

HISTORIC DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT

CHARLES L. McINTOSH HOUSE

(Written Fall, 1985)

I. NAME

Historic: Charles L. McIntosh House

Common: Wisconsin Conservatory of Music

II. LOCATION

1584 North Prospect Avenue

Legal Property Description: Rogers Addition in SE ¼ Section 21-7-22, Vol. 1, p.40 Block 199, Lot 14 excluding RR & NWLY 7' for Street

III. CLASSIFICATION

Structure

IV. OWNER

Wisconsin Conservatory of Music
1584 N. Prospect Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202

V. YEAR BUILT

1903-04

ARCHITECT: H.R. Wilson (Chicago)

VI. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The McIntosh House is a Neo-Classical Revival style mansion sited back from Prospect Avenue behind a lawn and circular driveway. The grounds are landscaped with mature shrubs. It is neighbored by modern high-rise apartment buildings.

The main block of the McIntosh House is a seven bay, two-story, hip-roofed, symmetrical composition flanked with a one-story side wing and an arcaded loggia. The house is built of dark red Galesburg paving brick, extensively trimmed with Michigan brownstone and copper. The roof is covered in tile. The focal point of the façade is the monumental, four column Corinthian portico executed in brownstone and approached by a broad flight of steps. The portico shelters the fully glazed double entrance doors, which are surmounted by a wide wrought iron railed balcony supported on brownstone consoles. The façade is further embellished with brownstone surrounds at the one-over-one double-hung windows, a molded

brownstone belt course at the second floor level, brownstone quoins and a wide brownstone modillion cornice. The low hip roof is hidden by a copper parapet balustrade.

VII. SIGNIFIANCE

The McIntosh House is architecturally significant as one of Milwaukee's finest and most unusual examples of Neo-Classical Revival domestic architecture. It is historically significant for its association with the life of Charles L. McIntosh, an important Wisconsin industrialist, William Osborne Goodrich, a prominent Milwaukee philanthropist, and the Wisconsin College of Music and the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music, two regionally important music education institutions.

VIII. HISTORY

The subject structure was built as his private residence by Charles L. McIntosh. McIntosh was a native of New York State who had previously been a manager of a belting firm in Hartford, Connecticut and a banker in Denver, Colorado. In 1895 McIntosh moved to Racine where he bought controlling interest in the J.I. Case Company, a maker of agricultural implements. In 1902 McIntosh became a director of the Milwaukee Harvester Company and decided to move to Milwaukee. Milwaukee Harvester later became part of the giant agricultural implements conglomerate, International Harvester Company.

In 1903 McIntosh bought the Robert C. Spenser House on Prospect Avenue for \$57,500 and had it razed to make way for the present structure. Chicago architect H.R. Wilson designed the lavish new mansion, which had been completed by October of 1904. The house was built to the highest construction standards of the day and utilized the finest and costliest materials available. McIntosh occupied the house until 1910 when he died of a heart attack in Naples, Italy. His widow, Effie, stayed on in the house until 1921 when she sold it to the William Osborne Goodriches.

William Osborne Goodrich (1863-1956) was the son and grandson of pioneer Milwaukee linseed oil producers. When he was 12 he was blinded in a gunshot accident and turned to the piano and singing as solace for his loss of sight.

When his sight returned, in part, he attended high school and began his singing career with the now defunct Arion Club, the old Musikverein and at Immanuel Presbyterian Church.

He passed up college to work in his family's business until he was 30 and then he went to Europe to study voice. While at Bayreuth, the Bavarian shrine to Richard Wagner, he was reportedly invited to sing for a social gathering at the home of Wagner's widow. The enthusiastic Cosima insisted that the tall, handsome baritone from Milwaukee join the Bayreuth festival company. Goodrich refused. His father was aged and he was needed at home to run the linseed oil business.

Goodrich was a perennial soloist for the annual "Messiah" productions and was in demand for other oratorios and for orchestral and choral concerts here and throughout the Midwest.

In 1892 he had married the oldest daughter of Capt. Frederick Pabst and the young couple built an imposing Gothic Style mansion at 2234 North Terrace Avenue where they lived until moving to the McIntosh House.

In 1932, as the residential nature of the Prospect Avenue neighborhood became to change, the Goodriches built an Alpine-like chalet at 1413 East Goodrich Lane, Fox Point, and leased their Prospect Avenue house to the Wisconsin College of Music. The music school acquired the building in 1948.

Goodrich remained a familiar figure in attendance at musical and theatrical events until a year before his death. His voice was as long-lived as it was notable. He was singing lieder concerts at 85.

“I’ve had stables of horses, Mediterranean yachts, absorbing business associations, years of living in Europe – but my music has been the greatest pleasure of all,” he told a writer shortly before he died at 93 in 1956.

The Wisconsin College of Music was formed in 1901 by the merger of two older schools, the Milwaukee Institute of Music (1884) and the Wisconsin School of Music. The college offered courses in theory, applied music and dramatics among others and had classes for both children and adults. By 1918 the school boasted over 70 teachers and had branches throughout the city. Locations included quarters on Second Street and on Broadway. In 1932 the Wisconsin College of Music leased the McIntosh residence at 1584 North Prospect. The Wisconsin College of Music merged with the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music in 1969 and the combined institution took the latter’s name.

The Wisconsin Conservatory of Music was incorporated on April 27, 1899. It was an outgrowth of the Luening Conservatory, which had been established by Eugene Luening (1852-1944) in 1887. At first it was located in the old Luening Conservatory quarters on Jefferson Street between State and Juneau in what had been the First Baptist Church. An adjoining dormitory housed some of the school’s 500 students in 1906. Courses included all phases of musical instruction from piano, violin and orchestral playing to composition, voice, music history, music education, dramatic art and languages. In 1910 the Conservatory merged with Marquette University, but the association lasted only a year. By 1918 the school operated eight branch locations throughout the city. A member of the National Association of the Schools of Music, the Conservatory offered a degree program by the 1940s. Subsequent locations included the Stephenson Building (756 North Milwaukee Street), the Watkins Building from 1937 to 1961 (840 North Third Street) and 1428 North Farwell. In 1969 the Conservatory merged with the Wisconsin College of Music and moved its operations to 1584 North Prospect Avenue. The combined school has maintained high standards of instruction and in recent years gained a reputation for its jazz program. Enrollment in the summer of 1985 totaled 646 students.

IX. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the Charles L. McIntosh House appears to satisfy the criteria of significance contained in Section 2-335 of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances.

IX. PRESERVATION GUIDELINES

The following preservation guidelines represent the principle 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 McIntosh House. Nothing in these

guidelines shall be construed to prevent ordinary maintenance or 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 natural stone and 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 was constructed.
- 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 or 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 changes in the size or configuration of windowpanes or sash.

2. Respect the building's stylistic period. If replacement of window sash or doors is necessary, the replacement should duplicate the appearance and design of the original window sash or door. Avoid using inappropriate sash and door replacements such as unpainted aluminum combination storm and screen units. Avoid the filling-in or covering of openings with inappropriate materials such as glass block or the installation of plastic or metal strip 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. Porches, Trim and Ornamentation

There shall be no changes to the existing porches, 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 north, south and west elevations are integral to the structure's architectural significance. Additions are not recommended and 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 and materials, and the degree to which it visually intrudes upon the principal elevation.

F. Signs

The installation of any permanent exterior sign 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 house.