

AGENDA # 3

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: 2/11/19

TITLE: 104 E Gilman St - Exterior Alteration to a
Designated Madison Landmark in
the Mansion Hill Hist. Dist. (Kendall
House); 2nd Ald. Dist.

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: 2/18/19

ID NUMBER: 52418

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

SUMMARY:

Dan O'Callaghan, registering in support and wishing to speak

Joe Korb, registering in support and available to answer questions

Bailey stated that the Commission has reviewed this project in the past, and they are working to reach a compromise in order to move the project forward in a compliant manner. She said that in 2016, staff approved using wood box newels on the stoop, but the approved plans were not followed and brick piers were constructed. She briefly described additional issues to address, including the size of the piers and caps, proposed decorative light fixtures, and a deteriorating decorative baluster.

O'Callaghan referenced the recommendations in the staff report and said that they are willing to construct an engaged pier on the right (east) side of the porch to match the opposite side. He said that they will also reduce the size of the east corner pier so that it matches the others. He noted the recommendation that the center piers should also be reduced in size, but said that they would prefer to maintain a taller height for those two piers to frame the entryway. He said that their goal was to replicate the piers and railings as shown in historic renderings of the house.

O'Callaghan provided details about the proposed railings, which are partially comprised of salvaged decorative railings that were formerly on the house. He said they will combine the salvaged railing with new materials so there is a decorative element in each section of the railing.

O'Callaghan said that he understands staff's concern that the style of the proposed light fixtures may not be appropriate, but they would still like to install lights on top of the two central piers. He mentioned the staff report recommendation to install downlighting on the lower pier, and said that Alder Zellers did not think that type of lighting was historically appropriate. He said that they would like some type of lighting, and hoped they could agree on something more appropriate to install. O'Callaghan also addressed the related staff recommendation that if the flat caps are replaced, new caps should have a pyramidal shape. He said that from what they can tell, historically there were brick piers with flat stone caps, so they would like to keep the flat caps as they are.

Korb said that they are hoping to avoid installing a 42 inch railing, which is taller than it would have been historically, by raising the ground level around the porch. McLean asked what the current grade difference is, and Korb responded that it was 24 inches. McLean asked if they have verified that the baluster spacing on the

proposed railing would meet code. O'Callaghan said that they would have to check with Building Inspection and propose a new design if it doesn't comply. McLean asked if the porch currently has can lighting, and Korb confirmed that it does.

Levitan brought up the pyramidal caps for discussion. Scanlon explained that the caps currently feel too heavy and wide. In a previous discussion of this topic, it was suggested that making the caps pyramidal as opposed to flat would help to solve this issue. Andrzejewski said that historically, one would not have seen anything quite like this porch on this style of house, so the caps don't bother her as they are, though she said that it is important that the piers are the same height. Arnesen said that in the context of the columns, the caps are minor, though they do look odd with the current dimensions. McLean said that because none of this is the same as it originally would have been, he doesn't have a problem with the flat caps.

Bailey prompted discussion of the two central piers. McLean pointed out that they would need to take down and completely rebuild the piers to make them the same size as the others. Arnesen said that if the applicant has agreed to replace the east corner pier and add an additional engaged pier, the larger middle piers aren't that big of a deal. Levitan asked if anyone found the central piers unacceptable as they are, and many Commissioners said they did not like them. Arnesen said that it is difficult to justify requiring the applicant to demolish and rebuild the central piers, and Rummel agreed. There was general consensus that the existing central piers are acceptable.

Levitan began discussion of the lighting, and Rummel said that the proposed fixtures don't seem appropriate. Bailey said that if the applicants are introducing lighting into a new feature, the lighting should be minimal and very simple. She explained that the proposed fixtures are very decorative and because the house has ornate features, there is a possibility of creating a false sense of history. Arnesen asked the applicant if the lighting was for safety or for appearance, and Korb responded that it was for safety. Arnesen mentioned that downlighting was suggested as an alternative if safety is a concern. O'Callaghan said that downlighting would cut into the piers and seem out of place. He said that he understands comments regarding the proposed fixtures and suggested that something more simple and utilitarian could be acceptable. Arnesen said that he was having a hard time picturing any light fixture that would be appropriate on the piers. McLean asked if the applicant had considered landscape lighting, and Korb responded that they had not.

Levitan asked if the new railing design was acceptable. Bailey said that it is conditional upon the applicant successfully raising the grade for the porch, and if they are unable to meet building code and need a taller railing, they will need to resubmit railing plans for staff approval. Arnesen asked if staff approves of the inclusion of the historical railing element, and Bailey confirmed that she does.

Arnesen pointed out that they had not discussed the decorative baluster, and Andrzejewski asked if the applicant agreed to recommendation #6 from the staff report. O'Callaghan confirmed and said they would repair the baluster to match the original.

Levitan reviewed the conditions for approval. A summary of discussion of the numbered recommendations from the staff report is below:

- 1) Light fixtures were not approved. The applicant shall cover or replace the caps of the two central piers that have been drilled for light fixtures so that wiring cannot be accessed for the installation of light fixtures.
- 2) The existing middle piers may remain their current size.
- 3) The applicant agreed to reduce the east corner pier in height and width to match the other piers.
- 4) The applicant agreed to construct an engaged pier to match the existing engaged pier on the opposite side of the porch.
- 5) The applicant may install the proposed porch railing, and agreed to the condition that a modified porch railing design be submitted for staff approval if the proposed railing does not meet building code.
- 6) The applicant agreed to repair the decorative baluster on the central dormer where possible and replace where necessary to match the original in design and materials.

ACTION:

A motion was made by McLean, seconded by Arnesen, to approve the request for the Certificate of Appropriateness with the conditions outlined above. The motion passed by voice vote/other.