



## Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

*Living with History*

**HPC meeting date: 11/09/2015**  
**Ald. Robert Bauman District: 4**  
**Staff reviewer: Dean Doerrfeld**  
**PTS**

**Property** 948 North 34<sup>th</sup> Street Concordia Historic District

**Owner/Applicant** PHIL PERRY  
948 N. 34<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
MILWAUKEE, WI 53208  
PHONE: (202) 841-3178

**Proposal** This project involves the reconstruction of a front porch and the installation of four skylights in the south-facing slope of the roof

**Staff Comments** The building was constructed ca. 1908 in a vernacular Dutch Colonial Revival style. The building is attributed to the architectural firm of Leiser and Holst, and constructed by Charles Roth for William Mitchell. This building displays all the elements of a well-executed example of this style: gambrel roof, varying wall materials, raking verge, and minimal ornamental detailing. Dwellings in this area vary in architectural style but have similar scale, massing, and proportions. Most are accented with a prominent front porch albeit of differing materials and details.

The Concordia Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1985, and locally designated in 1988.

The applicant has been in the process of restoring this property for some time. The initial effort in reconstructing the porch included stone piers as a base element. This was begun without a COA and work was stopped. The applicant subsequently removed the stone portions, and is now requesting a COA to reconstruct the porch with square wood posts and a vernacular balustrade. The posts are constructed with a central structural element wrapped with finished lumber. A stopped quarter-round molding will be created at all four corners and the top encircled with a "triple pencil molding." The base is also vernacular with a vertical board and molded cap. The balustrade and porch railings are composed of 2x2 balusters and a molded handrail—the step rail is anchored by a newel with ball cap. Porch skirting is a symmetrical pattern of alternating 1x4s and 1x2s. In discussions with the applicant, staff requested that at the structural piers, the skirt be widened to cover the supporting piers.

The proposed porch reconstruction is consistent with the guidelines and appropriate for this house and the Concordia Historic District. Images from the mid-1980s illustrate that the porch on this dwelling was very similar to the one proposed. Although skirting cannot be seen in the older images, the proposed method is appropriate.

The applicant also requests a COA to install two skylights in the south facing slope of the upper portion of the gambrel. These were installed previously by the applicant without a COA. Additionally, alterations to attics usually require a permit from the Department of Neighborhood Services, and there is no record of a permit. Staff has consistently recommended disapproval for the installation of skylights on any portion of the roof visible from the public right-of-way. The Commission has concurred with staff on all occasions.

**Recommendation**

Reconstruct porch: Approve with Conditions  
Install skylights: Disapprove

**Conditions**

Porch skirting is to be modified to include wider building elements to mask structural piers at foundation.

**Previous HPC action**

**Previous Council action**