

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

August 12, 2019

PREPARED FOR THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION



Project Name & Address: 1334 Williamson Street

Application Type(s): Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations in the Third Lake Ridge historic district.

Legistar File ID # [56851](#)

Prepared By: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner, Planning Division

Date Prepared: August 5, 2019

Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Craig Pfister

Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish and reconstruct a storefront facade.

Background Information

Parcel Location/Information: The site is located in the Third Lake Ridge Local Historic District.

Relevant State Statute Section:

Wisc SS 62.23(7)(em)2m. In the repair or replacement of a property that is designated as a historic landmark or included within a historic district or neighborhood conservation district under this paragraph, a city shall allow an owner to use materials that are similar in design, color, scale, architectural appearance, and other visual qualities.

Relevant Landmarks 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.

41.23 THIRD LAKE RIDGE HISTORIC DISTRICT.

- (7) Standards for Exterior Alterations in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District - Parcels Zoned for Mixed-Use and Commercial Use.
- (a) Any exterior alterations on parcels zoned for mixed-use and commercial use that are located within two hundred (200) feet of other historic resources shall be visually compatible with those historic resources in the following ways:
 - (a) Height
 - (b) Alterations of street façade(s) shall retain the original or existing historical proportion and rhythm of solids to voids
 - (c) Alterations of street facade(s) shall retain the original or existing historical materials.
 - (d) Alterations of roof shall retain its existing historical appearance.

Analysis and Conclusion

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter the façade at 1334 Williamson St. The building was constructed in 1912, but has seen several alterations to the storefront over time. The earliest photo staff can locate is from 1965, which features aluminum-framed plate glass windows flanking the current aluminum entry. The windows are now wood framed. The proposal would remove much of the current storefront materials and replace it with a configuration more in keeping with the original time period, but featuring contemporary materials.

All buildings evolve over time and this building has had its most extreme changes in the storefront area. It is likely the aluminum entry dates to the ca. 1960s, which is outside the period of significance for the Third Lake Ridge Historic District (1850-1929). The applicant is proposing to keep the proportions of solids to voids, but replace the mid-century and later materials. Staff has one concern about replacing the stone below the storefront windows as it appears they may suggest a former entry location. Without additional documentation, it seems unfortunate to eliminate this possible forensic evidence on the building.

A discussion of the relevant ordinance sections follows:

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) N/A
 - (b) N/A
 - (c) Proposal must meet the Third Lake Ridge Historic District standards, which primarily focus on the street façade of a historic resource.
 - (d) This standard stresses that alterations made to structures in historic districts should be carefully evaluated to ensure retention of historic significance and character in the district. Protecting the historic resources means using appropriate materials for the components. The suggested materials and configurations are in keeping with the character of the district.

41.23 THIRD LAKE RIDGE HISTORIC DISTRICT.

- (7) Standards for Exterior Alterations in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District - Parcels Zoned for Mixed-Use and Commercial Use.
- (a) Any exterior alterations on parcels zoned for mixed-use and commercial use that are located within two hundred (200) feet of other historic resources shall be visually compatible with those historic resources in the following ways:

- (a) No changes proposed to the height.
- (b) There is no documentation for the historic proportions or ratio of solids to voids other than that this building follows a typical form for a turn-of-the-century commercial building. The applicant is proposing to change the materials in the storefront, but maintain the existing proportions and ratio of solids to voids.
- (c) The applicant is making the argument that the existing storefront materials are inappropriate and out of character with the rest of the building. The proposed rehabilitation of the storefront would replicate the form of a period-appropriate design and introduce materials that would give the appearance of those more typical to the historic period of the building.
- (d) No proposed changes to the roof.

Recommendation

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

1. Door specifications to be approved by staff