



Project Name/Address: 128 West Johnson Street – Holy Redeemer Church
Application Type: Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alteration on a landmark site and in a historic district
Legistar File ID # [43803](#)
Prepared By: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner, Planning Division
Date Prepared: June 17, 2019

Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Jason Krause – Krause Konstruktion
Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for an exterior alteration involving the covering of all wood trim, fascia, and soffit with aluminum.

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

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to cover all wood trim in aluminum wrap, cover the face of the bell tower with aluminum wrap and replicate all decorative trim on the bell tower in aluminum. The Holy Redeemer Church was constructed in 1869 and designed by John Nader with stonework by James Livesey, and had an addition to the sanctuary in 1892. A Romanesque Revival building, the building is architecturally significant for its vernacular design and as representative of both Nader and Livesey, and historically significant as the first Catholic church for German speaking residents of Madison and as the second Catholic church in the city.

The proposal to wrap all of the wood trim does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Retention of historic materials is a priority per the standards and replacement of all wood with aluminum does not meet the State requirements for replacement with materials that are similar in design, color, scale, architectural appearance, and other visual qualities. Additionally, it is bad preservation practice as it will not be possible to see deterioration to the wood underneath the wrap, which would create maintenance and possible structural problems in the future.

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) Staff does not believe the proposed work meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
 - (b) N/A.
 - (c) N/A.
 - (d) The proposed work would frustrate the public interest by removing historic decorative features on the bell tower and covering over original materials in a way that endangers their preservation.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. No new use is proposed for the property.
2. The proposal is to repair wood trim prior to wrapping it in aluminum. However, on the bell tower, the proposal is to remove all decorative elements and replicate them in aluminum. It is unclear if the clock face will be reinstalled or replicated. Replacing and covering over wood would alter and remove distinctive materials which characterize the property.
3. The proposal is not to create conjectural features, with will create the appearance of a stone and metal building rather than a stone and wood building.
4. The clock was added to the building in 1881 and is an alteration that has achieved significance in its own right. The clock should be retained.
5. The building is significant in part because of its vernacular design and creative use of local materials. The wood trim is a distinctive material characterizing the property and the aluminum will not accurately replicate the look and finish of wood.
6. Rather than repairing deteriorated features as the standard specifies, the proposal is to cover all wood to hide future deterioration and in some instances to replace decorative wood elements with aluminum.
7. No chemical treatments appear to be a part of this proposal.
8. It does not appear that any archaeological resources will be impacted with this proposal.
9. The exterior alteration will cover some historic materials and destroy others rather than maintaining and repairing, which directly contradicts this standard. The aluminum wrap and replacement is not a compatible replacement for the wood trim and decorative elements on the building.
10. The proposed work does not involve new additions or construction.

Recommendation

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness are not met and staff recommends that the Landmarks Commission deny the proposal. The wood elements of the landmark should be maintained and repaired, not covered and replaced with aluminum.