

AGENDA # 3

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: 7/29/19

TITLE: 128 W Johnson St - Exterior Alteration to a Designated Madison Landmark in the Mansion Hill Hist. Dist. (Holy Redeemer Church) - Installation of aluminum trim; 4th Ald. Dist.

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: 8/5/19

ID NUMBER: 43803

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

SUMMARY:

Jason Krause, registering in support and available to answer questions

Bailey described the proposed work, which includes covering all wood trim and the face of the bell tower in aluminum and removing the decorative wood trim on the bell tower and replicating in aluminum. She went over the applicable Secretary of the Interior's Standards, and said that staff recommends denial of the project because the standards are not met. She explained that the wood elements of the landmark should be maintained and repaired, not covered and replaced with aluminum. She said that beyond not meeting the standards, she is not in favor of wrapping wood materials because one cannot see the deterioration that might be occurring underneath and will not be aware of infestation or rot until it becomes a structural issue. She said that the proposed work would also alter the appearance of the landmark property and would not preserve the historic materials that are in place.

Krause asked what staff would recommend as a covering rather than aluminum. Bailey said that she is opposed to any covering, and the wood should be preserved as wood. Krause said that the cost of preserving and painting the wood would be more than double the cost of the aluminum covering and the church cannot afford that, so he had proposed using aluminum as a more affordable way to deal with the deteriorating wood. He said that due to cost, the property owner likely cannot do anything with the wood trim and will end up with further deterioration.

Levitan asked staff if it would potentially be considered demolition by neglect if nothing is done to care for the wood. Bailey said that she has visited the site, and it doesn't seem to have reached the point of demolition by neglect; however, there is an obligation for maintenance of the building. Levitan asked what happens if no work is done and the wood is neither restored nor clad. Bailey said that if it gets to the point where the wood is obviously deteriorated, they will have that discussion. Krause asked if staff thinks there is currently any deterioration. Bailey said that at this point, there is not enough deterioration that she would reach out to Building Inspection. Krause said that in his inspection, he found that most of the wood has a lot of dry rot, so they would need to install new lumber prior to painting.

Andrzejewski explained that the Landmarks Commission is beholden to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, one of which prohibits the removal of distinctive materials. She said that part of the standard is

material and part is form, so if there is a decorative element, it is important that it be maintained. Bailey said that if there are areas of deterioration, one can piece in a repair as opposed to replacing the entire feature. Krause said that he has no problem with replicating what is currently in place, but it is the cost that is the issue. Andrzejewski suggested that they could replace the wood piecemeal, by replacing what is critical first and completing the work over time.

Levitan said that on its face, the proposal does not meet the standards that the Landmarks Commission is required to apply, so he does not see how they can comply with the ordinance and approve the project. Krause said that he understood.

ACTION:

A motion was made by Arnesen, seconded by Kaliszewski, to deny the request for the Certificate of Appropriateness on the grounds that the project does not comply with 41.18(1)(a) and 41.18(1)(d). The motion passed by voice vote/other.