

HISTORIC PRESERVATION STUDY REPORT

CHARLES A. KOEFFLER, JR. HOUSE

(Written Fall 1986)

I. NAME

Historic: Charles A. Koeffler, Jr. House

Common: Same

II. LOCATION

Street Address: 817-19 North Marshall Street

Tax Key Number: 392-1621-000

Legal Property Description: Plat of Milwaukee in Secs (28-29-33_-7-22, Block 95, Lot 4 & South 15 feet on East Line of Lot 3 & N. 20 feet Lot 5

III. CLASSIFICATION

Structure

IV. OWNER

Taxman Investment Company
797 North Jefferson Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

V. YEAR BUILT

1898

Architect: Ferry & Clas

VI. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Koeffler House is located in a nineteenth century residential area of substantial former single-family residences and early twentieth century apartment buildings on the eastern edge of the central business district. Many of the houses have been razed for parking lots or modern apartment buildings while the remaining ones have been converted to offices and apartments.

The Koeffler House occupies almost its entire lot with only modest planting strips at the front and sides. It is a 2-1/2 story, gray brick, limestone-trimmed, English Renaissance Revival Style double house. The large, asymmetrical house has architecturally developed elevations on the east, south and north sides. All of these elevations are characterized by broad bay windows, Flemish-inspired curved gables and abundant stone trim.

The east elevation facing Marshall Street is the most elaborately articulated. It is massed to create the appearance of a large single-family residence. Only the paired entrances sheltered by the broad front porch betray that it is actually a pair of side-by-side three-story townhouses. In typical Victorian fashion, the roofline is the most picturesquely composed part of this elevation, with its curved gables, barrel-roofed dormers, domed turret and strapwork parapet balustrade. The front porch is the only feature that has been noticeably altered by the removal of the original banded Ionic columns and the strapwork balustrade at the roofline.

VII. SIGNIFICANCE

The Charles A. Koeffler, Jr. House is architecturally significant as a fine example of the period revival domestic architecture favored by affluent Milwaukeeans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is a distinguished work by the noted regional architecture firm of Ferry and Clas. It is important as a rare surviving example of an upper income doublehouse in the Yankee Hill area and an important work by an architecture firm that significantly influenced the architectural development and urban planning of Milwaukee.

VIII. HISTORY

The Koeffler House was built in 1898 as the city residence of attorney Charles A. Koeffler, Jr. and his brother, Hugo, a real estate investor. The brothers occupied the house until 1922, while also maintaining a summer home in Wauwatosa. At the time the Koefflers built their house, the Yankee Hill neighborhood was one of the most affluent in the city. Many other wealthy merchants, industrialists and professionals resided in the area that contained some of the city's finest houses.

The Koeffler's chose Ferry and Clas, one of the city's most fashionable architecture firms, to design their residence. Ferry and Clas were already well established as one of the leading design-oriented firms and were well known for their fine residences, such as the Captain Frederick Pabst House, 2000 West Wisconsin Avenue. The Koeffler House represents a unique example of the firm's work, being a double house in an original interpretation of the English Renaissance Revival style. The Flemish-influenced architecture of Jacobean England enjoyed a great vogue among Milwaukee's affluent German-Americans in the early twentieth century. The Koeffler House represents an early manifestation of the turning away from the heavy-handed Flemish Renaissance Revival style of the 1890s, exemplified by the Pabst Mansion, to the subtler forms of seventeenth century English domestic architecture that were to dominate upperclass residential design in Milwaukee in the years leading up to World War I.

The firm of Ferry and Clas was on the cutting edge of innovative architectural design in Milwaukee at the turn of the century. Their bold and successful experiments with a variety of period revival architectural styles introduced and popularized new design trends in the city. The Koeffler House is a unique work demonstrating their facility in designing in the emerging Jacobean Revival Style. It is just as important a milestone in their domestic work as the Flemish Renaissance style Pabst Mansion (1890-92), the Neo-Classical Gustav Pabst House (1906) at 2230 North Terrace Avenue or the Georgian Revival style William Fitzgerald House (1901) at 2022 East Lafayette Place. Other Milwaukee architects were influenced by the work of the firm and further exploited design concepts pioneered by Ferry and Clas. Ferry and Clas made important contributions to the city in the field of urban design. They championed the City Beautiful Movement and advocated civic improvements that had an important effect in determining the present character of downtown Milwaukee.

IX. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the Charles A. Koeffler, Jr. House, 817-19 North Marshall Street, appears to satisfy criteria five (5) and six (6) of the historic preservation ordinance, Section 2-334(2)(e).

X. PRESERVATION GUIDELINES

The following preservation guidelines represent the principal concerns of the Historic Preservation Commission regarding this historic designation. However, the Commission reserves the right to make final decisions based upon particular design submissions. These guidelines shall be applicable only to the Charles A. Koeffler, Jr. House. Nothing in these guidelines shall be construed to prevent ordinary maintenance or the restoration and/or replacement of documented original elements.

A. Roofs

Retain the original roof shape. Dormers, skylights and solar collector panels may be added to roof surfaces if they are not visible from the street. Avoid making changes to the roof shape that would alter the building height, roofline or pitch.

B. Materials

1. Masonry

- a. Unpainted brick or stone should not be painted or covered. Avoid painting or covering unpainted brick. This is historically incorrect and could cause irreversible damage if it was decided to remove the paint at a later date.
- b. Repoint defective mortar by duplicating the original in color, style, texture and strength. Avoid using mortar colors and pointing styles that were unavailable or were not used when the building
- c. Clean masonry only when necessary to halt deterioration and with the gentlest method possible. Sandblasting brick or stone surfaces is prohibited. This method of cleaning erodes the surface of the material and accelerates deterioration. Avoid the indiscriminate use of chemical products that could have an adverse reaction with the masonry materials, such as the use of acid on limestone.
- d. Repair or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible. Avoid using new material that is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed.

2. Wood/Metal

- a. Retain original material, whenever possible. Avoid removing architectural features that are essential to maintaining the building's character and appearance.
- b. Repair or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the appearance of the old as closely as possible. Avoid covering

architectural features with new materials that are inappropriate or were unavailable when the building was constructed.

C. Windows and Doors

1. Retain existing window and door openings. Retain the existing configuration of panes, sash, surrounds, sills, doors, and hardware, except as necessary to restore the building to its original condition. Avoid making additional openings or changes in existing fenestration by enlarging or reducing window or door openings to fit new stock window sash or new stock door sizes. Avoid changing the size or configuration of windowpanes or sash.
2. Respect the building's stylistic period. If the replacement of doors or window sash is necessary, the replacement should duplicate the appearance and design of the original window sash or door. Avoid using inappropriate sash and door replacements. Avoid the filling-in or covering of openings with inappropriate materials such as glass block or the installation of plastic or metal awnings or shutters. Avoid using modern style window units such as horizontal sliding sash in place of double-hung sash or the substitution of units with glazing configurations not appropriate to the style of the building.

D. Trim and Ornamentation

There shall be no changes to the existing trim or ornamentation except as necessary to restore the building to its original condition. Replacement features shall match the original member in scale, design and appearance.

E. Additions

The south and east elevations are integral to the structure's architectural significance. Additions require the approval of the Commission. Approval shall be based upon the addition's design compatibility with the building in terms of height, roof configuration, fenestration, scale, design, color and materials, and the degree to which it visually intrudes upon the principal elevations.

F. Signs/Exterior Lighting

The installation of any permanent exterior sign or light fixture shall require the approval of the Commission. Approval will be based on the compatibility of the proposed sign with the historic and architectural character of the building.

G. Site Features

New plant materials, fencing, paving and lighting fixtures shall be compatible with the architectural character of the building.