

STAFF REPORT 10-11-2023 REGULAR MEETING

PREPARED BY: G. LANDSBERG

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2023-00050

ADDRESS: 603-609 E MILWAUKEE (AKA PEERLESS BUILDING)

HISTORIC DISTRICT: JAM HANDY/NORTH END – EAST GRAND BOULEVARD

APPLICANT/OWNER: ED FISH/PEERLESS REALTY, LLC

ARCHITECT: DS ARCHITECTS

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 09-15-2023

DATES OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 09-27-2023

SCOPE: ERECT ADDITION

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Erected in 1925, the subject building is of brick and steel frame construction, exhibiting dark red brick competently deployed in modest ornamental patterns; juxtaposed with modern concrete sills and a water table below the first floor window line. Window groupings are divided by brick piers, and the main entry on Milwaukee has a brick portal slightly relieved from the main building façade. The building has new windows approved by the Commission in April 2022.

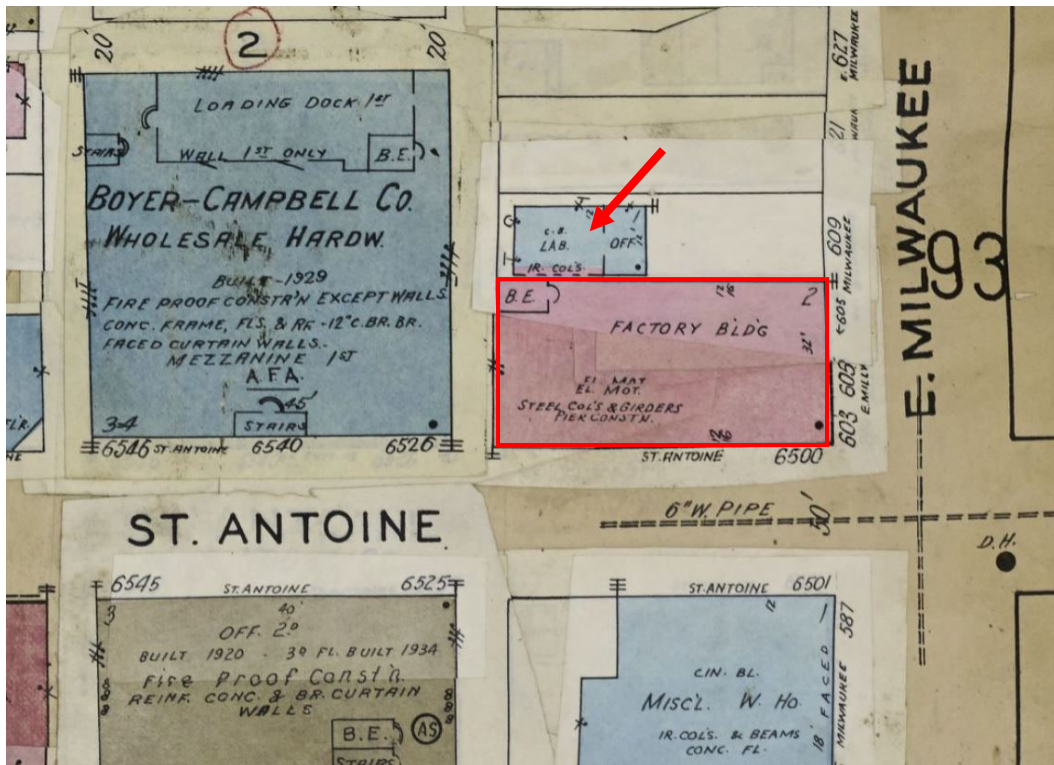


View of existing conditions at 603 E Milwaukee, corner of St. Antoine and E. Milwaukee. Staff photo, September 27, 2023.

In November 2021, the Commission approved other renovations and alterations to the building, including the demolition of a non-contributing/non-historic block addition to the building, work that has not yet been completed. Several new entrances have begun to appear on the east elevation, near the location of the block addition, which is also consistent with the Commission’s earlier approval.



Parcel view of vicinity, 603 E Milwaukee is outlined in yellow. The existing block addition is marked by red arrow.



1950 Sanborn map of same vicinity (orientation rotated, parcel outlined). Subject building at 603 E. Milwaukee (corner of St. Antoine shown here in pink to designate brick construction). The concrete block addition, shown here in blue, appears at the adjacent 609 E. Milwaukee (marked by red arrow).



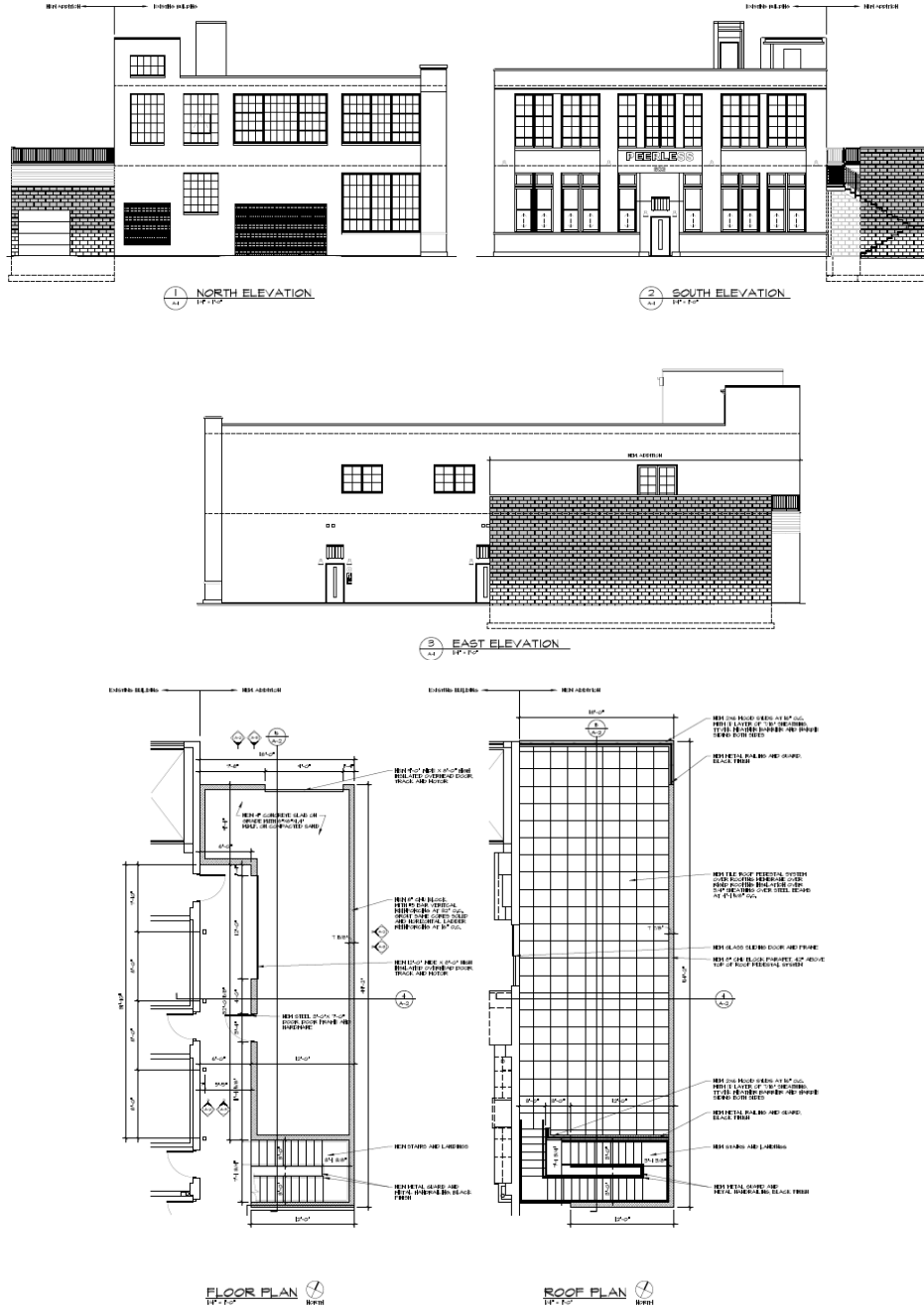
Existing concrete block addition at side of building. Note new entrances being constructed. This existing addition has already been approved for demolition by the Commission; the new structure is proposed to be built in the same general location. View to the northwest from East Milwaukee. Staff photo, September 27, 2023.



Reverse view of same area, view to the southwest. Staff photo, September 27, 2023

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Per the submitted drawings and documents, the applicant proposes to erect a new concrete block addition in the general footprint of the existing one, which is already approved for demolition. Like the existing addition, the proposed addition will be utilitarian in nature with no ornamentation, and a similar height. Additionally, the new addition (which will function primarily as a storage area) features a rooftop patio/recreation area reached by an exterior stair. The concrete block will be painted black, over a burnished block foundation. Wood stairs to the rooftop patio will be finished in black, and the patio will feature a painted black metal railing.



Excerpts from applicant's drawings depicting the proposed work (not to scale).

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Jam Handy/North End – East Grand Boulevard Historic District was established in 2015 to safeguard the dwindling historic stock of industrial structures in the Milwaukee Junction area. The boundary of the district extends south specifically to include this particular building and make it subject to such protection. The building is identified as a contributing structure in the district report.
- The proposed addition is compatible with the plain brick wall of the corner building against which it is built, and is compatible with the industrial and utilitarian nature of the district overall.

ISSUES

- No issues.

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-78, Determinations of Historic District Commission

Staff recommends that the proposal should qualify for a Certificate of Appropriateness, as it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and the Jam Handy/North End – East Grand Boulevard Historic District's Elements of Design.