



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date

1/9/2023

CCF #221376

Ald. Perez

Staff reviewer: Tim Askin

Property

723 - 725 W. Historic Mitchell Street

**Owner/Applicant
Proposal**

Shane McAdams Studio

Stack Design Group

Simulated restoration of the art moderne upper façade of the 723 building. Storefront and window alterations to the 725 building.

Staff comments

The drawings and materials submissions are not sufficient for full review. Requests for additional information did not receive a meaningful response.

723

The Trespa panels are an honest attempt at mimicking the form and grid-like character of the original Vitrolite. It is unlikely that sufficient Vitrolite material can be sourced in a single color to achieve an actual restoration, but this has not been demonstrated. It is also unknown if it is cost-prohibitive. Guidelines require original materials when possible and the Commission typically requires evidence to this effect. A sample of Vitrolite should be brought to the Commission for comparison purposes. The color options are challenging. The pure colors lack the depth of Vitrolite while the proposed "Crafted White" has depth, but appears dirty when examined closely.

The round windows do not currently have glass. No specific proposal is made for their replacement. The central column of glass block will be restored.

The detailing of the transition from the Trespa panels to the storefront is awkward as drawn. Columns and storefront features do not align. The brick pilaster between the two storefronts creates a visual connection that needs to be removed in a successful remodel. The two buildings no longer have any functional or visual ties and this pilaster is a major contributor to the vertical misalignment of materials and the awkward transition between materials.

725

Conceptually the storefront alterations in the 725 building are acceptable. The proposed windows for the upper level are appropriately sized, but the front elevation is the only information provided. The original transom area below the proposed windows is heavily damaged. Owners have stated they will be repair it, but declined to specify how. The full height of the opening should be restored and a clear design plan should be provided for the damaged area.

Recommendation

HOLD for complete submittal and revisions.

Approve the general concept for upper floor alterations. Staff is neutral on the Trespa panel option without having the option for direct physical comparisons.

Recommend that the new storefront system for 725 address the pilaster, incorporate a transom, and restore the full height of the original opening.