecting porch.

Materials are proposed as a mixture of vertical and horizontal wood siding. Window construction is not specified. Skylights are also unspecified.

Staff Comments

As new construction in Brewers Hill, there are substantial criteria for evaluation beyond our standard four criteria of siting, scale, form, and materials. The zoning overlay has significant explicit restrictions on building height, roof pitch, porch design, windows, and garage siting. The house appears quite tall in the drawings, it is definitely within the required 30-40' range although the roof peak height is not noted. The zoning and overlay criteria appear to be met.

Criteria

1. Siting

The siting appears to be addressed adequately. Zoning requirements in Brewers Hill make it difficult to fail this criterion. Between the base zoning and the overlay, traditional siting is effectively required at the baseline. The attached garage will be addressed separately.

2. Scale

The guidelines specifically refer to the "bulk" of the building. The house feels large in the drawings, but is approximately the same height as the prior, unrelated proposal. It will be taller than average amongst neighbors on its block. For general bulk and height, it will nonetheless be well within the range of historic homes in the district.

3. Form

"The massing of new construction must be compatible with surrounding buildings." This is mostly satisfactory. The attached garage is the primary concern, particularly the unbroken straight length of façade on the east elevation. More variation is required at least the point of connection the garage.

4. Materials

Windows, Doors, and Skylights

The windows, doors, and skylights are unspecified. The form and shape are acceptable as drawn. Staff is willing to approve specific models later in the process if the Commission applies certain conditions to what can be approved. Any all-wood, non-clad windows that have SDLs with a spacer bar for staff approval once the pricing options have been considered. Doors should be solid wood or wood veneer. Slider doors are also non-historic and French doors have been our preferred option for large openings. Garage overhead door may be steel or fiberglass.

Skylights are not traditional but should be permitted where they would be in new construction. The alley side of the front gable seems like too visible of a location to approve skylights. North of the dormer on that side would be acceptable without question. The skylights on the east elevation in the garage connector are acceptable as proposed, if the garage connector is approved. Any skylight with a flat glass surface would be acceptable. No bubble, pyramidal, or dome skylights should be permitted.

Garage

The zoning overlay states that garages “must be located in the rear yard and must use the alley for access if available.” This is technically achieved, but the Commission has generally interpreted this to require a detached garage where it is feasible. Staff would challenge the applicants on the attached garage. A detached garage is entirely feasible. Applicant’s site plan shows the attached garage at a point roughly 40’ from the rear lot line. While a larger garage than that which is proposed may be necessary to accommodate a staircase within it, this remains possible. Staff is very concerned with allowing an attached garage when a detached one is feasible. Additionally, the proposed unfinished attic, spaces could be re-arranged to allow a slightly smaller “bonus room” in this location rather than above the garage. On the other hand, with the offset, it is possible that the garage will appear detached from the alley entrance. The east elevation has no offset or differentiation at the ground floor and would need some form of additional detailing if the Commission were inclined to start the precedent of an attached garage where detached is possible.

Recommendation

Hold for minor revisions on garage detailing whether the attached garage is approved or not. Apply conditions per materials section above.

Prior Projects

191018 New House January 2020. Project withdrawn

190682 Garage Demo September 2019. Approved, but work not begun. Approval has expired.