



Project Name/Address: 104 E Gilman, Kendall House

Application Type: Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations on a landmarks site in a historic district

Legistar File ID # [52418](#)

Prepared By: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner, Planning Division

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Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Dan O'Callaghan

Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for an exterior alteration at the Kendall House in the Mansion Hill historic district involving the construction of brick piers in the front porch, installation of light fixtures on two of the piers, and repair and replacement of a decorative baluster located in front of the centrally located dormer on the primary elevation.

Background Information

Parcel Location: The subject site is located on a landmark site in the Mansion Hill 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 Historic Preservation 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.

Analysis and Conclusion

In 2016 Staff administratively approved the installation of wood box newels at the front stoop of 104 E Gilman which is a designated landmark known as the Kendall House. At that time, the property owner was interested in replacing the raised concrete stoop with the idea that at some point in the future, the covered porch could be reconstructed. The removal of the existing stoop also meant removing the hedge at the perimeter. Existing metal railings were going to be installed between the wood box piers.



Photo from the 1970s



Illustration with Mansard roof, WHi29733



Google street view 2011

The work was constructed differently than approved. The piers were constructed in brick instead of wood and the brick was not in a color that was appropriate for the landmark building. The two middle piers flanking the front steps were constructed wider and taller than the other piers. In addition, the middle piers have been installed with conduit and wiring to receive a top mounted light fixture. Staff worked with the property owner's representative to find an agreeable solution to allow the brick piers to remain. The brick has been stained to closely match the color of the stone. In their current configuration, the piers are very similar to those shown in the photo from the 1970s except that the middle piers and the pier on the east corner are wider and taller than the other piers. There is ghost evidence on the building wall of an engaged pier on the east side of the porch.



c. 1868, WHi31861

Documentary evidence of the piers does not seem to be available so it is unknown if the original piers for the covered porch were brick or stone or wood. It may be possible that the piers shown in the photo from the 1970s are original to the construction of the covered porch. The original building did not have a mansard roof or a covered front porch as shown in the c. 1868 photo (WHi31861). The mansard roof is believed to have been added in 1873 and the porch may have been part of that same building campaign.

The Alder requested referral of this item from the July 23, 2018, meeting to the August 6, 2018, meeting. The Alder noted items that were not identified in the prior submittal and were not addressed in the previous staff report. Conditions of approval have been added to this staff report to address those items. At the August meeting, the Landmarks Commission referred the project to a further meeting and asked the applicant to investigate if the proposed railing would meet Building Code requirements.

The applicant has located the previously installed metal railing, but found that much of the railing was too deteriorated to reuse. They are salvaging the decorative central panels for each section and refabricating the metal railing to be located between the piers. In order to maintain the original dimensions of the railing, the applicant is proposing to raise the adjacent grade in order to meet building code requirements. Additionally, the applicant would like to keep three larger piers and install decorative lighting on top of the two piers that flank the central stair.

In completing work on the property, the applicant has identified that the decorative baluster needs repair and limited replacement. It is located on the primary elevation along the mansard roof in front of the centrally located dormer.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. The applicant is not proposing to change the use. It will remain a multi-unit, residential building.
2. This building has undergone several changes over time. Any rehabilitation of the structure needs to have historic evidence of a particular time period. While the proposed porch has some pictorial evidence, the proposed modifications would create a new and distinctive character, which is not in keeping with this Standard.
3. The larger piers change the character of the porch. Installation of lights on the central piers that flank the stairs would also be a change. Installation of the highly decorative light fixtures proposed would

create a false sense of history for the property. Any lighting installed on the property would need to be simple and unobtrusive in order to meet the requirements of this Standard.

4. The porch has undergone several changes over time. The applicant is proposing to reinstall the metal railing that had previously been in place. This will retain one of the elements of the porch. The baluster for the former is a character-defining feature and the applicant is proposing to repair and replace it with materials-in-kind.
5. The decorative baluster will be retained. Coming to a compromise for how to rehabilitate what is currently installed on the porch with what historic evidence we have will allow this project to be in keeping with the distinctive characteristics of the property and building.
6. The decorative baluster is deteriorated and parts of it will need to be replaced. The applicant will investigate repairing where possible, but the final product will replicate what is currently installed. The deteriorated railing will largely be refabricated based upon the original design, and the decorative central panels for each section will be incorporated.
7. N/A
8. N/A
9. The new porch is differentiated in that it uses new brick for the piers, but the staining allows it to blend with the building in order to be compatible. Keeping the height of the three larger piers would later the character of the property, as would installation of the light fixtures on the central piers.
10. The new porch could later be removed, if necessary.

Recommendation

Staff believes the standards for amending the original administrative approval to allow brick piers may be met and recommends that the Landmarks Commission approve the Certificate of Appropriateness with the following conditions of approval:

1. The caps of the piers that have been drilled for light fixtures shall be covered or replaced so that wiring cannot be accessed for the installation of light fixtures. It would be more appropriate to add light fixtures directed toward the stairs in a lower portion of the pier than to mount fixtures to the tops of the piers. Any light fixture installation would need the review and approval of the Landmarks Commission. If the caps are replaced, they should have a pyramidal sloped top surface instead of being flat. In addition, the overhang should be reduced so that the cap is more appropriately sized to the pier.
2. The middle piers shall be reduced in height so that they match the height of the other piers.
3. The east corner pier should be reduced in height and width so that it matches the height and width of the other piers. The cap should be made smaller so that the overhang matches the overhang of the other piers.
4. An engaged pier shall be constructed to match the existing engaged pier on the opposite side.
5. If the proposed porch railing does not meet Building Code, the applicant must submit a modified design to staff for approval.
6. The decorative baluster shall be repaired where possible and replaced where necessary and must match the original in design and materials.