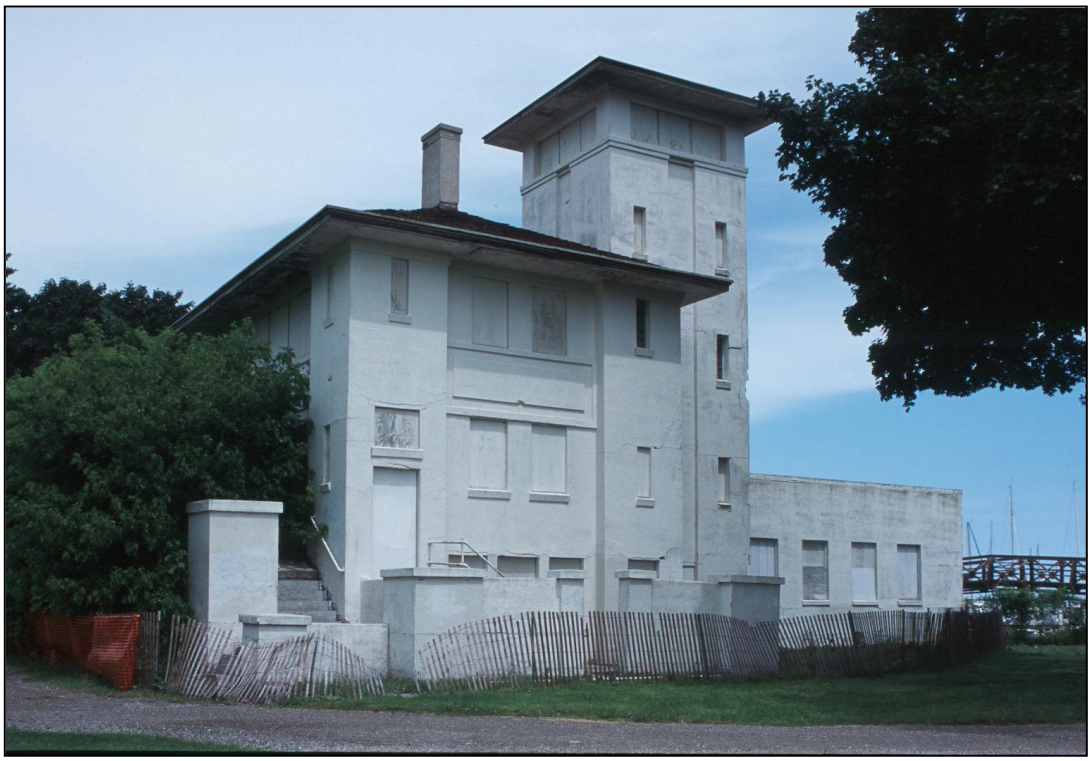

FINAL DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT

COAST GUARD STATION

1600 NORTH LINCOLN MEMORIAL DRIVE

AUGUST, 2001

COAST GUARD STATION
DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT

I. NAME

Historic: Coast Guard Station
Common: Old Coast Guard Station

II. LOCATION

1600 North Lincoln Memorial Drive

Legal Description:

That part of the SW ¼ of Section 22, Town 7 North, Range 22 East, in the First Ward of the City of Milwaukee, bounded and described as follows: Beginning at a point on the westerly line of the quarter Section aforesaid, 603.51' south of the northwest corner of the quarter Section; thence north 45 degrees 9' E 250'; thence S 44 degrees 51' E 200.57' to the present dock line of the harbor; thence along said dock line S 45 degrees 9' W 250'; thence N 44 degrees 51' W 200.57' to the point of beginning, containing 1.15 acres, more or less.

Tax Key Number: 358-9999

III. CLASSIFICATION

Structure

IV. OWNER

Milwaukee County

ALDERMANIC DISTRICT

Fourth Aldermanic District, Alderman Paul Henningsen

NOMINATOR

Doran L. Gendelman

V. YEAR BUILT

1915 – 1916

ARCHITECT

Unknown

VI. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Old Coast Guard Station is located on Milwaukee's lakefront, in McKinley Park, on a parcel of land slightly over an acre in area. The site can be found on the south/southwest bank of the Flushing Tunnel intake channel. Nearby buildings include the Milwaukee Yacht Club on the north/northeasterly side of the intake channel and the Flushing Tunnel Station on the north/northwest side of Lincoln Memorial Drive.

The Old Coast Guard Station, so named to distinguish it from the present, active, station, is a three story, rectangular, Prairie Style structure with a prominent five-story tower located at the southeast corner of the building. It was built between July 1915 and April 1916. The main block of the building parallels Lincoln Memorial drive. The first story is at grade and is visible when viewed from the south or the north. A one-story boathouse wing extends from the building on its Lake Michigan façade and extends north beyond the main block of the building.

The Old Coast Guard Station has many distinguishing features that are characteristic of the Prairie style including wall massing, surface treatment, windows and roof. The blocky massing of the building is emphasized by the projecting corners, a feature also used on the prominent tower. The walls form a taut planar surface through the use of stucco cladding over terra cotta tile. A broad hip roof overhangs the structure and has slightly flared eaves. A hip roof also crowns the tower. Simple rectangular windows are arranged in horizontal bands along the length of the building and are framed by lintels and sills. Similar bands of windows are placed at the topmost story of the tower to create the illusion that the roof is floating above the structure. Although the windows are currently boarded up, historian Carol Lohry Cartwright, in her 1988 National Register nomination for the building, reported that the original sash were extant. From old photos they appear to be six-over-one in configuration. Window openings in the corners consist of narrow casements. Similar windows appear asymmetrically arranged on the tower. A raised terrace extends along the Lincoln Memorial Drive façade of the building and is approached by flights of stairs on the southwest and northwest. Large piers buttress the terrace and a planting bed is located between them. Entrances are located at the northwest and southwest facades of the building and are positioned between the ground and first stories. These entrances are approached by shallow stairs that are enclosed in small courtyards behind tall stucco-clad walls. A second entrance on the southwest elevation is approached at grade behind the courtyard walls. Another entrance is located on the main façade close to the north end of the structure. Lohry Cartwright indicated that some of the original doors are still extant although none are visible due to their boarding over.

The five-story lookout tower dominates the lakefront façade of the station as previously indicated. To its north is the boathouse. The original boathouse consisted of a hip roof wing that housed four garage-like openings at the waters edge and a launchway that extended into the water for the raising and lowering of Coast Guard boats. Large concrete bulkheads that form a small slip border the runners or ramps of the launchway. The concrete bulkheads continue along the lakefront and form a sea wall protecting the station from changes in the level of the lake. City of Milwaukee permit records show that this original boathouse was demolished in September 1938 and replaced that same year by the current one-story flat roof structure. The new $32,000 structure with steel supported roof is larger than its predecessor. While retaining four bays for boats it extends north beyond the main portion of the building. It features five window openings, two large cargo-size openings and a pedestrian entrance. It is clad in stucco to resemble the original portion of the station but lacks the detailing and massing that make the original portion so distinctive. Possibly from this time period as well is a metal pedestrian bridge that crosses over the launchway. The approaches to this bridge are

built of concrete with simple Deco designs and tie in with the concrete retaining wall at the water's edge by the flushing intake channel.

Aside from the new boathouse, which is now sixty-five years old, there have been few changes to the Coast Guard station's exterior. Historic photographs in the collection of the Milwaukee County Historical Society and a captioned photograph in the Milwaukee Sentinel of April 17, 1916 show that the stucco cladding on the main portion of the building was tinted, not white, and was contrasted with light colored spandrels between the second and third stories and light colored stucco banding below the roof of the tower. This coloring scheme better emphasized the Prairie Style of the building. A series of architectural drawings for a Coast Guard Station in Milwaukee exists at the National Archives but none exactly match the building as constructed. One series of drawings, dated May 7, 1913, came from local architect Alfred C. Clas. These drawings consist of three sheets of floor plans and one elevation, the elevation fronting the lakefront. The building is in the Prairie Style with stucco cladding, battered walls, hip roof and the typical shirtwaist proportions with a narrow second story delineated by a beltcourse that wraps the building. Clas designed the boathouse portion of the building with four large boat openings and positioned the lookout tower to the north of the launchway. Resembling a lighthouse, the tower features a windowed lookout room at the top complete with balcony. The plans are marked "not used" and initialed "p.p." The second set of drawings consists of a lakefront elevation, a north elevation and floor plans for the first and second floors. In some ways the second, undated set, is a simplified version of the Clas design with some modifications. Like the Clas design the tower remains at the north end of the boathouse, and the shirtwaist proportions and beltcourse are retained. In this version, however, the number of launch doors has been reduced to two and the tower lookout has had its windows reduced in number and the balcony eliminated. The floor plans for the first and second story are also completely different from Clas' proposal. The window and door openings, the location of the tower, the lack of a raised terrace across the Lincoln Memorial Drive façade and lack of an at-grade first story all distinguish the designs from the building that is extant today. The plans are initialed "v.m." a person whose identity is not known today.

In her 1988 National Register nomination for the building, Carol Lohry Cartwright indicates that the interior of the Old Coast Guard Station has retained its overall floor plan and some of the woodwork, although most doors and architectural trim have been removed. A second structure was once located to the north/northwest of the station. Built in 1920, the $14,000 twenty-four by twenty-eight foot structure housed a radio station. It was stucco clad like the main station and had a hip roof. It was demolished in 1980. A metal signal tower also appears in historic views of the site but it too has been razed. A fire occurred in the main building on January 19, 1989 but since it was confined to a relatively small area at the southwest corner of the second floor it did not affect the historic integrity of the building. The damage was considered minor and after examination of the building on February 8, 1989 by structural engineer Ambrose Wilger, developer Charles Trainer, architect David Uihlein and Preservation Officer Les Vollmert it was determined that there was no serious structural damage to the building. Firefighters chopped a hole in the roof to ventilate the fire but the hole has since been patched. Media reports greatly exaggerated the damage caused by the fire. State Historical Society staff also visited the site on March 29, 1989 and determined that the building had not lost its essential features and retained its historic integrity. It was subsequently listed in the National Register of Historic Places on August 7, 1989.

The building was last used by the Coast Guard in 1970/1971 and thereafter used by the American Indian Movement and the Indian Community School until 1980. It has been vacant since that time. In recent years saplings have been allowed to grow in the terrace area along

the west façade and they now obscure the Lincoln Memorial Drive elevation of the building. A snow fence has also been installed around the building's perimeter to prevent access to the structure.

VII. SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Coast Guard Station is significant for its architecture and for its associations with maritime history. The building is a rare example of non-residential Prairie Style in Milwaukee. While the style was generally used for private residences and some churches or even schools, it is not found on major governmental or public buildings. Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan indicates that the Prairie Style arose in Chicago in the early twentieth century and most examples can be found in the upper Midwest. Frank Lloyd Wright was the leading proponent of the style but his associates as well as others designed buildings that are characterized by their horizontality, low-pitched broad overhanging roofs and bands of windows. While Wright began to explore other forms by the nineteen-teens, the Prairie Style was still practiced by local architects into the 1920's. The station was built at the time that the Frank Lloyd Wright Bogk house was under construction on nearby Terrace Avenue. The Prairie Style actually had reached a lull in its popularity here by the mid-teens only to be revived by Russell Barr Williamson when he permanently settled in Milwaukee after World War I. The Old Coast Guard Station is a simplified version of the style but fits within the mainstream of the work being done in Milwaukee at the time. All the major hallmarks of the style are present from the stucco cladding to the broad overhanging roof, horizontal bands of windows, projecting corner blocks, front terrace, and side entrances disguised behind courtyard walls. While not all Prairie houses or buildings utilized stucco, for example, the Bogk house was brick. It was a material that best conveyed the modernism and forward-looking principals that the architects held dear. That the Coast Guard station was clad in stucco and lacked historical references shows that Federal government wanted to make a bold statement about its newly organized maritime service.

The Old Coast Guard Station is also significant in Milwaukee's maritime history as the only surviving historic building associated with the Coast Guard's life saving service in the city and as an early example of the new and improved facilities that were constructed as a result of the creation of the Coast Guard by an Act of Congress on January 28, 1915. Two prior stations had been occupied before the extant building was constructed, but both had been demolished after life saving crews vacated them. Coast Guard Annual Reports from 1915 indicate that in the Great Lakes region, only one other station was built that year, in Oswego, New York and that only three others were contracted for elsewhere in the U.S. at Point of Woods, Long Island, Cape Fear, North Carolina, and Coos Bay, Oregon. Milwaukee has long been an important port in the Great Lakes. Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan identifies historic maritime resources as important in the history of Great Lakes navigation. The plan summarizes that early navigation began with Native Americans but expanded quickly during the period of exploration and trade by Europeans in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. By the latter part of the nineteenth century lumber and iron ore became important raw materials shipped from northern Wisconsin while Milwaukee became one of the great grain and machine exporting ports. Commerce continued in the twentieth century, especially with the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1959. Combining the work of the Revenue Cutter Service and the Life Saving Service into one Coast Guard Service enabled a more efficient patrol of the waters and aid to victims of boating and shipping disasters.

VIII. HISTORY

Today's U. S. Coast Guard is a consolidation of four government agencies that protected, aided and rescued ships, sailors, vessels and passengers and protected government revenues. These agencies were the U.S. Lighthouse Service, the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service, the U.S. Life Saving Service, and the Steamboat Inspection Service.

The U.S. Lighthouse Service traces its roots back to 1760 with the establishment of a lighthouse at the entrance to Boston harbor. By 1786, twelve lighthouses had been established along the eastern seaboard. The first lighthouse on the Great Lakes was thought to be that at Presque Isle on Lake Erie, dating to 1819. This service also included the manning of lightships that were stationed off shore where the construction of a building was not feasible.

The U.S. Revenue Cutter Service was established in 1790 to help combat the loss of government revenue through maritime smuggling. Revenue cutters were patrolling the Great Lakes by the 1820's and also assisted lake ships in distress, patrolled local regattas, and manned lookout stations.

The U.S. Lifesaving Service began as a volunteer service in the eastern seaboard in 1785 under the Massachusetts Humane Society. Beginning in 1847 the Federal government began periodic appropriations to help fund these services, aid shipwrecks, and hire some permanent staff although the majority of lifesaving personnel remained volunteers. Congress created a permanent U.S. Life Saving Service in 1878 and placed it under the authority of the U.S. Treasury. The Steamboat Inspection Service has not been as well documented as the other three agencies, but was established to prevent the loss of life from the explosion of faulty boilers in steam powered vessels. The country's first laws on this matter were passed in 1838 in response to the growing number of deaths from marine boiler explosions. The agency's eventual duties consisted of the inspection of vessel construction and equipment, examination and licensing of marine officers, the examination of seamen and marine causalities, and the enforcement of inspection laws, the establishment of regulations to prevent collisions, and the establishment of regulations for the transporting of passengers and cargo.

The U.S. Coast Guard was created by Congress on January 15, 1915 by the amalgamation of the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service and the U.S. Life Saving Service. The U.S. Lighthouse Service was incorporated into the agency in 1939, and the Coast Guard became part of the U.S. Navy as the nation prepared for World War II. The Steamboat Inspection Service, by then called the U.S. Bureau of Marine Inspection and Navigation, was temporarily transferred to the Coast Guard in1942 for the duration of the war but became a permanent part of the agency in 1946. On April 1, 1947, the Coast Guard was transferred from the Treasury Department to the Department of Transportation. Today on the Great Lakes, the Coast Guard's main functions are lifesaving and icebreaking to keep shipping lanes open as long as possible. Most of the lighthouses are now automated and unmanned.

As referred to above, the Life Saving Service began as a volunteer activity and received only sporadic funding and manpower from the Federal government until a permanent government agency was set up in 1878. Prior to that date, in 1873, Milwaukee had been identified as one of a number of potential sites for a lifesaving station on the Great Lakes. A lifesaving station was not constructed until 1877 following local petitions in the aftermath of a serious shipwreck in the fall of 1875. The $2,095, two-story, Gothic Revival Style building was constructed at the end of South Pier, near the "Straight Cut" or the new mouth of the Milwaukee River.

Milwaukee's station was one of eighteen in the Eleventh District and the largest on the Great Lakes. It was the fourth largest in the entire service. By 1886 the lifesaving station had been relocated to Jones Island, where it was headquartered in an attractive, Shingle Style structure. It is not known at this time whether the design of stations came from a district headquarters or was produced by local architects. We do know from an account in Flowers 1881 History of Milwaukee that the first station was built by Klaus, Schwartz & Co., contractors from Buffalo, New York.

When Jones Island became polluted due to the outflow of the city's sewerage system, efforts began to find a new location on the lakefront. A Milwaukee Sentinel article of May 13, 1915 reported that Captain Olsen had been dissatisfied with the illness of his crew from the polluted conditions and the fact that the water level had been falling at that location for several years. This coincided with city plans to locate the municipal sewage treatment facility on Jones Island and also with Federal plans to create a new agency called the Coast Guard. Common Council Proceedings of October 28, 1912 indicate that the Federal Government was already seeking lakefront property from the city. Formal action was taken in court for the condemnation of lakefront property at McKinley Park on February 19, 1913. This site was chosen because it was one of two large parcels that the city had reclaimed from the lake bed, the other being the Northpoint pumping station site at the east end of North Avenue. McKinley Park originated as the site for the intake slip and flushing tunnel and flushing tunnel station that pumped clean water from Lake Michigan to the polluted Milwaukee River through a large underground tunnel in order to create a flowage during low water levels in the river. As land around both the Northpoint Pumping Station and the Flushing Tunnel expanded, both sites became popular recreational destinations for residents who had no other access to the lakefront. The two municipal sites, along with the narrow beach at Lake Park, became the focus of a lakefront parkway known as Lincoln Memorial Drive. The creation of the parkway proceeded slowly and was finally completed in the
1920's.

On May 26, 1913 the Common Council decided that "in view of the benefits to the city from the relocation of said life saving station, and in view of the fact that the United States of America has heretofore given the city a permit to fill in the harbor for park purposes for a distance of 600 feet from the shore, the City of Milwaukee waives any claim it may have for damages for the taking of said piece of land for a site for the life saving station, and will accept a nominal sum therefore [sic] as damages". The resolution was adopted on June 23, 1913. A newspaper account in the Milwaukee Sentinel of May 13, 1915 reported that the Federal government would turn over its Jones Island site in exchange for the new lakefront property. It is interesting to speculate that the Alfred C. Clas drawings dated May 7, 1913 were prepared as samples for the Common Council's review and were forwarded to the Coast Guard. Clas was hard at work on the design of Lincoln Memorial Drive at the time and did other designs for park structures, notably the pavilion at Lake Park. Clas' designs for the Coast Guard Station were not used but evidently influenced the final design that was probably the work of a Coast Guard staffer or a Federal design office. Discussion of the station's design in that same Sentinel article indicates that it would be built of concrete and brick. Perhaps a change in design and materials occurred after this article since the station was built of hollow tile and clad in stucco.

Although the site was approved in 1913, work would not begin on the Coast Guard structure until 1915 when a permit was taken out on December 13th. The permit indicates that the architect was the "owner" and represented by Government Inspector Col. D. C. Wickham. Milwaukee contractors Jones & Payne were responsible for the building's construction. The

station was ready for occupancy by April 17, 1916 when the Sentinel ran a photo on the building complete with caption. The new facility was more spacious than the Jones Island station with accommodations for two powerboats, and other craft associated with rescue work, private quarters for Captain Ingar Olsen and his family, and quarters for up to eight crewmen. By the beginning of World War II, some twelve to fourteen crewmen would be in residence at the station. The Prairie Style building was quite modern in appearance in comparison to the shingled and more residential looking building that the life saving crew occupied on Jones Island. Like its predecessor, however, the new facility was arranged with a boat room and apparatus room but for motorized boats instead of sailboats that required horses to draw them out of the water. The living quarters were more institutionalized and spacious in the new building and probably considered more professional than what the crew had occupied before. The Prairie Style of the building was limited to the exterior with none of the open flowing interiors that would have characterized a residential example.

The Coast Guard would occupy the building until 1970. A new station was built at 2420 South Lincoln Memorial Drive in Bay View and the contemporary structure was designed by the Coast Guard engineering department. The Coast Guard remains in this building at present. The Indian Community School subsequently took over the old premises in 1971 and occupied the building until 1980. Milwaukee County then took out permits to turn the building into its Parks Department headquarters with meeting rooms available for the public but the occupancy permit was cancelled three years later in January 1983. The federal government then began the lengthy process of divesting itself of the now-surplus property and sold the site to Milwaukee County for $200,000 in June 1987. A National Register nomination was prepared for the station in 1988 and the building was subsequently listed in the National Register on August 7, 1989 based on its architectural and historic significance.

In the last decade and a half a number of proposals have been entertained for the building including a restaurant and maritime museum. Objections from the DNR over private businesses on public lakefront quashed the restaurant proposal and the museum has not come to fruition. The County Board has recently voted to demolish the building and allocated $100,000 for its razing.

SOURCES

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"Life Savers to Have New Headquarters". Milwaukee Sentinel, May 13, 1915.

Milwaukee Common Council Proceedings. File Number 1071, October 28, 1912 and File number 4928, May 26, 1913 and June 23, 1913.

Milwaukee Permit Records. 1600 North Lincoln Memorial Drive.

Milwaukee Sentinel. June 21, 1946. In the clipping collection at the Milwaukee County Historical Society.

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Noble, Dennis L. Great Lakes. A Brief History of the U. S. Coast Guard Operations. Coast Guard Bicentennial Series. N.P. [c.1976].

Old Coast Guard Station National Register Nomination. Prepared by Carol Lohry Cartwright, April 15, 1988.

Wyatt, Barbara, ed. Cultural Resources Management in Wisconsin. Vol. 2, Architecture. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986.

IX. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Old Coast Guard Station be considered for designation for its fulfillment of criteria e-1, e-5, and e-9 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Section 308.81 of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances.

e-1: Its exemplification of the development of the cultural, economic, social or historic heritage of the City of Milwaukee, State of Wisconsin or of the United States.

RATIONALE: The Old Cast Guard Station is significant as the only historic extant building associated with the early years of the Coast Guard in Milwaukee. It represents the new and expanded agency created by the consolidation of the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service and the U.S. Life Saving Service and incorporates such modern amenities as accommodations for motorized boats and more spacious quarters for the crewmen and Captain.

e-5: Its embodiment of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen.

RATIONALE: The Old Coast Guard Station is significant as a fine and unique example of the Prairie Style used for a governmental building, the only one of its kind in Milwaukee. It represents a very innovative treatment for a building type commonly designed in more eastern seaboard Shingle Style or Colonial Revival Style.

e-9 Its unique location as a singular physical characteristic that represents an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community or the City of Milwaukee.

RATIONALE: The Old Coast Guard Station has been a landmark at McKinley Park along Lincoln Memorial Drive for its entire history. Occupying recreational reclaimed lakebed land and surrounded by tree-filled green space, the towered station has been one of only a few structures along the parkway and is distinctive for it style and unique picturesque location along the water's edge.

X. PRESERVATION GUIDELINES

The following preservation guidelines represent the principal concerns of the Historic Preservation Commission regarding this historic designation. However, the Commission reserves the right to make final decisions based upon particular design submissions. Nothing in these guidelines shall be construed to prevent ordinary maintenance or the restoration and/or replacement of documented original elements.

A. Roofs

Retain the roof shape. Skylights or dormers are discouraged as the building has public visibility on all four elevations. Avoid making changes to the roof shape that would alter the building height, roofline or pitch. If replacement is necessary, duplicate the appearance of the original roofing as closely as possible.

B. Materials

1. Masonry

a. Unpainted brick, terra cotta, or stone should not be painted or covered. Avoid painting or covering natural terra cotta or stone. This is historically incorrect and could cause irreversible damage if it was decided to remove the paint at a later date.

b. Repoint defective mortar by duplicating the original in color, style, texture and strength. Avoid using mortar colors and pointing styles that were unavailable or were not used when the building was constructed. Avoid using a mortar mix comprised solely of Portland cement as its strength and hardness can damage old brick.

c. Clean masonry only when necessary to halt deterioration and with the gentlest method possible. Sandblasting limestone, terra cotta, brick or cream brick surfaces is prohibited. This method of cleaning erodes the surface of the material and accelerates deterioration. Avoid the indiscriminate use of chemical products that could have an adverse reaction with the masonry materials, such as the use of acid on limestone.

d. Repair or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible. Avoid using new material that is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed.

e. Retain original stucco cladding or replicate the original texture of the stucco if re-cladding is required.

2. Wood/Metal

a. Retain original material, whenever possible. Avoid removing architectural features that are essential to maintaining the building's character and appearance.

b. Retain or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the appearance of the old as closely as possible. Avoid covering architectural features with new materials that do not duplicate the appearance of the original materials. Covering wood trim with aluminum or vinyl is not permitted.

C. Windows and Doors

1. Retain existing window and door openings. Retain the existing configuration of panes, sash, surrounds and sills, except as necessary to restore to the original condition. Avoid making additional openings or changes in existing fenestration by enlarging or reducing window or door openings to fit new stock window sash or new stock door sizes. Avoid changing the size or configuration of windowpanes or sash. Use storm windows or protective glazing which have glazing configurations similar to the prime windows and which obscure the prime windows as little as possible.

2. Respect the building's stylistic period. If the replacement of doors or window sash is necessary, the replacement should duplicate the appearance and design and material of the original window sash or doors. Avoid using inappropriate sash and door replacements. Avoid the filling-in or covering of openings with inappropriate materials such as glass block or concrete block. Avoid using modern style window units, such as horizontal sliding sash or casements, in place of double-hung sash or the substitution of units with glazing configurations not appropriate to the style of the building. Vinyl or metal clad prime window units are not permitted. Glass block basement windows are not permitted, except on elevations where they will not be visible from the public.

3. Steel bar security doors and window guards are generally not allowed. If permitted, the doors or grates shall be of the simplest design and installed so as to be as unobtrusive as possible.

D. Trim and Ornamentation

There should be no changes to the existing trim or ornamentation except as necessary to restore the building to its original condition. Replacement features shall match the original member in scale, design, color and appearance.

E. Additions

No additions will be permitted on the Lincoln Memorial Drive elevation of the building. Replacement of the 1938 boathouse with a more compatible addition would be acceptable as long as it references the lakefront and boathouse function that it replaces. An addition constructed to the north elevation will be entertained as long as it is smaller in mass and scale than the original building. Any other addition requires 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, color, and materials, and the degree to which it visually intrudes upon the principal elevations or is visible from the public right of way.

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 or light with the historic and architectural character of the building. Plastic internally illuminated box signs are not permitted.

H. Site Features

New plant materials, paving, fencing, or accessory structures shall be compatible with the historic architectural character of the building if visible from the public right of way.

I. Guidelines for New Construction

It is important that new construction be designed to be as sympathetic as possible with the character of the structure.

1. Siting

New construction must respect the historic siting of the building. It should be accomplished so as to maintain the appearance of the building from the street as a freestanding structure.

2. Scale

Overall building height and bulk, the expression of major building divisions including foundation, body and roof, and individual building components, such as overhangs and fenestration that are in close proximity to a historic building must be compatible to and sympathetic with the design of the original building.

3. Form

The massing of the new construction must be compatible with the goal of maintaining the integrity of the building as a freestanding structure. The profiles of roofs and building elements that project and receded from the main block should express the same continuity established by the historic building if they are in close proximity to it.

4. Materials

The building materials, which are visible from the public right-of-way and in close proximity to the building, should be consistent with the colors, textures, proportions, and combinations of cladding materials used on the building. The physical composition of the materials may be different from that of the historic materials, but the same appearance should be maintained.

J. Guidelines for Demolition

Although demolition is not encouraged and is generally not permissible, there may be instances when demolition may be acceptable if approved by the Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission shall take the following guidelines, with those found in

subsection 9(h) of the ordinance, into consideration when reviewing demolition requests.

1. Condition

   Demolition requests may be granted when it can be clearly demonstrated that the condition of a building or a portion thereof is such that it constitutes an immediate threat to health and safety and is beyond hope of repair.

2. Importance

   Consideration will be given to whether or not the building is of historical or architectural significance or displays a quality of material and craftsmanship that does not exist in other structures in the area.

3. Location

   Consideration will be given to whether or not the building contributes to the neighborhood and the general street appearance and has a positive effect on other buildings in the area.

4. Potential for Restoration

   Consideration will be given to whether or not the building is beyond economically feasible repair.

5. Additions

   Consideration will be given to whether or not the proposed demolition is a later addition that is not in keeping with the original design of the structure or does not contribute to its character.