

AGENDA # 9

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: 9/16/19

TITLE: Section 106 Consulting Party Review -
Proposed Irish Pub
Telecommunications Facility at 317
State St; 4th Ald. Dist.

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: 9/26/19

ID NUMBER: 55809

Members present were: Richard Arnesen, Katie Kaliszewski, Arvina Martin, and David McLean. Excused was Anna Andrzejewski.

SUMMARY:

Bailey explained that the Landmarks Commission reviewed a proposal for new cellular infrastructure at 317 State Street at the May 20 meeting, and requested additional photo simulations and more detailed renderings. She said that the applicants took the feedback from the State Historic Preservation Office and the Landmarks Commission and have reworked their proposal. She said that they are proposing to remove the antenna installation currently located on the chimney on the back of the property and are introducing additional antennas on the sides. She showed images of the proposed installation on the west side of the building and pointed out that the new boxes will be no further forward than the current box. She said that in removing the existing items from the chimney, they are now proposing to install similar boxes on the rear of the building. In looking at the images of the west side of the building, McLean asked which boxes are new and which are existing on the side. Bailey showed photos of the existing conditions, and said that there are currently two boxes on the west side; one additional box would be added and one existing box would be enlarged. She said that the new proposal does clean things up on the east side facing the Capitol, and being a three-story building next to a two-story building, the box is minimally visible. However, she said that on the west side facing farther down State Street, the move to create more equipment there is troubling. Kaliszewski agreed, and noted that it would be larger than what is currently there. Bailey said that the applicants are proposing to increase the infrastructure on the most visible side of the building, which is next to a single-story building. She pointed out that the proposed installation includes a box to hide the equipment, but there appear to be wires hanging out of the bottom of the box. Kaliszewski agreed that it would look cleaner if the wires were not visible at the bottom. Bailey mentioned that having the wires hanging down is probably not good in terms of weather conditions either, and suggested they ask the applicants if there is a way to cover the wires. She said that the color of the boxes is kind of in keeping with the side of the building, but is not quite the same color, and suggested they ask if there is a better color match to the side of the building. Bailey discussed her recommendations and pointed out that the proposal seems to remove most of the mechanical equipment from the top of the building and it increases the amount that is on the sides of the building. She said that one expects to see mechanical equipment on top of a building, so it is generally ignored in that location. She said that rather than including more infrastructure hanging off the sides of the building, her preference is that they put mechanical equipment on top of the building, even if it is a set of antennas that are visible. She said that if the applicants do end up installing boxes that hang off the sides, she is interested in seeing if the wires can be enclosed and the boxes can better match the color of the existing building. Arnesen said that those recommendations sound good, and Kaliszewski agreed.

Bailey explained that the State Street District was determined eligible to the National Register, and this particular building has distinctive architecture. She said that staff believes that placing additional antennas on the side of the building will negatively impact the architectural character of the Irish Pub building and the properties within the viewshed of that building along State Street. She said that particularly on the west side looking down State Street, they need to look at the cumulative effects in that area because she thinks it is too much. She explained the determination the Landmarks Commission needs to make regarding whether the proposal meets the criteria for an Adverse Effect. McLean said that he agreed with Bailey's recommendation and the suggested methods to mitigate the visual impacts. Arnesen asked if staff's recommendation is that if the applicant completes the suggested methods to mitigate visual impacts that they would no longer consider it an Adverse Effect. Bailey confirmed that is correct. McLean asked if they would be able to review the project again in the future. Bailey said that they could ask to review it again. Kaliszewski explained that if the Landmarks Commission determines there is an Adverse Effect, that information would go to the State Historic Preservation Office and the reviewer would determine if they agree and what mitigation is needed.

ACTION:

A motion was made by McLean, seconded by Martin, to determine that the proposal would meet the criteria for an Adverse Effect. The motion passed by voice vote/other.