

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

December 9, 2024

PREPARED FOR THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION



Project Name & Address: 857 South Shore Drive, Eggiman House

Application Type(s): Certificate of Appropriateness for alteration to front of building

Legistar File ID # [86352](#)

Prepared By: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner, Planning Division

Date Prepared: December 4, 2024

Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Sindhu Raju

Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of a new window openings on the front of the structure.

Background Information

Parcel Location/Information: The subject property is a designated landmark.

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.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Analysis and Conclusion

The proposed project is to install three new window openings on the front façade of the historic structure. The property was designated a Madison Landmark in 1995 for its architectural significance. This building was constructed in 1937 and is the only known Motohome in Wisconsin. Motohomes were a prefabricated affordable housing product available during the 1930s. The International style building's character-defining features include its rectangular form, flat roof, lack of ornamentation, smooth-surfaced exterior walls, and windows that wrap the corners of the building.

The applicant is planning a rehabilitation for the building and as part of that work, they want to introduce three new windows on the front of the building on the second floor so that there are better views of the lake. The applicant correctly identifies that the new windows would be in keeping with the architectural style of the building and that there were different styles of Motohomes, which had more windows on their front façades. But the Landmarks Commission has a long precedent of interpreting the Secretary of the Interior's (SOI) Standards of Rehabilitation that introducing conjectural features, particularly on the primary façade of a building does not meet SOI standard 3. Staff has been working with the applicant as part of planning the repairs to the historic structure and clarified that we did not believe this proposal met the standards of approval, so this proposal would need to go before the Landmarks Commission for approval if they wanted to proceed. The applicant wished to proceed.

A discussion of relevant standards follows:

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. The building will continue its residential use, but the proposal is to change the front of the structure to replicate the more recent trend of lakefront properties on this street having more windows on the front façade.
2. The exterior walls are segmented with panels that fit within the steel frame structure. The proposal would introduce windows in the same way as those that currently have windows into three of the existing panels that currently do not have windows. So while some historic materials would be removed to introduce new window openings, the proposal is to do so in a way that replicates the panels that historically contained windows.
3. While other Motohomes had more windows on the front, this building did not. The sliding glass door that replaced the garage door and the newer side entrance were both added before this property

became a landmark. Introducing new windows on the front of the building and creating a ribbon band of windows on the front of the second floor, while a feature found on some International style buildings, is not a feature on this building and would be introducing a conjectural feature, which is expressly forbidden in this standard.

4. N/A
5. N/A
6. N/A
7. N/A.
8. N/A
9. The new windows will largely replicate the appearance of the historic, and will make it difficult to differentiate what was there historically versus what is new. The differentiation will be subtle and largely require archival materials to verify the change to the front of the building.
10. If the new window openings are added, the holes in the panels could be infilled in the future to return the front façade to its historic look.

Recommendation

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness are not met and recommends the Landmarks Commission deny the project as proposed.