

City of Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission

Attention: jowcza@milwaukee.gov
lelmer@milwaukee.gov

I am writing regarding a Certificate of Appropriateness (File Number 210168) for the proposed project at 2710 East Belleview Place owned by Robert and Allyn Travis scheduled for a hearing on June 14, 2021. I would like some clarification about the plans for the west side of their house as the current situation is causing water damage in my garage. If this issue cannot be resolved, I oppose the current plan.

I live on the west side of the Travis' house at 2608 N. Summit Avenue. The houses are very close together with only a sidewalk and window wells between the houses. The sidewalk slants downhill from their house toward mine. Until a few years ago, I had been able to manage to keep out run-off water by using a dehumidifier in the basement during summer and doing regular upkeep on my house with caulking, tuck pointing, and maintenance of the window wells, drains, and grating.

A few years ago Mr. Travis purchased a log holder used to hold stacked fireplace logs and placed it against the outside east wall of my garage. It is visible from the street, East Belleview Place, which runs in front of his house. The log holder abuts directly with my house, has no gutters, and has a slanted roof that allows rainwater to run downhill directly onto the masonry of my house. The taller part of the structure's roof is 65" tall and the bottom of the slanted roof is 48" tall. The structure is 19" wide and 15.5 feet long. It is shown in the photos below.







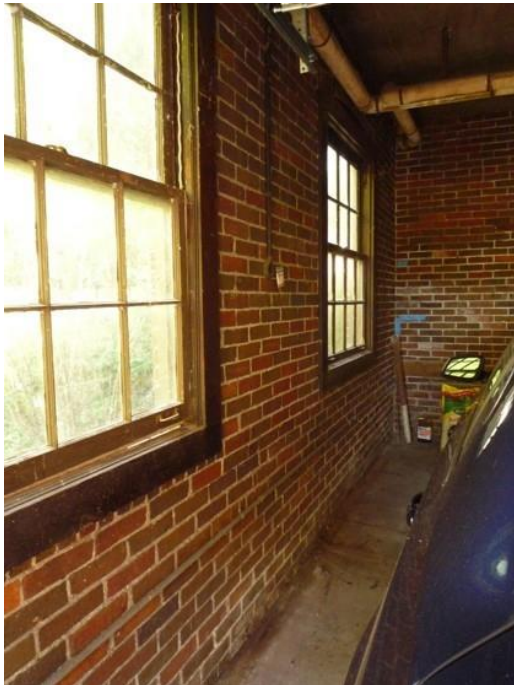
I have politely asked Mr. Travis several times since the log holder appeared to please move the log holder away from the garage wall, and it has not happened. Since the log holder was placed, the wall in my garage has started to discolor white as seen below. The upper blue line on the back wall represents the top of the log holder roof where the peak is 19" east of my garage wall and 65" tall. The second blue line represents where the bottom of the log holder roof abuts the garage wall on the outside and is 48" tall. The left end of the log holder ends at the corner of the garage wall. The right end of the log holder occurs at the vertical blue line on the right. Water runs down the wall on the outside and onto the garage floor inside when it rains. The floor is currently dry as it hasn't rained lately. There is a drain in the garage floor so no standing water, but the floor stays wet most summers when it rains regularly.



The south wall of my garage, an exterior wall in the photo below, is not showing signs of white discoloration inside.



The north wall of my garage, also an exterior wall in the photo below, is not showing signs of white discoloration either.



I have asked a city inspector and an independent masonry professional about the east garage wall, and they both said that the log holder is damaging the wall and causing it to turn white (effloresce) because water is seeping through the bricks from the outside. They said that the only way to stop the efflorescence is to move the log holder away from the garage wall altogether and keep the bricks as dry as possible. If the water damage continues, it could cause permanent damage to the wall, which is a support for the second floor above. Since the log holder is very heavy (likely over 1000 pounds including the firewood), it is not a simple matter to move. For example, Mr. Travis has said he cannot budge the corner of the structure even when it is empty. Some of the employees of the landscapers who were working for Mr. Travis during the summer of 2020 were able to unload and move the log holder temporarily so it is not fixed to the sidewalk. However, I do not have access even to do caulking to try to stop water from entering the garage at my own foundation line. I do not have any way at all to try to stop the efflorescence in the current situation.



As shown above, Mr. Travis is already using the garden north of my garage, without asking for permission, to drain rain water from the roof of his garage into my yard. Since the plants on my side of

the fence are mature and the downspout is away from the foundation, I don't really mind. In fact, if he were to remove at least 4 or 5 overgrown arbor vitae along the property line, the log holder could be moved about 20 feet north so it no longer abuts my garage foundation. Then the rain water from the log holder's roof could also flow into the garden instead of into my garage. As an added bonus, it would not contribute to more water that might otherwise need to go down the **drain** in the sidewalk adjacent to the Travis' back door (as seen in the very first photo above). Another option would be to move the log holder to his north property line where there are more trees, a strip of perennials in the neighbor's yard, and the neighbor's curbed driveway that slants downward toward N. Summit Avenue. There are possibly other options on the other side of his house to place the log holder, but my only interest is that it is moved away from the walls of my house. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Ellen Blank, homeowner

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