



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date: 4/1/2019

Ald. Nik Kovac District: 3

Staff reviewer: Tim Askin

PTS #114702 CCF #181795

Property 1945 N. BARTLETT AV.

Owner/Applicant LINCOLN D FOWLER
AND LILITH FOWLER 2009
REVOCABLE TRUST D5/112009
2961 MARIETTA AVENUE
MILWAUKEE WI 53211

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Iron Jenny Design
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Milwaukee, WI 53212
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Proposal Convert property to single family residential use with new window openings and a rooftop addition. Substantial rehabilitation work on the interior and exterior is proposed.

The rehabilitation of the Bartlett Avenue elevation with new outswing, wood doors to match the documented historical condition, restored steel lintel and decorative rosettes above outswing doors, replacement of the existing door opening with window opening, a new wood door designed to match documented historical condition, new double hung windows, restored ornamental metal trim.

The rehabilitation of the Irving Place elevation with the excavation of existing window wells and addition of new glass blocks and window well covers, the addition of two new masonry openings with matching stone lintels and sills, the restoration of the brick masonry pediment to match the documented historical condition, new "hayloft" shutters that match the existing, restored hoisting beam.

The rehabilitation of the rear elevation with a new wrought iron balcony and guard railing, reduced existing opening infilled with brick, preserved existing lintel, new wood door with upper lite and side lite, new rooftop wood privacy screen and guard railing, new clay wall coping, new double hung windows;

The rehabilitation of the southwest elevation (not street visible) with the addition of new awning windows at the first level, enlarged existing opening at the second level and new double hung windows with brick lintel and stone sill to match existing, the addition of a new double hung window with matching brick lintel and stone sill at the second level, new metal gutter and downspout to match ornamental metal trim, new metal-clad enclosure at existing elevator penthouse, new penthouse wood door with lite.

New construction consists of a new, metal-clad rooftop addition with operable skylights and new awning windows and access to a new rooftop deck at the Irving and rear elevations, but not at the Bartlett elevation.

Site work to include: the installation of new wrought iron gate and wood privacy fence and new concrete stoop and steps poured at the rear entrance off of Irving Place.

Staff comments

A return to this building's historic uses is neither practical nor desirable. It served as a storage facility far longer than it ever served as a fire house. Residential use is appropriate to the neighborhood, matches current zoning, and is a reasonable option for the building.

Guidelines and Restoration of Lost Features

The specific guidelines for this property suggest that neither new fenestration nor a penthouse should be allowed. However, on balance, there are great pains being taken to rehabilitate the property. This includes restoring long-lost features based on photographic evidence such as a proper firehouse door, block and tackle for the hayloft, and the north false gable. Similar alterations were approved for the previous owner and this project has a more sensitive rooftop addition.

Rehabilitation of Existing Building*Balcony*

One balcony is proposed at the rear of the building. The design is compatible and the addition is a reasonable accommodation to the new use.

Windows

Original windows are simple 1/1s and applicant requests to replace all existing windows with insulated Marvin Ultimate Double Hung in all wood construction. Interior photos indicate that most, if not all windows are beyond reasonable repair efforts.

The applicant requests the addition of 7 new openings. On the SW elevation, applicant requests the addition of 4 new awning window openings at the lower level, 1 new double hung opening at the second level, and the expansion of one existing opening at the second level. The expanded opening and the double hung opening on the first floor are acceptable as they are not street visible. The headers should be expanded to be as wide as their sills, but as they are new, they should not be as wide as the original headers elsewhere on the building. The awning openings at the lower level are acceptable as they assist in converting that portion of the building to legal bedrooms. New windows on the southwest elevation are all a clad product. Staff suspects this is an issue of fire-rating because of the very tight property line and adjacency of the neighboring house. If all other windows are wood and the architect will certify in writing that this is a matter of building code, the clad windows can be approved in this specific situation on an elevation that is not street visible and strictly to meet building code requirements. The new south elevation windows are generally constructed such that they could not be confused with original openings

The new second story window at the front and the windows on the north elevation are a more complex situation. The attempt to match existing conditions is valid, but theory suggests that these windows should be differentiated as new openings. Staff believes that there is no good way to accomplish this, as any changes to the fenestration pattern would severely disrupt the rhythm of the façade. In this unusual case, it may be best to allow replication of historic features.

Hayloft

Applicant proposes to replace existing hayloft shutters with replicas that match existing material and construction. Replication of the existing door can be reviewed by staff after inspection by staff and a bid for repair from a qualified carpenter. Restoration of the block and tackle is proposed by applicant and encouraged by staff.

Doors

The metal garage door on the Bartlett façade will be replaced with outswing wooden door replicas of the original based on photographic evidence. Applicant requests to switch the location of the existing door opening and window opening. At the rear elevation, applicant requests to reduce the size of the existing opening and add a new wood door with and upper and side lite. Reducing the size of the opening is a reasonable accommodation to the new use; however staff suggests the omission of upper and side lites to minimize glazing and modern appearance. Alternatively, the reduced opening could be filled in in a more symmetrical manner.

Landscaping

Staff recommends approval of the proposed site alterations at the rear elevation including new wrought iron gates at the entrance to the property and new concrete stoop and steps. The wood fence must be painted.

North Gable Reconstruction

The restoration of the north gable is mostly acceptable as proposed. The design is appropriate, based on limited photographic evidence. As the photographic evidence is limited, special care will have to be taken to make it clear that it is a reproduction. This can be accomplished by using slightly different mortar color or using modern cream brick.

Penthouse

A substantial rooftop addition is proposed with a 604sf footprint within the building's 2200sf footprint. Applicant intends to keep the existing freight elevator operational. At the roof level, applicant proposes to add a staircase from level III to address egress issues and provide additional roof access. Both the addition and existing elevator penthouse are proposed to be clad in metal. Mechanicals will be placed on the rooftop and vented through secondary elevations.

Recommendation Recommend HPC Approval with conditions

Conditions

1. Replication of the existing doors can be reviewed by staff after inspection by staff and a bid for repair from a qualified carpenter.
2. Submit shop drawings for all new windows and doors
3. Expand headers on the rear double hung windows on the south elevation as above
4. Reconstruction of north gable should be differentiated in materials from original building, as above.
5. Symmetrical infill of rear entry.
6. Deck surface for rear balcony shall be constructed of natural wood. Metal components as indicated for all other features of the balcony are acceptable
7. Paint wood fence.
8. Standard masonry conditions

New mortar must match the original mortar in terms of color, texture, grain size, joint width, and joint finish/profile. The compressive strength of the repointing mortar shall be equal or less than the compressive strength of the original mortar and surrounding brick or stone. The replacement mortar shall contain approximately the same ingredient proportions of the original mortar. Mortar that is too hard is subject to premature failure and could damage the masonry. See the city's books *As Good As New* or *Good for Business*, Masonry Chapters, for more information. In most cases, this means a lime mortar with natural hydraulic cement rather than Portland cement. No joint of a width less than 3/8" may be cleaned of damaged/decomposed mortar with power disc grinders. No over-cutting of the joints is permitted. Remove decomposed mortar back into the wall 2.5 times the height of the joint before repointing. New brick must match as closely as possible the color texture, size, and finish of the original brick. A sample panel of brick and mortar must be reviewed and approved by HPC staff prior to general installation of the material.

Previous HPC action

Designated 2003. Previous rooftop addition project approved September 2017.