



Living with History

**MINUTES SPECIAL MEETING
CITY OF MILWAUKEE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
Wednesday, October 7, 2009, 1:30 PM
MacLaren House/UWM Alumni House 3230 E. Kenwood Boulevard**

**Matt Jarosz Chair
Sandy Ackerman, Pat Balon, Ald. Robert Bauman,
Randy Bryant, Ann Pieper Eisenbrown**

1. Roll call

Chair Matt Jarosz called the meeting to order at 1:42 P.M.

Commission members present: Sandy Ackerman, Randy Bryant, Ann Pieper Eisenbrown, Matt Jarosz

Commissioners Absent: Pat Balon, Ald. Bauman

Staff Present: Carlen Hatala

Others Present: Dan Stephans, Vince Milewski, Matt Millen, John Millen, Dan Walker

2. Certificate of Appropriateness Application for the removal of the original slate roof and installation of a new slate roof at the MacLaren House (UWM Alumni House) at 3230 E. Kenwood Boulevard. (MacLaren House historic site) (3rd Ald. District)

Dan Stephans, Historic Preservation Officer for the State DOA, explained how the commission's directive to check out the condition of the slate and its origins led to extensive research and investigation of the original slate roof on the MacLaren House/UWM Alumni House

Matt Millen, slate roof specialist, explained that the roof consisted of self weathering slate from Vermont. He identified this as Vermont slate because of the gray/black lines at the back. Foreign slate is different. He pointed out different sections of the MacLaren roof where the color was different due to weathering, to coal and sulphur deposits and oxidation from sun exposure. The roof is failing because it used the more colorful slate at the top of the quarry when the house was built. This slate was promoted as giving buildings instant antiquity and was more costly at the time due to the hand work involved but it proved to be not as strong as slate from deeper in the quarry. Today's standards are better and quarrying is more mechanized. Vince Milewski added that he checked out slate at the various quarries in Scotland and England during a trip there. Their product did not match the MacLaren House slate.

When asked if slate could be salvaged from the roof in the installation of a new roof, Matt Millen said that a high percentage was delaminating and he demonstrated by hitting a slate with a roofing hammer. A new slate roof should last 200 years. The current slate will continue to deteriorate rapidly. None of it was recommended for use as roofing material.

When asked if the new slate will have brown and orange colors in it, Matt Millen pointed out some samples he brought. The green slates were already starting to turn color at the storage yard and he was confident the slate will start showing the browns and tans within five years. Not all slates will change at the same rate. The colors for the replacement roof will be sea greens, strata gray, black and Vermont gray. The self weathering slate will turn color over time. There are 30 sections to the roof and each had a different blend of slate and each section was laid differently. Millen will be identifying the lengths, thicknesses, colors and how the slate was laid for each of the 30 sections. This will be mapped so the new roof will look similar.

There was some concern about future deterioration of the new roof and a question was asked if any problems were found. Matt Millen and Vince Milewski answered that there will be a new underlayment (plywood decking on top of a bituminous membrane on top of the original concrete deck) and the built in gutters will be looked at. They are causing problems today. The current ASTM standards insure slates with higher strength so the replacement roof should last longer.

Commissioners thanked Millen for preparing a mock-up of the new roof materials and the detailed explanation about the condition and history of the slate.

THE MOTION: Randy Bryant moved and Ann Pieper Eisenbrown seconded a motion to accept the findings as presented and allow Vermont slate to be installed for the new roof. The new slate will match the size, color, thickness, pattern and texture of the original. Any anomalies will be re-created. A copy of the specifications is to be sent to historic preservation staff before the work is sent out for bids. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Adjournment

THE MOTION: There being no further business, Sandy Ackerman moved and Randy Bryant seconded a motion to adjourn the special meeting. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 2:15 P.M.