



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report Revised 05-09-2016

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date: 05-09-2016
Ald. Robert Bauman District: 4
Staff reviewer: Carlen Hatala
PTS

Property	1037 W. JUNEAU AVE. Pabst Brewery Historic District	
Owner/Applicant	BLUE RIBBON REDEVELOPMENT FUND V, LLC 735 W. WISCONSIN AVE. STE 610 MILWAUKEE, WI 53233	Blue Ribbon Management, LLC 735 W. Wisconsin, Ave., Ste. 610 Milwaukee, WI 53233 Phone: (414) 313-0057
Proposal	<p>On September 15, 2015, the HPC approved the renovations to the former First German Methodist/Forst Keller Restaurant that included a rear (south) addition and outdoor patio area.</p> <p>The new two-story, masonry addition to the south of the existing structure is configured to house restrooms, mechanical equipment, and an elevator.</p> <p>The exterior of the addition has undergone design changes and its review is before the commission today.</p>	
Staff Comments	<p>The new design for the addition consists of a monolithic rectangular box with flat roof.</p> <p>Changes include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The elimination of the proposed chisel faced stone and ground faced masonry that was applied vertically to a portion of the elevation2) The substitution of light color brick to approximate the color of the cream city brick as will look after cleaning3) Elimination of the backlit letters spelling out The Brewery4) Elimination of window openings in order to simplify the facade as well as satisfy code requirements5) The glass storefront piece on the west façade was pushed back one foot to accentuate the division between the two buildings.6) East façade glass had to be changed to 1-hour rated spandrel glass to meet code7) The service door was moved to the south around the corner8) The new proposal includes a large wall sign/mural with the Pabst logo on the plain south wall of the addition9) The former canopy over the bar area consisted of translucent panels. The new proposal includes a free standing canopy (not attached to the building) over the bar area. Two options are given, one in wood and one in black painted metal.	

THE ADDITION

The former proposal for the addition has something of the character of the Mid-Century modern about it. The new proposal is rather stark in contrast to the detail of the former church building. It is not meant to compete with that building but its very starkness calls attention away from the former church. There is a lack of scale that does not fit with adjacent historic structures. It appears to have been designed to form a blank backdrop/billboard for the painted signage being proposed.

The canopy is preferable in wood. The black painted metal is too stark in contrast with the overall project.

THE SIGNAGE

The sign proposal deviates from others presented to the commission by its size (almost filling the 38.7-foot wide by 42-foot tall wall) and the fact that it is painted directly on the new, blank, brick façade. It appears that the tenants want to be visible from the freeway. The tenants wish to capture some of the character of the old brewery complexes when the brewery name was often painted right onto the exterior walls of the buildings. Following a brief discussion with a plan examiner, this might require a variance. If the HPC approves this sign it would have to be contingent on it meeting code and whether this would be considered signage or a wall mural.

Recommendation

The addition and the sign are tied together. The addition forms the backdrop for the sign and becomes a blank "canvas". As staff I would like to see more architectural expression given to the addition to give a sense of scale. To require that features recede and extend from the façade, however, would result in a change for the sign. Perhaps another design option could be explored for the sign.

Continue to work on the design of the addition and sign.

Conditions

Previous HPC action

CC File # 150583, PTS # 105771

Previous Council action