




Gundersen Downtown Project

La Crosse, WI

Gensler

4/20/2021



***At it's best, preservation engages the past in a conversation with the present
over a mutual concern for the future.***

William Murtagh



Scope of the Project:

The Gundersen Downtown Project includes the renovation and build-out of approximately 51,000 square feet of existing space on the Lower Level through Third Floors of The Wettstein's block of Buildings at 201-215 3rd Street North, La Crosse, WI 54601. The Project includes office space on the lower level and main floor for the Gundersen Medical Foundation, which anchors this project as "The Front Porch" to the Community. There is also a small retail community gathering space that includes a health-conscious food business on level one, providing convenient, accessible access for both the building tenants and Community spaces. Levels two and three will include office space for Gundersen's Business Services Teams and an innovation center, as well as a co-working tenant space occupying the second floor of the Fox building.

A New Life for a Legacy Building



Historic Image A



Historic Image B



Current Photo

Originally built as The Fox Bros Garage in the 1920's, you could store your new car in this state of the art fireproofed building when it was built. More currently known as the Wettstein's Building, it has maintained an important place in the built fabric of downtown La Crosse. Gundersen's continued investment in this building will enable it to remain part of this community.

Texture, Color and Pattern



The intended design is a blend of the colors, textures and patterns found nearby. The legacy of the existing buildings are made stronger by the design's varied materiality and active facades, helping to complete the block with a contemporary but respectful and honest approach to materiality. The result is an 'authentic' and vibrant feeling to the overall project.

Current Condition

The current East (primary) and North (secondary) facades of the building have been significantly altered over time, with many of the original windows and doors moved or blocked.

On the North facade there is currently one window opening, although there is evidence of other windows having once been on this facade, they have since been removed and filled in with an exterior plaster.



East and North Facades



EAST FACADE: (Primary Facade) This project proposes moving the current entrance at the Fox Building . This entrance will be filled back in with a storefront system and brick sill, as was originally constructed. The new entrance is located further to the north, where the original entrance was located, see Historic Image A. All other existing windows on the East elevation will be replaced with new aluminum framed windows, within original openings-improving the energy performance of the building and updating the aesthetic to match the other facades new window and mullion color.

NORTH FACADE: (Secondary Facade) Outdoor cafe seating creates an active pedestrian environment at the building entry-encouraging conversations and streetlife. In an effort to create an interior working environment that is healthy and sustainable (optimizing daylight and comfort), this project proposes new openings on this facade, turning an unfinished wall into an architecturally resolved and active building facade.

North Facade

NORTH FACADE: (Secondary Facade) The new windows and the combination of a dark metal panel cladding system - matching the elegant industrial nature of the original building - and plaster, have been designed to both maintain historic character while also creating an updated identity for the project. There are a mix of windows that are larger, and have grid muntins, recalling the warehouse style windows that used to be a part of this building. The window head and sill heights are based off of existing concrete frame structural elements. The punched openings align with these datums, while the widths vary, aligning to the pattern of the metal panel.



West and South Facades

WEST FACADE: (Secondary Facade) The majority of the original window openings on the Fox Building have been filled in over time (with plaster and smaller windows). This project proposes to return to the original window openings on levels 1 and 2. These will be aluminum framed systems with grid muntins, recalling the warehouse style windows that used to be a part of this building. There is also a trapezoidal window in the upper portion of this facade that was uncovered during demolition. This opening will be maintained with a new aluminum framed system.

SOUTH FACADE: (Primary Facade) The windows on the second level which are within the scope of this project, have been filled in over time to reduce the heights of the openings. This project will return the windows to their original sizes. The windows will be aluminum framed systems.

Please reference the attached drawings from the construction documents.

