

AGENDA # 2

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: 6/17/19

TITLE: 515 S Paterson St - Exterior Alteration in
the Third Lake Ridge Hist. Dist. -
Installation of door on second-story
porch; 6th Ald. Dist.

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: 6/25/19

ID NUMBER: 55997

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

SUMMARY:

Tracy Dietzel, registering in support and wishing to speak
M.E. Pasquesi, registering in support and wishing to speak

Bailey described the proposed project to remove the decorative window on the second-story front porch, relocate that window to the west side of the house, and convert the former window opening to a door. She pointed out that the design for the new door on the upper porch replicates the light pattern of the existing window. She also noted that the applicant received a Certificate of Appropriateness in 1995 to construct the two-story front porch.

Bailey provided an overview of the applicable standards, and said that staff's recommendation is that the proposed work does not meet the standards. She explained that the proposed work does not retain the historical proportion and rhythm of solids to voids because a rectangular door would replace the square window, and would also change the proportion. She noted that this project would also remove original materials, which does not meet the standards.

Levitan asked about the 1995 porch approval and how that relates to the ordinance. Bailey said that she wasn't aware of any specific discussion of the ordinance, but this type of porch is typically found in this neighborhood. She referenced a 1982 survey image of the property and explained that the porch that exists in that image is replicated in the overall form of what was introduced in 1995, including the new railing above.

Arnesen asked for confirmation that Bailey recommends denial of moving the window to the side of the house as well. Bailey said that if the Commission decides to approve the removal of the window and conversion to a door on the front of the house, then they could also approve the relocation of the window to the side of the house. She explained that rather than throwing away the window, reusing it elsewhere on the property makes sense in terms of preservation.

Dietzel said that as she tries to restore the house, she is saving any old pieces, which is why she would like to keep and relocate the window. She pointed out that in the design of the new porch door, she is trying to replicate the existing window and maintain the historic features. She said that as far as she can tell, the house has already been greatly altered from its original state, and explained that she is trying to keep it as historic as possible while also making it functional to age in place. Because there is currently no door to access the

second-story porch, she said that she has to climb out the window in order to shovel and sweep the porch. She said that she believes it would look more historic to add a door on the second story.

Pasquesi said that she supports the project. She said that she has looked around the neighborhood to see what others have done to their houses, and she isn't sure that all of the projects came before the Landmarks Commission, so she is glad that Dietzel is doing things the proper way.

McLean asked about the difference in window sizes between the existing side window and the front window that may be relocated to the side. Levitan said that the front window is one block larger than the existing side window, with 6 blocks inset on the front window and 5 blocks inset on the side window. He said that the relocated window will be slightly larger, but will be balanced in terms of left to right symmetry. He said that a strict application of the ordinance would make this project difficult to approve, but the policy of historic preservation would not be damaged by granting this approval. He explained that it will be more functional and it will look better than what is currently there. He said that the rhythm has already changed by modifying the downstairs porch and adding the upper porch, and when the Commission approved the upper porch in 1995, they had to have known that at some point there would be a door added. Dietzel said that when the upper porch was approved by the Commission, she couldn't afford to add the door at that time, but it had seemed like the Commission was expecting there to be a door added.

Arnesen asked how others felt about the replication of the window in the new second story door, saying that he would prefer a plain door that does not recreate the window. Levitan asked if it would create a false sense of history. Arnesen said that he thought it might, and pointed out that it would be much more expensive to attempt to recreate something that wasn't actually there historically. McLean and Martin agreed that the door should not recreate the pattern of the existing window. Kaliszewski said that she doesn't like the idea of the moving the window because it also creates a false sense of history, but understands that the property owner would like to keep the window. McLean said that because the porch has been altered so much, it would be nice to keep the original window in place. Arnesen said they should take the applicant's word that in 1995, the Commission was agreeable to a door being added, saying that it is silly to approve a porch with no door. McLean said that perhaps the porch should not have been there, and Arnesen said that it is there now, and it would be a shame not to let the owner use it. Levitan said that there is good faith on behalf of the applicant, who is being a good steward of the property and doing what is necessary to maintain it. Levitan asked Kaliszewski her thoughts on the door design. Kaliszewski said that she is fine with whatever the applicant chooses for the door because they aren't following the standards to begin with. Bailey said that she agreed with Arnesen and it should be a simple door rather than one that recreates the window.

McLean asked about the type of front door in place on the first floor porch. Dietzel said that the front door had been on the back of the house and was moved to the front, and is a double arch wooden door behind a full glass storm door. McLean said that he is contemplating the width of the upper door because 36" is standard, but because ADA isn't an issue on the second floor, she may be able to install a narrower door that would better match the other openings on the house. He suggested that Dietzel look at the proportions of the door and window widths.

Commissioners noted that due to the Landmarks Commission previously approving the new porch in 1995, there was an assumption that there would eventually be a door created to access the porch, and therefore it is acceptable to approve the installation of a door on the second-story porch.

ACTION:

A motion was made by Arnesen, seconded by Martin, to approve the request for the Certificate of Appropriateness with the condition that door specifications be approved by staff. The motion passed by voice vote/other, with Kaliszewski voting opposed.