



Cook County

Chicago

**South Portico, Griffin Museum of Science and Industry
5700 S. DuSable Lake Shore Drive**

DCEO-HD250225, SHPO Log #005010325

February 3, 2025

Dr. Chevy Humphrey

Griffin Museum of Science and Industry

5700 S. DuSable Lake Shore Drive

Chicago, IL 60637

Thank you for your submission of material regarding the south portico of the Griffin Museum of Science and Industry (GMSI), which we received on 01/03/25 (SHPO Log# 005010325). Because this project is receiving state funding (HD250225) through the IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), our comments are required by the [Illinois State Agency Historic Resources Preservation Act](#) (20 ILCS 3420) and [its implementing rules](#) (17 IAC 4180) (Act). Additionally, this office holds a [Conservation Easement](#) on the GMSI through August 30, 2061. Stipulation 4.c requires that this office provide the Chicago Park District (building owner) with a determination whether proposed work meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards).

Our staff have determined that no historic archaeological properties are known to exist within the project area. However, if any archaeological materials are encountered during construction, this office must be notified. This letter is not a clearance for purposes of the [Illinois Human Remains Protection Act](#) (20 ILCS 3440).

The Griffin Museum of Science and Industry (GMSI, also known as the Palace of Fine Arts) is a contributing structure to the Jackson Park Historic Landscape District and Midway Plaisance, which was listed to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) on 12/15/72; the building was designated a Chicago Landmark in 1955.

The proposed project seeks to insert a new, accessible entry on the building's south elevation by lowering the grade of the south terrace, removing the center section of stairs, and installing an accessible entrance into building's lower level. The project will also add a glass curtain wall behind the south portico's Ionic columns and create an outdoor terrace on top of the new entry.

Despite the building's prominent position within Jackson Park, there is currently no direct access to the building from Jackson Park without entering through the free-standing entry vestibules along the building's north elevation. The building serves as a backdrop to Jackson Park but does not connect to the park itself;

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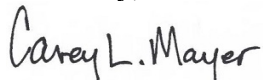
creating a narrative that the building is to be viewed but not necessarily experienced from the park and the surrounding neighborhood.

The proposed plans retain the building's symmetry and take advantage of the site conditions by lowering the elevation of the south terrace. As proposed, the new entry pavilion is tucked slightly within the south stairs and side knee walls. Existing interior spaces on the lower level that now house mechanical systems will be reused for the new entry; two sets of existing stairs and an elevator will be reconfigured to provide access from the lower level to the portico level and main level of the museum, which sits approximately 5' above the portico elevation. The interior spaces directly off the south portico were renovated in 2000 and contain no historic finishes.

While the proposed project does alter GMSI's south (primary) elevation, the intervention is small within the scale of the entire building, and its minimalist design visually defers to the highly decorative south elevation. The proposed south portico project will not adversely affect the historic building or the surrounding Jackson Park Historic Landscape District; thus, the proposed modifications to GMSI's south portico meet the Standards.

Our office will continue to coordinate with the Historic Preservation Division of the City of Chicago's Department of Planning and Development (DPD) on your proposed project. This coordination is not a substitute for their mandatory review and required submissions/processes, which you are still obligated to fulfill. To ensure that the proposed project continues to meet the Standards and avoids an adverse effect, please submit the next set of deliverables as they are developed to Anna Margaret Barris, AnnaMargaret.Barris@Illinois.gov for review and comment. Failure to submit subsequent plans for review and comment may result in an adverse effect determination.

Sincerely,



Carey L. Mayer, AIA
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

c: Dana Edwards, Illinois Dept. of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
Emily Ramsey, Ramsey Historic Consultants, Inc.
Dijana Cuvalo, AIA, Historic Preservation Division
Andrew Schneider, Chicago Park District