

AGENDA # 4

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: 8/27/18

TITLE: 932 Spaight St - Exterior Alteration in the
Third Lake Ridge Hist. Dist.; 6th
Ald. Dist.

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: William Fruhling, Acting Preservation
Planner

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: 9/10/18

ID NUMBER: 52811

Members present were: Stuart Levitan, Anna Andrzejewski, Richard Arnesen, David McLean, and Marsha Rummel. Excused was Katie Kaliszewski.

SUMMARY:

James Stopple, registering in support and wishing to speak.

Stopple explained that the property owner received a work order from the City, and work had been done without coming before the Landmarks Commission, including the installation of gutters. He said that the majority of nearby houses have k-style gutters, which would make one think it was acceptable. He mentioned that the property owner spent thousands of dollars to replace the gutters and is trying to get the house back in order. He said that they are almost finished with the items on the work order, and should have everything done within a few weeks.

Andrzejewski noted that the staff report indicates that 41.23(9)(c) and 41.23(9)(d) are the biggest issues. She said that 41.23(c) specifically calls out the street façade of the existing structure, and mentioned that a possible solution could be to require round gutters on the front of the house and allow k-style gutters on the sides and rear. McLean pointed out that there is a hip roof and the gutters wrap the house, so he wasn't sure if the gutter styles could be mixed. Arnesen said that if the gutters are going all the way around the house, they likely couldn't transition between the two styles.

Fruhling referenced a project that came before the Commission on July 23, 2018 that was almost the exact same situation; gutters were installed without a permit in the Third Lake Ridge historic district, and the Commission did approve that COA. Given previous similar cases, he suggested that they have a future policy and procedures discussion about whether the Commission wants to hear these discussions or whether they could be reviewed administratively.

Andrzejewski mentioned the gutters at 1053 Rutledge, which were reviewed at the August 6 meeting. In that case, the Commission approved round gutters on the front of the house and allowed k-style on the rear. Arnesen pointed out that it was a little different than the current case because there were no gutters on the sides of that house.

McLean discussed the materials, and pointed out that k-style gutters are becoming more common because they are cheaper and easier. He said that original gutters are disappearing from historic districts as people are moving to contemporary style gutters, which is significant because if that continues, half round gutters will never be seen at all. He said that most people may not care about the style of gutters, but those concerned

with history and architecture would be excited to see something that is not lost due to contemporary methods of construction.

Andrzejewski said they need to consider whether this is a historically distinctive feature. She then stated that preservation practice says that if it can be reversed, maybe it isn't that big of a deal, and gutters can be reversed. McLean agreed and said that gutters do not affect the house structure or configuration. Andrzejewski said that she agreed with his point as well, and they are losing them rapidly.

McLean said that they are just gutters, but they are significant. He said that even a layperson can tell that half rounds look more appropriate on historic homes than the k-style. He stated that it is significant, but asked whether it was worth making the applicant change the gutters that they had already installed because it is reversible.

There was further discussion about the two previous gutter cases that recently came before the Commission. Arnesen said that they can't reward people who have already installed gutters without approval because then everyone will start replacing their gutters without permission.

Levitan asked if the fact that the majority of the houses on the block have k-style gutters would factor into their decision. McLean said that is even more reason to require half round gutters.

Rummel said that with the recent increase in gutter discussions, Commissioners need to be educated on them. She also mentioned that the average person likely would not know that an inappropriate style of gutter was used on a historic home. She said that if the Commission is going to enforce something, they need to help educate people on what they need to look for and why it is important.

There was brief discussion on previous gutter cases and ensuring consistency. Arnesen said that in cases where resources have been spent and gutters have already been installed, it is hard to say that they need to be taken down and new ones need to be installed.

Rummel asked about the effects of climate change and increases in torrential rain on the different gutter styles. McLean said that if roofers do the appropriate calculations and install the correct size of gutters, both half rounds and k-style gutters should work fine in terms of water flow.

Levitan said that he doesn't think it frustrates the public interest to allow these gutters. He stated that he is generally against authorizing work done without approval, but this narrative is more understandable; the applicant received a work order and likely panicked and did the work.

Arnesen stated that approving these gutters does not mean that the Commission is condoning this in the future, especially as it relates to more important parts of buildings in historic districts.

ACTION:

A motion was made by Andrzejewski, seconded by Arnesen, to retroactively approve the request for the Certificate of Appropriateness. The motion passed by voice vote, with McLean voting opposed.