



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date	6/1/2026	CCF # 260043
Ald. Coggs	Staff reviewer: Andrew Stern	
Property	213 W. Brown Street	Brewers Hill Historic District
Owner/Applicant	Shannon Brennan and Kat Devlin 1951 N. 2 nd Street. Milwaukee, WI 53212	

Proposal

Exterior rehabilitation including siding, windows, and doors and the removal of a non-historic entryway and installation of a new Bilco-style cellar door and new deck.

Staff comments

The gabled-ell house at 213 W. Brown was constructed in approximately 1876. The owners are proposing an extensive exterior restoration of the house, which can be broken down into four major categories: siding, windows, doors, and deck.

Siding

The house had been clad in asphalt replacement siding until the owners removed that siding to reveal the historic cedar clapboard underneath. The clapboard siding shows areas of deterioration and there are several areas where there is inadequate wall assembly and weather protection, allowing for water infiltration. The applicants are proposing removing all historic siding to allow for installation of wall sheathing and a weather-resistant barrier. The historic siding will be salvaged and reinstalled, where possible, with new cedar clapboard siding installed to match the dimension, profile, and exposure of the historic siding. They are proposing to install LP SmartSide engineered wood clapboard siding on the rear (south) elevation that is not visible from the right-of-way. The preservation guidelines for the district recommend avoiding use of "new material that is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed." HPC has allowed smooth fiber cement siding in historic districts only on new construction and has never approved an engineered wood product. Staff recommends the rear façade also be clad with new or salvaged cedar clapboard siding to match the dimension, profile, and exposure of the historic siding. Inside and outside corner posts will be replaced using 1"x6" cedar and window trim will be replaced with 1"x4" cedar.

Windows

The historic windows consist of a mix of mainly two-over-two double hung sash windows and a few one-over-one windows. The applicants are proposing restoring ten historic windows and replacing one vinyl window and one deteriorated historic window with new Marvin two-over-two solid wood windows. They are also proposing adding two new two-over-two windows into a new opening in the ell on the southeast side of the house, along the proposed deck. The windows will not be visible from the right-of-way. In addition, they are proposing all new wood storm windows with meeting rails to match the historic heights. Staff has no concerns with the window proposals.

Doors

The applicants are proposing to restore the historic wood front entry door and add a matching wood screen door. They are proposing removing the existing side entry and enlarging the opening to accommodate French doors for the proposed new deck. The new French doors are solid wood and the design is appropriate for the style of

the house. This opening is not visible from the right of way and while French doors were not a door type that would have been found on a cottage of this style, staff is comfortable supporting the new doors on the new porch given the lack of yard or other outdoor space for this parcel.

Deck

The applicants are proposing to remove a non-historic enclosed stairway on the side façade and adding a Bilco-style basement door and a 15'x8' deck accessed from the French doors. The new deck will be constructed of cedar tone pressure treated lumber. The deck will have 5/4 cedar tone decking with 1"x4" skirting. The posts will be 4"x4" with 2"x2" balusters and decorative top and bottom rails. The deck will not be visible from the right-of-way. Staff has no concerns with the deck proposal.

Recommendation

Approve with conditions.

Conditions

1. All finish wood must be smooth and free of knots and must be painted or treated with an opaque stain upon completion. Note: when new, bare wood is left exposed to the exterior elements for a period of only a week or two, the life of the paint job subsequently applied to it will be decreased. The use of a decay-resistant wood for is required for porch areas. Using western white pine or Ponderosa pine is "at your own risk" because this wood has no natural decay resistance and can deteriorate in some exterior settings in just a few years.
2. The rear (south) façade shall be clad with salvaged historic cedar clapboard or new cedar clapboard to match the dimension, profile, and exposure of the historic siding on other facades.
3. Provide designs for the molded top and bottom rails and newel posts of the rear deck to staff for approval.
4. Corner boards, trim, window surrounds, cornice return, and water table to be retained or replaced in-kind.