

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
JUNE 24, 2019
C14H-1974-0028
MOONLIGHT TOWERS
VARIOUS LOCATIONS

PROPOSAL

Restore nine Moonlight Towers and reconstitute three Moonlight Towers, including use of replacement connectors as needed. Use of replacement leg and horizontal members was approved at the Commission's April 22, 2019 meeting.

ARCHITECTURE

50' high steel towers, each topped with six lamps.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

Austin Energy is prioritizing maintaining a maximum percentage of original tower members in each of the remaining towers. That said, it is anticipated that each of the twelve towers will have slightly more than 40 percent historic material remaining after all towers are restored. This accounts for a 40 percent failure rate on nine towers that are still standing, as well as reconstruction of three towers that have been consumed for parts to restore five other towers (work completed).

Staff note: This refers only to the connectors. All existing connectors will be visually inspected and non-destructively tested. Passing connectors will be painted and used in the re-installation of the tower, while connectors failing the structural inspection will be replaced with new milled steel parts. Steel parts are proposed to be milled rather than cast, with steel comparable to the original material.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are used to evaluate projects on historic landmarks. The following standards apply to the proposed project:

- 2) *The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*

Interspersing original and replacement components in each tower will preserve the historic character of the Moonlight Towers and retain their distinctive features, spaces, and spatial relationships. The location of replacement components will be documented.

With regard to the replacement connectors: The replacement and original parts appear to be identical from six feet away, and most of the towers are viewed from a much greater distance. This proposal also preserves the historic character of the towers.



As viewed from 6 feet away: Replacement parts (left); original tower section (right)

- 6) *Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*

Original tower connectors that pass the structural inspection will be reused. Original connectors that fail the structural inspection will be replaced in-kind with steel connectors with an extremely similar profile.

The project meets the applicable standards.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Committee members recommended marking replacement pieces prior to installation, interspersing original and replacement components in each tower, and researching high-quality finishes to prolong the lifespan of original components.

Austin Energy and Enertech staff will document the location of replacement pieces and drawings, and will discuss the possibility of marking replacement components prior to installation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve the proposal.