



Project Name & Address: 938 Spaight Street

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

Legistar File ID # [68533](#)

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Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Bruce Bosben, Apex Real Estate Holdings

Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of an existing garage, expansion of the front porch, and other exterior alterations.

Background Information

Parcel Location/Information: The subject 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 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.
 - (2) Demolition or Removal. In determining whether to approve a certificate of appropriateness for any demolition or removal of any landmark or structure within a historic district, the Landmarks

Commission shall consider all of the following, and may give decisive weight to any or all of the following:

- (a) Whether the structure is of such architectural or historic significance that its demolition or removal would be detrimental to the public interest and contrary to the general welfare of the people of the City and the State.
- (b) Whether a landmark's designation has been rescinded.
- (c) Whether the structure, although not itself a landmark structure, contributes to the distinctive architectural or historic character of the historic district as a whole and therefore should be preserved for the benefit of the people of the City and the State.
- (d) Whether demolition or removal of the subject property would be contrary to the policy and purpose of this ordinance and/or to the objectives of the historic preservation plan for the applicable historic district as duly adopted by the Common Council.
- (e) Whether the structure is of such old and unusual or uncommon design, method of construction, or material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty and/or expense.
- (f) Whether retention of the structure would promote the general welfare of the people of the City and the State by encouraging study of American history, architecture and design or by developing an understanding of American culture and heritage.
- (g) The condition of the property, provided that any deterioration of the property which is self-created or which is the result of a failure to maintain the property as required by this chapter cannot qualify as a basis for the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness for demolition or removal.
- (h) Whether any new structure proposed to be constructed or change in use proposed to be made is compatible with the historic resources of the historic district in which the subject property is located, or if outside a historic district, compatible with the mass and scale of buildings within two hundred (200) feet of the boundary of the landmark site.

Prior to approving a certificate of appropriateness for demolition, the Landmarks Commission may require the applicant to provide documentation of the structure. Documentation shall be in the form required by the Commission.

41.23 THIRD LAKE RIDGE HISTORIC DISTRICT.

- (9) Standards for Exterior Alterations in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District - Parcels Zoned for Residential Use.
 - (a) Any exterior alterations on parcels zoned residential 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:
 - 1. Height.
 - 2. Landscape treatment.
 - 3. Rhythm of mass and spaces.
 - (b) Alterations of the street façade(s) of any existing structure shall retain the original or existing historical proportion and rhythm of solids to voids.
 - (c) Alterations of the street façade(s) of any existing structure shall retain the original or existing historical materials.
 - (d) Alterations of the roof of any existing structure shall retain its existing historical appearance.
 - (e) Alterations of the street facade(s) shall retain the original or existing historical proportional relationships of door sizes to window sizes.

Analysis and Conclusion

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish an existing detached garage structure, expand the front porch, convert six existing door openings to window openings, convert one existing window opening to a door opening, remove the side balcony, remove the front fire escape, and repair/replace siding and trim.

This house is a Queen Anne Victorian residential building, constructed for Henry and Elizabeth Fauerbach in 1902. Henry was the son of the founder of the Fauerbach Brewery, and he became the vice president of the brewery and its master brewer. Henry and Elizabeth hired noted Madison architect, Lew Porter, to design their home. Porter oversaw the construction of the current State Capitol building a few years later after previously completing several significant public buildings in the Madison area. Over the years, the building underwent significant changes on the exterior and also evolved from a single-family residence to a multi-unit rental. Recently, the property owner was undertaking staff-approved repairs, which included removing the nonhistoric siding. This revealed several decorative features, including the ghosting of where the original porch had been located.

The current proposal would reconstruct a period-appropriate porch in the footprint of where the historic porch had been located. There is no photographic evidence of the porch, but the Sanborn Maps confirm the footprint of the porch. The proposal would also remove the front fire escape and modify some of the former window openings that had been altered to doorways back to being window openings that match the proportions of those found elsewhere on the structure, and removing the balconies on the side of the structure that were created for the nonhistoric door openings that are being converted back to being windows. Where the fire escape was on the front of the structure, the proposal is to introduce a railing in the gable end to allow for that unit to still use the balcony area, but introduce a more period-appropriate railing style.

Additionally, there is an older garage, not original to the house, which is proposed for demolition. It is a simple structure, located at the rear of the property.

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.

- (2) Demolition or Removal. In determining whether to approve a certificate of appropriateness for any demolition or removal of any landmark or structure within a historic district, the Landmarks Commission shall consider all of the following, and may give decisive weight to any or all of the following:
 - (a) The garage is not historic and is not architecturally or historically significant.
 - (b) N/A
 - (c) The garage does not contribute to the character of the historic district.
 - (d) Removal of this nonsignificant accessory structure is not contrary to the purposes of this ordinance.
 - (e) The structure is not particularly old and unusual or uncommon design, method of construction, or material.
 - (f) Retention of the structure would not promote the general welfare of the public.
 - (g) This structure does not serve the present function of the property and is not deteriorated due to neglect of the current owner.
 - (h) There is no proposed new structure and the demolition will create a larger open space in the rear yard for use of the residents.

Staff does not recommend additional documentation of the current garage prior to its demolition.

41.23 THIRD LAKE RIDGE HISTORIC DISTRICT.

- (9) Standards for Exterior Alterations in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District - Parcels Zoned for Residential Use.
- (a) Any exterior alterations on parcels zoned residential 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:
 - 1. The height of the proposed new porch is in keeping with both the height of the historic porch and those found in the immediate vicinity.
 - 2. The reconfiguration of the porch and the demolition of the garage will reintroduce the historic landscape treatment.
 - 3. See above.
 - (b) The proposed alteration to the street façade will return it to the historic proportion of solids to voids.
 - (c) Historic materials are being retained where possible and damaged materials are being replaced in kind.
 - (d) N/A
 - (e) The proposed alteration will reintroduce the historic window sizes to openings that had previously been converted to doorways.

Recommendation

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness could be met and recommends that the Landmarks Commission approve the project with the following condition of approval:

- 1. Final railing specifications be approved by staff.