



Project Name/Address: 717 E Main (Madison Gas & Electric Company Powerhouse)

Application Type: Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations of a landmark site located in the Third Lake Ridge historic district

Legistar File ID # [48965](#)

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Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Tim Bliefert, MG&E

Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter exterior features of a landmark site located in a historic district.

Background Information

Parcel Location: The subject site is a landmark site located on East Main Street.

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.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will 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 elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will 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.

41.23 THIRD LAKE RIDGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

- (5) Standards for Exterior Alterations in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District - Parcels Zoned for Employment Use. Any exterior alterations on parcels zoned for employment 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.

Analysis and Conclusion

MG&E is interested in reconstructing the masonry enclosure wall around a portion of the landmark site. The existing brick wall was constructed in the 1930s and has been repaired many times with different brick and mortar which has resulted in an incongruous appearance. In addition, the existing wall is generally in poor condition. Repairing the existing wall would essentially mean reconstructing the wall. The existing "sea well" structure at the corner of Blount and Main Streets will be retained and the new wall will incorporate it as a corner feature.

The wall will be constructed in the same location with three exceptions: The wall will be held away from the corner of the Powerhouse building to expose the corner, the walls will angle in to meet the sea well in a different configuration than currently exists, and the masonry wall will end a bay before the gate and change to the metal infill panel.

The existing wall is being reconstructed with a similar appearance and similar features. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are being appropriately addressed with this reconstruction proposal. The proposed wall will not destroy historic materials, features or spatial relationships that characterize the property.

Recommendation

Staff believes that the standards for granting the Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed alterations to the landmark site are met and recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness.