



## Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

<b>HPC meeting date</b>	<b>7/7/2025</b>	<b>CCF # 250366</b>
<b>Ald. Coggs</b>	<b>Staff reviewer:</b> Tim Askin	
<b>Property</b>	626 E. North Avenue	Kilbourn/Reservoir Park
<b>Owner/Applicant</b>	City of Milwaukee	Framing Wisco Project

### Proposal

Framing Wisco is a collaborative initiative that installs Frames in neighborhoods across the City of Milwaukee and engages the community in doing so. The goal is for each Frame to be strategically placed throughout Milwaukee to highlight and celebrate Milwaukee's natural landscapes, urban aesthetics, and historic landmarks.

The frame will be an artist-designed 8'x12' structure at the south edge of the hill.

### Staff comments

#### *G. Site Features*

*New plant materials, paving, fencing, or accessory structures shall be compatible with the historic architectural character of the site visible from the public right of way.*

- There is no avoiding the public right of way within a park, especially for a structure meant to be seen and experienced. Given the large open area at the top of the hill, the proposal is unlikely to provide a major distraction from the character of the park.
- 1. Siting
  - a. This guideline emphasizes maintenance of sightlines and views of existing structures. The structure will be distant from any historic surface features in the park and will not obstruct views of them. The structure should be placed within the track for two reasons, 1) minimizing visibility in views toward the park and 2) public safety, as the strip of available land between the track and the edge of the hill is negligible.
- 2. Scale
  - a. A horizontal orientation would be preferable, but it is acknowledged that that is not ideal for current snapshot photography practices. It will be the only structure on the hilltop, as all historic buildings related to the reservoir have been demolished. This may be of some concern.
- 3. Form
  - a. As it is not a building, form compatibility is somewhere between impractical and impossible. Nonetheless, this guideline bases its restrictions on proximity to existing buildings and so its application is limited.
- 4. Materials
  - a. Bare wood is not a traditional material within the park, the surrounding neighborhood, or the city at large. The wood must be stained or painted in some manner.

### Recommendation

Approve with conditions. Several of these conditions are based on requirements for murals and are applicable to any public art installation.

1. Place inside the jogging track for safety
2. Stain, paint, or otherwise cover any bare wood.
3. Provide a maintenance plan for the frame which names the party responsible for such maintenance.
4. Provide an end date for the installation and/or decommissioning plan, naming responsible parties.