



Project Name & Address: 144-148 N Breese Ter
Application Type(s): Certificate of Appropriateness for an addition and exterior alterations
Legistar File ID # [80046](#)
Prepared By: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner, Planning Division
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Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: David Ferch, architect; Wisconsin Triangle Building Corporation
Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for an addition and exterior alterations.

Background Information

Parcel Location/Information: The subject property is located in the University Heights historic district.

Relevant Ordinance Sections:

41.18 STANDARDS FOR GRANTING A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

A certificate of appropriateness shall be granted only if the proposed project complies with this chapter, including all of the following standards that apply.

- (1) New Construction or Exterior Alteration. The Landmarks Commission shall approve a certificate of appropriateness for exterior alteration or construction only if:
 - (a) In the case of exterior alteration to a designated landmark, the proposed work would meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
 - (b) In the case of exterior alteration or construction of a structure on a landmark site, the proposed work would meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
 - (c) In the case of exterior alteration or construction on any property located in a historic district, the proposed exterior alteration or construction meets the adopted standards and guidelines for that district.
 - (d) In the case of any exterior alteration or construction for which a certificate of appropriateness is required, the proposed work will not frustrate the public interest expressed in this ordinance for protecting, promoting, conserving, and using the City's historic resources.

41.25 STANDARDS FOR ALTERATIONS.

- (1) General
 - (a) Alterations are defined as any change to any portion of the exterior of a building or site that replaces existing materials or changes its appearance. This section provides standards for building alterations.
 - (b) Materials and Features
 1. Alterations shall be in keeping with the original design and character of the building.

2. The removal of historic features on elevations visible from the developed public right-of-way is prohibited.
- (d) Accessibility
 1. Whenever possible, access to historic buildings should be through a primary building entrance.
 2. Barrier-free access requirements shall be complied with in such a manner that the historic building's character-defining exterior features and features of the site and setting are preserved or impacted as little as possible.
- (3) Exterior Walls
 - (a) Masonry
 3. Replacement brick units shall be of a similar dimension, color, and permeability as the historic bricks
 - (b) Wood
 1. Replacement siding shall imitate the original siding within one inch of historic exposure/reveal.
 2. Where more than one layer of siding exists on the structure, all layers except the first must be removed prior to re-siding.
 3. All trim must project beyond the face of the siding to the same extent it did with the historic siding.
 4. Wrapping of trim and ornament is prohibited.
- (4) Roofs
 - (a) General
 1. Alterations to a roof shall include a roof style that is compatible with the existing roof.
 - (e) Vents
 2. Rectangular or continuous soffit vents are permitted if they are finished or painted the same color as the adjacent soffit.
- (5) Windows and Doors
 - (a) Openings
 3. The new openings and the windows or doors in them shall be compatible with the overall design of the building.
 - (b) Sill and Head Height
 2. The new or reconfigured openings shall have similar appearance to the historic windows or doors of the structure.
 - (c) Windows
 2. Only when original windows are too deteriorated or hazardous to repair may they be replaced with new windows that replicate all design details.
 5. Incompatible, non-historic windows may be replaced with new windows compatible with the historic character of the building.
 7. New windows that are compatible with the historic character of the building may be reinstated in openings that had previously been filled in.
- (6) Entrances, Porches, Balconies and Decks
 - (b) Porch Elements
 1. Where physical evidence of the overall historic form and detailing are not evident, porch elements shall be of a simple design found on similar historic resources within the district.
 2. Accessible graspable railings may be added to stair railings and should be painted to match the associated railing.

3. Spaces beneath porches and stairs shall be enclosed with a framed lattice of crisscross design, narrow vertical boards, masonry, or other approved openwork design to allow ventilation.
4. All wood on exterior porches shall be painted or opaquely stained.

(7) Building Systems

(a) Mechanical Systems

1. Mechanical and service equipment shall be installed so that it is as unobtrusive as possible and does not damage or obscure character-defining historic features.
2. Grilles, vents, equipment, meters, and other equipment attached to the building shall be finished or painted to match the building.

(c) Lighting and Electrical Systems

1. Decorative light fixtures shall replicate the original in style and placement.
2. Security light fixtures or security cameras shall be installed so that they are as unobtrusive as possible and do not damage or obscure character-defining historic features.
3. Exterior mounted conduit on elevations visible from the developed public right-of-way is prohibited.

41.26 STANDARDS FOR ADDITIONS.

(1) General

(a) General

2. A new addition shall be designed to be subordinate and compatible with the character of the structure.
3. The addition shall be visually separated from the principal building.
4. The alignment, rhythm, and size of the window and door openings of the new addition shall be similar to those of the historic building.

(b) Materials and Features

1. A new addition shall be constructed on a secondary or non-character defining elevation so that historic materials and features are not obscured, damaged or destroyed.

(2) Building Site

(a) General

1. Exterior additions to historic buildings shall be designed to be compatible with the historic character of historic resources within two hundred (200) feet and to maintain the pattern of the district.
2. New site features (such as parking areas, access ramps, trash or mechanical equipment enclosures) shall be designed so that they are as unobtrusive as possible, retain the historic relationship between the building and the landscape, and are visually compatible with historic resources within two hundred (200) feet.

(3) Exterior Walls

(a) General

1. Materials used for exterior walls of the addition shall be similar in design, scale, architectural appearance, and other visual qualities of the historic building, but differentiated enough so that it is not confused as historic or original to the building.

(b) Wood

1. Products that replicate wood shall have a smooth surface without textured faux wood grain.

(4) Roofs

(a) General

1. The form and pitch of the addition roof shall be similar to and compatible with the existing roof form and pitch.
- (b) Materials
 1. Visible roof materials shall be similar to the historic roof materials on the structure.
 2. Any roofing materials shall be permitted on flat or slightly sloped roofs not visible from the developed public right-of-way.
- (e) Vents
 1. Roof vents shall be minimally visible and as unobtrusive as possible.
- (5) Windows and Doors
 - (a) General
 1. Openings and the windows or doors in them shall be compatible with the overall design of the historic building.
 2. The new openings shall have similar dimensions, operation, components, and finish as the historic windows or doors of the structure.
 - (c) Entrance Doors and Storm Doors
 1. Doors shall be compatible with the overall design of the building.
 2. New door openings shall have a similar height to width ratio, components, and finish as the historic doors of the structure.
- (7) Building Systems
 - (a) Mechanical Systems
 2. Installing mechanical equipment on the roof that is highly visible from the developed public right-of-way is prohibited.
 3. Grilles, vents, equipment, and meters shall be placed in a location on an elevation not visible from the developed public right-of-way or on the roof. Grilles, vents, equipment, and meters on elevations visible from the developed public right-of-way are prohibited, unless technically infeasible. Grilles, vents, equipment, and meters shall be finished or painted to match adjacent materials.
 - (c) Lighting and Electrical Systems
 1. Decorative light fixtures shall be compatible in style and location with the overall design of the building.
 2. Security light fixtures or security cameras shall be installed so that they are as unobtrusive as possible.
 3. Exterior mounted conduit on elevations visible from the developed public right-of-way is prohibited.
 4. Roof appurtenances such as antennas, satellite dishes, or communications equipment should be installed so that they are minimally visible from the developed public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure historic features.

Analysis and Conclusion

The proposed project is for the an addition that will connect two historic buildings above ground, where they are already connected below grade, and alterations to the exteriors of the buildings to bring back the historic character that has suffered over time due to inappropriate alterations that have obscured historic features.

The residential building at 144 N Breese Ter is a two-story Foursquare form building that was constructed in 1911 as the home of Edward & Laura Ward. Edward was the acting Secretary of the UW Extension Department at the time. Charles and Jessie Crownhart purchased the house in 1916. Charles was a noted lawyer and politician, a leader in the Wisconsin Progressive Movement, and author of the first Wisconsin's Workman's Compensation Act

that was enacted in 1911. While residing at this house, he was elected to the Wisconsin Supreme Court and served as a justice on that court until his death in 1930. Jessie Crownhart continued to live at 144 N Breese Ter until her death in 1943.

The residential building at 148 N Breese Ter is a Queen Anne style house designed by architects Gordon & Paunack for Mathew Diebold, who was a foreman and stonecutter for their architectural firm. The building, constructed in 1901, features his stonecutting skills with rusticated stone walls. This was also home to William Dudley from 1921-1935. During his tenure at this house, he served as the Chief of the Bureau of Audio Visual Instruction at the University of Wisconsin.

The two buildings have been owned by the Triangle Fraternity for the past 45 years. In 1978, a stucco addition was added to the back of 148 N Breese Ter. At other points in time the original windows were replaced with vinyl sash inserts, some windows were covered over, and the original wood siding on the buildings was either removed or covered with vinyl siding. Both buildings are currently joined with a basement addition. The proposal would remove nonhistoric vinyl siding to be replaced with smooth-surfaced fiber cement boards, reinstate formerly obscured windows, create an accessible entrance between the two buildings, construct more period appropriate railings to the front porch of 148 N Breese Ter, reconfigure and re-clad the out-of-character rear addition, and create a new rear addition that would join the two buildings above grade with another rear addition behind 144 N Breese Ter.

The character of the alterations largely comply with the historic district standards. Staff is asking for investigation beneath the existing vinyl siding to see if there are any remnants of the original siding to replicate the historic reveal on the clapboard areas and to replicate any of the decorative details that may still be in place underneath the nonhistoric vinyl. There will need to be more detailed information on the windows for those that need to be replaced or reinstated in previous openings.

For the addition, it is largely stepped back from the front façades of the buildings so that they can continue to read as separate buildings. The addition of the accessible entrance is incorporated sensitively into the historic front porch of 148 N Breese Ter. Otherwise the addition that connects the two buildings is largely a single-story hyphen. A new egress stair will read as a two-story side addition to 148 N Breese Ter. Finally the two-story rear addition to 144 N Breese Ter is stepped back from the wall plane of the rear of the historic resource.

A discussion of relevant standards follows:

41.25 STANDARDS FOR ALTERATIONS.

(1) General

(a) Alterations are defined as any change to any portion of the exterior of a building or site that replaces existing materials or changes its appearance. This section provides standards for building alterations.

(b) Materials and Features

1. The alterations proposed at 144 Breese would return the look of the building to its documented historic appearance. The alterations at 148 Breese are using the documentation they have available and installing period appropriate materials and designs where they do not have documentation.
2. The only historic features to be removed that are currently visible are related to the porch at 148 Breese, which is being altered to make it accessible in a way that is sensitive to the historic design.

(d) Accessibility

1. The proposed alterations would introduce an accessible entrance to the front of the building complex, which is the primary entrance from the street.

2. The proposed alteration to introduce an accessible path, ramp, and access by removing the side wall of the porch at 148 Breese to a wider patio area between the buildings allows for minimal visual alterations to the historic features of the building, while making the front of the buildings accessible.

(3) Exterior Walls

(b) Wood

1. The replacement siding at 144 N Breese will replicate the appearance of what had been in place historically. The areas with clapboard-styled vinyl on 148 Breese are currently 8" reveal, which is not historically accurate. Staff has asked for some destructive investigation to see if any of the original siding is in place in the limited areas on this mostly masonry building. The application materials state that the applicant team is searching for historic photos to show what the clapboard areas on this building previously looked like. An image from the Wisconsin Historical Society shows a very narrow clapboard in the areas with clapboard on that building.
2. The applicant will remove the existing vinyl siding and install new smooth-surfaced fiber cement boards.
3. All trim must project beyond the face of the siding to the same extent it did with the historic siding.
4. Wrapping of trim and ornament is prohibited.

(4) Roofs

(a) General

1. Aside from the alterations related to the work for the additions, there is one area on the existing structure of 148 Breese that will be significantly altered. When the addition was constructed on the back of the building in 1978, a firewall projected up through the roof between the historic structure and the addition. The proposal would remove this out of character previous alteration and have a continue roofline in that area.

(e) Vents

2. The beadboard soffits and rectangular soffit vents meet the standards.

(5). Windows and Doors

(a) Openings

3. The proposal is mostly for reintroducing windows into openings that were previously covered over. The new openings and the windows or doors in them appear to be compatible with the overall design of the building.

(b) Sill and Head Height

2. The new or reconfigured openings appear to have similar appearance to the historic windows or doors of the structure.

(c) Windows

2. The application states that the windows proposed for replacement are already replacement windows, some of them inappropriate vinyl replacements. The proposal would introduce replacement windows that are more compatible with the historic appearance of what had previously been installed.
5. The proposal would replace failed incompatible, non-historic windows to be replaced with new windows compatible with the historic character of the building.
7. New windows that are compatible with the historic character of the building are to be reinstated in openings that had previously been filled in.

(6) Entrances, Porches, Balconies and Decks

(b) Porch Elements

1. The oldest picture of 148 Breese shows a nonhistoric railing that is out of character with the building. The proposal is to install a new railing for that porch that is simple but more in keeping with the character of Queen Anne houses in the district.
2. Accessible graspable railings are to be added to stair railings and should be painted to match the associated railing.
3. Spaces beneath porches and stairs will be enclosed with a framed lattice of crisscross design, narrow vertical boards, masonry, or other approved openwork design to allow ventilation. The application proposes that the accessible ramp will be concrete, so there is no open area beneath it and the patio area between the buildings will be on the rooftop of the basement connector between the buildings.
4. All wood on exterior porches shall be painted or opaquely stained.

(7) Building Systems

(a) Mechanical Systems

1. There is no information on mechanical and service equipment, but they shall be installed so that it is as unobtrusive as possible and does not damage or obscure character-defining historic features.
2. Grilles, vents, equipment, meters, and other equipment attached to the building shall be finished or painted to match the building.

(c) Lighting and Electrical Systems

1. There is no information on lighting in the application, but decorative light fixtures shall replicate the original in style and placement.
2. Security light fixtures or security cameras shall be installed so that they are as unobtrusive as possible and do not damage or obscure character-defining historic features.
3. Exterior mounted conduit on elevations visible from the developed public right-of-way is prohibited.

41.26 STANDARDS FOR ADDITIONS.

(1) General

(a) General

2. The new additions are proposed to be on the sides and rear of the two buildings. They will be subordinate and compatible with the character of the structure.
3. The additions will be visually separated from the principal building through a combination of different rooflines, changes in siding materials, and insets from the historic buildings.
4. The alignment, rhythm, and size of the window and door openings of the new addition appear to be similar to those of the historic building.

(b) Materials and Features

1. A new addition are to be constructed on a secondary and non-character defining elevation so that historic materials and features are not obscured, damaged or destroyed. The historic masonry that will be removed from the interior side of 148 Breese is proposed to be installed on the rear of the building as a decorative feature.

(2) Building Site

(a) General

1. The projecting bay off of the back of 148 Breese, the additions between the two buildings, and the addition off the back of 144 Breese Exterior all appear to be in keeping with similar additions to historic resources in the vicinity.
2. The proposal includes information on reconfiguring the parking area and the trash enclose, including screening.

(3) Exterior Walls

(a) General

1. The proposal is for smooth-surfaced clapboard on the additions, which is compatible with the design and character of the historic buildings. However the clapboard on 148 Breese will need to be a narrower reveal than the proposed 8" reveal. For the single-story connector, the proposal is for smooth fiber cement panels since that area is mostly windows to allow it to read as open. In the area on the back of 148 Breese where the reclaimed stone is proposed to be installed, the base of that area is proposed to be a smooth cast stone, which will differentiate the new stone from the rusticated historic blocks. The new foundation areas visible from the back of the buildings are proposed to be a smooth-finished synthetic stucco.

(b) Wood

1. The applicant is proposing a smooth-surfaced fiber cement board.

(4) Roofs

(a) General

1. The form and pitch of the addition roof are similar to and compatible with the existing roof form and pitch on both buildings. The single-story connector between the buildings is flat-roofed, which is in keeping with the character of the flat roof on the front porch of 148 N Breese.

(b) Materials

1. The roofing specifications meet our standards.
2. Any roofing materials shall be permitted on flat or slightly sloped roofs not visible from the developed public right-of-way.

(e) Vents

1. Roof vents shall be minimally visible and as unobtrusive as possible. The proposed design meets the standards.

(5) Windows and Doors

(a) General

1. Openings and the windows or doors in them appear to be compatible with the overall design of the historic building.
2. The new openings have similar dimensions, operation, components, and finish as the historic windows or doors of the structure.

(c) Entrance Doors and Storm Doors

1. Doors appear to be compatible with the overall design of the building.
2. New door openings have a similar height to width ratio, components, and finish as the historic doors of the structure.

(7) Building Systems

(a) Mechanical Systems

2. Installing mechanical equipment on the roof that is highly visible from the developed public right-of-way is prohibited.
3. Grilles, vents, equipment, and meters shall be placed in a location on an elevation not visible from the developed public right-of-way or on the roof. Grilles, vents, equipment, and meters on elevations visible from the developed public right-of-way are prohibited, unless technically infeasible. Grilles, vents, equipment, and meters shall be finished or painted to match adjacent materials.

(c) Lighting and Electrical Systems

1. Decorative light fixtures shall be compatible in style and location with the overall design of the building.
2. Security light fixtures or security cameras shall be installed so that they are as unobtrusive as possible.

3. Exterior mounted conduit on elevations visible from the developed public right-of-way is prohibited.
4. Roof appurtenances such as antennas, satellite dishes, or communications equipment should be installed so that they are minimally visible from the developed public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure historic features.

Recommendation

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness could be met and recommends the Landmarks Commission approve the project with the following conditions:

1. Final siding specifications be approved by staff as the proposed 8" reveal is not compatible with the design of the building.
2. Any proposed new exterior lighting will need a Certificate of Appropriateness
3. Any new signage will need a separate Certificate of Appropriateness