

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

May 17, 2021

PREPARED FOR THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION



Project Name & Address: 402 N Thornton Avenue, Tenney Park

Application Type(s): Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations to a Designated Madison Landmark

Legistar File ID # [65201](#)

Prepared By: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner, Planning Division

Date Prepared: May 11, 2021

Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Corey Stelljes, City of Madison Parks

Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of a basketball court.

Background Information

Parcel Location/Information: The subject site is a Designated Madison Landmark

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.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall 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 architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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 for the removal of an existing basketball court and half basketball court, then installation of a new basketball court with a new connecting path. The new basketball court is reoriented on the site of the former courts, but framed within the space by the existing paths. The new path will run from the existing pedestrian walkways to the new court.

Tenney Park is designated as a landmark for its landscape architecture. The park has featured structured recreational spaces in addition to the natural spaces. The new court will be approximately in the same location and in a previously disturbed area. The reconfigured court will not significantly change the historic character of the park while modifying an existing amenity to meet ongoing usage of the site.

A discussion of the relevant standards follows:

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. While there will be a change to the environment of the park landscape, the change is minimal and will not alter the historic character of the park.
2. The work will not impact the historic character of Tenney Park and no historic materials or historically designed landscape features will be removed or altered.
3. The work will read as a new feature and does not introduce conjectural elements.
4. The existing basketball courts are not historic.
5. N/A
6. N/A
7. N/A

8. While Tenney Park is located within a historic village site, the act of constructing the park and the previous construction of the basketball courts make this particular site unlikely to still retain archaeological resources. The proposed location for the new court minimizes the possibility for disturbing possible archaeological resources. However, as an undertaking of a local government, the City will need to submit this project for review by the Wisconsin Historical Society, which will include review by possible archaeological monitoring.
9. The new court will not destroy historic landscape features or structures.
10. This court can be removed in the future without significantly altering the landscape architecture of the park.

Recommendation

Staff believes the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness are met and recommends that the Landmarks Commission approve the project as proposed.