

## AGENDA # 1

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: 12/3/18

TITLE: 121 Langdon St - Exterior Alteration to a Designated Madison Landmark in the Mansion Hill Hist. Dist. (Suhr House); 2nd Ald. Dist.

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: William Fruhling, Acting Preservation Planner

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: 12/11/18

ID NUMBER: 53824

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

### **SUMMARY:**

*David Ferch, registering in support and wishing to speak.*

*Harold Langhammer, registering in support and wishing to speak.*

Ferch described the work to be completed on the front, side, and rear porches. He said that the front porch repairs are extensive and go beyond cosmetic repairs. They will complete work on the box beam, columns, and will reframe the porch. He said that they will take the stone piers down, add new footings, and then rebuild the piers. There is rot in the porch roof that the contractors recommend approaching from above rather than disturbing the beadboard on the porch ceiling. Ferch said that there is currently a flat seam metal roof that he hopes to replace with rubber membrane.

Ferch showed historic photos of the side of the house, and said that he hopes to make the side porch look similar to the original. He explained that he has one original column that he intends to duplicate, and hopes to get porch rails made to match the original design as shown in the photo. He said that to meet code, they need a 42" railing, so he is proposing that a metal rail with cables be placed behind the wood rails. He mentioned that they are also reframing the side and rear porches because the footings need to be replaced.

Ferch said that it was difficult to find historic images of the back of the house, so he is not sure what the rear porch originally looked like. For continuity, he proposed using the same rails and columns as the side porch. He said that he would also like to raise the porch so that it is at the same floor level as the rear door; this will make it easier to provide accessibility to the building in the future.

Fruhling said that because of the flat profile of the front porch roof, it is not very visible, so he has no problem with a new rubber membrane roof in place of the metal. In terms of the side and rear porches, Fruhling emphasized the importance of documenting the dimensions of the single original post so that it is accurately replicated. He also discussed conditions 2 and 5 from the staff report, confirming that the applicant understood that the only portions of the building to be painted are wood or metal, not brick or stone, and that any new metal framing for the rear and side porch guardrails will be painted to match the brick. Ferch confirmed that he understood these conditions.

Andrzejewski voiced concern over the rear porch and stairways for which Ferch is proposing to replicate original post and railing elements. She said that she would rather he not try to replicate something that wasn't there because it creates a false sense of historical development, which conflicts with the Secretary of the Interior's Standard #3. Kaliszewski said that these concerns had crossed her mind as well, but it might not look right if the side and rear porches have different railings.

Arnesen asked Andrzejewski what she thinks about the historic railing on the side porch, which is also not original, and she said that the side porch has acquired historic significance due to its age, so she is okay with that. She said that matching materials and color would be a good approach for the side and rear porches, but not replicating the original posts for the rear porch. Kaliszewski agreed, and suggested that the new railings on the stairs and rear porch be built at the height required by the building code rather than adding the metal guardrails. McLean said that it is difficult because there will be an oddity of proportions from a similar viewing angle; he said that he understands trying to separate the new from the old, but there will be a noticeable difference in heights. Kaliszewski said that she would be okay with it on the back of the house. Levitan said that if the railings and stairs on the two porches don't match, most people would say that it looks wrong.

McLean suggested slightly changing the design of the new elements so they match with each other, but are distinguishable from the original elements while still maintaining a similar scale. Andrzejewski and Kaliszewski agreed. Andrzejewski said that the new elements don't need to be dramatically different from the original elements. She pointed out that there will be a lot of replacement occurring on the porches, and she was concerned about it looking so new; she wants to ensure that the historic aspects speak to the historic character and are distinguished from what is new.

McLean said that a rubber roof on the front porch may not withstand potential chair legs on it, and suggested they may need additional reinforcement under the rubber so that it does not get holes in it. Levitan asked if the Commission was okay with a rubber membrane roof, and there was general consensus that it was acceptable.

### **ACTION:**

**A motion was made by McLean, seconded by Kaliszewski, to approve the request for the Certificate of Appropriateness to repair the front, side, and rear porches and stairways with the condition that all final details must be approved by staff; to tuckpoint damaged masonry, with the extents of the work and the mortar mix and mortar color to be approved by staff; and to replace the arched storm window on the lower level of the front façade, with specifications for the window to be approved by staff. The motion passed by voice vote/other.**