



## Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

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**HPC meeting date: 4/1/2019**  
**Ald. Robert Bauman District: 4**  
**Staff reviewer: Tim Askin**  
**PTS #114700 CCF #181793**

**Property** 1030 N. 4TH ST.

**Owner/Applicant** MILWAUKEE TURNERS  
PO BOX 510766  
MILWAUKEE WI 532030131

Mike Kinsella  
Poblocki Sign Co.  
922 S. 70th St.  
West Allis, WI 53214  
Phone: (414) 453-4010

**Proposal** Erect three projecting signs on the west elevation of the building.

- Round sign at gym entrance: 3' diameter
- Rectangular sign at main entrance: 4' x 2'2" with 1' x 2'2" sign hanging from it.
- Vertical rectangular sign: 4' x 22' with bulb lettering characters 1'4' x 1'0".

**Staff comments** Turner Hall is a National Historic Landmark, the highest designation that is granted by the federal government for historic properties. Locally, it stands among peers such as City Hall, Pabst Theater, Golda Meir School, and the Soldiers Home. Across the state, there are further examples such as the Capitol, Ten Chimneys, Taliesin, Man Mound, and the SC Johnson Wax complex. In terms of German-American history, perhaps its most comparable National Historic Landmark building is the Indianapolis Athenaeum, which also has a history related to Turners. Changes to such buildings must be held to a very high standard.

The round sign is acceptable in the design and location proposed. Staff believes it meets the requirements of the sign ordinance in its current configuration as well.

The rectangular tavern sign is also generally acceptable with minor modifications. It projects too far from the building. Zoning code requires the 4' maximum projection being inclusive of mounting brackets. In staff's experience, obtaining a variance for excess projection is unlikely.

The vertical sign as designed does not appear to meet the guidelines for the property. In addition to its height exceeding one story, it obstructs architectural details of the central tower including the cornice line, elaborate window sills, and decorative turrets. It is also out of scale for the building. A design on the scale of the 1950s neon sign would be more appropriate.

Staff recommends approval of the round size as proposed.

The "Tavern" sign should be referred to staff to address a minor size reduction and adjustment of placement.

The vertical sign is too large and needs modifications. It should be denied or held over.

**Recommendation** Recommend HPC Approval with conditions

**Conditions**

1. Mounting posts shall be drilled into mortar joints only and not into the face of any brick or stone.
2. Shrink tavern sign to meet zoning requirements and place higher so as not to obstruct red brick detailing.
3. Removal of round board sign at main entrance.
4. Hold over vertical sign for redesign in smaller format.

**Previous HPC action** n/a

**Previous Council action** Locally designated 1986; National Historic Landmark 1996.

**Guidelines**

*Turner Hall Guidelines*

E. Additions

The west elevation is integral to the structure's architectural significance. Additions require the approval of the Commission. Approval shall be based upon the addition's design compatibility with the building in terms of height, roof configuration, fenestration, scale, design and materials, and the degree to which it visually intrudes upon the principle elevations.

F. Signs/Exterior Lighting

The installation of any permanent exterior sign or light fixture shall require the approval of the Commission. Approval will be based on the compatibility of the proposed sign with the historic and architectural character of the building.

*Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation*

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.