



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date: 2/13/2017
Ald. Robert Bauman District: 4
Staff reviewer: Tim Askin
PTS #114189

Property 608 N. BROADWAY

Owner/Applicant DONALD S ARENSEN Mr. Donald Arenson
N78 W14597 APPLETON AVE 608 N Broadway
MENOMONEE FALLS WI 53051 Milwaukee, WI 53202
Phone: (414) 704-3080

Proposal Applicant proposes to replace original second and third story double-hung arch-top wood windows with aluminum-clad windows with a colored vinyl finish.

Staff comments The building is a contributing structure in the East Side Commercial Historic District and dates from the mid-1870s. Few other Italianate commercial buildings remain in the city with this level of integrity. Four new vinyl replacement windows were installed some years ago on the fourth floor at an unknown date. No COA was sought for said windows.

The proposed replacement window product is clad on the exterior with aluminum and top-coated with a colored vinyl finish. This vinyl finish coat presents a highly noticeable plastic sheen. Vinyl windows are not permitted in local historic districts per the city's guideline book Living with History, which the Milwaukee Common Council has officially adopted as part of the formal guidelines for historic structures, and districts. In addition to the citywide guidelines, Eastside Commercial Historic District Guidelines require that owners "retain original [wood] whenever possible" (A.2.b.i.) and permits window replacement only if "necessary" (A.3.a.). The owner has not demonstrated any imminent failure of these windows and has declined to consider rehabilitating the existing windows with more energy-efficient glazing or interior or exterior storms.

All of the recent window work in this historic district and locally-designated nearby structures has resulted in either the original wood windows being restored or new windows made of wood to match exactly the sizes and profiles of the original windows. Examples of this work are the Milwaukee Federal Building; the Iron Block building at Water and Wisconsin; the storefronts for Johnson Bank and the Marriott Hotel at the corner of Milwaukee and Wisconsin; and the Hilton Garden Hotel located at Broadway and Michigan directly across the street from the subject building. These projects involve a total of more than 800 wood windows.

As 1) vinyl-coated windows do not meet the guidelines, 2) other property owners in the district have been required to comply with the all wood standard consistently, and 3) this commission generally does not approve replacements that are not solid wood, the original wood windows should be retained and rehabilitated and the application should be denied.

Recommendation Recommend HPC Denial

Conditions

Previous HPC action Various inappropriate windows have been denied at this property over the last few years including fully vinyl and metal windows

Previous Council action

