



Project Name & Address: 300 E Gorham Street, Gates of Heaven

Application Type(s): Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations to a Designated Madison Landmark in the Mansion Hill Historic District

Legistar File ID # [60541](#)

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Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Amy Scanlon, City of Madison Engineering Division

Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for an exterior restoration project.

Background Information

Parcel Location/Information: The subject site is a Designated Madison Landmark located in the Mansion Hill 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 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 shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall 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 architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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 applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior restoration work of the landmark structure known as the Gates of Heaven. Madison's Jewish community constructed the synagogue in 1863. Originally located on West Washington Avenue, the City relocated the building to its location in James Madison Park in 1971. The sandstone and brick building is in the Romanesque Revival style with an ornate battlement façade and decorative details on all sides. The building is designated for its connection to the Madison's early Jewish community, for its significant architecture, and as the work of noted architect August Kutzbock.

The proposed work will clean soiled masonry using the gentlest means possible, reverse or consolidate damaged masonry, rake out failed mortar, replace mortar with mortar matching the historic, repair of doors and decorative windows, and replacement of exterior storm windows.

A discussion of the relevant standards follows:

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. This project does not propose a change in use.
2. The proposal will only remove failed building materials and replicate those features where replacement is necessary.
3. None of the repair work will create a false sense of history.
4. The proposed work is preservation in nature and no historic materials are proposed for removal.

5. Features which are too deteriorated for repair will be replicated, thereby preserving the distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. The scope of work prioritizes repair and specifies replacement only when necessary. For the historic materials, they will be replicated with materials in-kind. The exception to this is the use of consolidant for repair of failing sandstone, but that will replicate the original material without having to remove what remains of the historic building fabric. The deteriorated plexiglass storms are not historic and will be replaced with a more sympathetic storm that will allow for more visibility of the decorative windows in the building.
7. The proposed cleaning will use the gentlest means possible and follow established preservation practices.
8. No significant archaeological resources will be impacted.
9. Any historic materials that must be replaced will be replicated to match the original.
10. N/A

Recommendation

Staff believes the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness are met and recommends that the Landmarks Commission approve the project as proposed.