

Historic Preservation Assessment
of
7 North Franklin Street
and
502 & 506 East Washington Avenue
Madison, WI



Charles Quagliana, AIA
Preservation Architect

In association with

Kurt Straus, P.E.
Structural Engineer

November 2017

November 28, 2017

Mr. Michael Metzger
Development Director
McGrath Property Group
1228 East Washington Ave.
Madison, WI 53703

Re: Assessment of 502 and 506 East Washington Avenue & 7 North Franklin Street
Madison, WI

Dear Mr. Metzger,

The following is my report on these properties.

Purpose

The purpose of the research and observations was to investigate the properties and to provide an opinion on condition, architectural significance, integrity and context of the properties.

Present Use

All the subject properties are currently multiple tenant housing.

Background

Research began with a review of Sanborn maps and neighborhood images at the Wisconsin Historical Society archives. I also obtained Intensive Architectural Survey information from the City of Madison Preservation Planner, Ms. Amy Scanlon. Additional research for images was conducted on-line with the Wisconsin Historical Society photographic archives and Architecture and History Inventory.

Although the Sanborn maps yielded little substantive information, several aerial view photographs in the collection of the Wisconsin Historical Society were located that showed East Washington Avenue and the buildings under study.

Image Whi 10328, a 1908 kite photo of the Isthmus area, shows the neighborhood east of the Capitol but the detail of buildings at the corner of Franklin Street and East Washington Avenue is difficult to discern. Image Whi (x3) 26152, a circa 1906 aerial view of the East Washington Avenue area, shows all three buildings as viewed from the west. The images are small, so it is not possible to compare historic details to existing conditions.

Image Whi (ID 11432) is a Birds Eye View from 1886. Both 7 North Franklin and 506 East Washington Avenue are visible. Although the general form of the buildings is evident, it is difficult to make out specific details of the structures. Image Whi (w6) 23828 was also viewed but provided insufficient details.

Other sources for historic photographs were investigated but no relevant images were located within the time frame of this report.

Observations

On October 26th, 2017, Kurt Straus (Structural Engineer) and Charles Quagliana (Preservation Architect) conducted on site observations of the three properties. Elements open to view were observed, photographs taken, field notes were recorded.

The location of these properties is just east of the Capitol Square on the eastern edge of the Capitol Neighborhoods, specifically the James Madison Park area. This is part of the original plat of Madison of 1836 known as block 117. The immediate area is characterized by small single-family homes, mid-size single-family homes and two flat units typical of the early settlement patterns of the areas close to the Capitol Square. Many of these dwellings have been converted into multiple tenant housing.



General view of 7 North Franklin Street, 502 and 506 East Washington Avenue

506 East Washington Avenue

Constructed 1849 (city records) Circa 1853 (WHS Property Records)

Architecture

The exterior architecture of the original building is obscured by the aluminum siding, but given the date of construction, simple rectangular form and some interior clues, it appears this is a very utilitarian vernacular style property.

Originally a simple rectangular building with a front gable type roof, it appears a small flat roof addition was added to the rear of the house.

Some of the original exterior materials and details remain under the present aluminum skin. Some elements such as decorative shingle patterns, brackets, wood banding, wood trim and porches, if they existed, are lost.

The 1 over 1 wood windows are not likely original to a building of this vintage. At the time of original construction only much smaller pieces of glass would have been available. The windows are covered with aluminum combination storm units. Wood members are in generally fair to poor condition.



View of 506 East Washington Avenue from the street.



View of flat roof addition to rear of the house.

The basic structure of the building is apparently a braced frame; however, our observations could not confirm this. This is a combination of heavy timber corner posts and heavy horizontal timbers supporting traditional 2 by 10 wood floor joists and 2 by 4 interior wall framing.

The 506 property has been beaten up, torn apart and significantly modified. It now contains 7 apartment units. Because of the many remodeling efforts, and original structural deficiencies, there are some significant floor deflections and settlement as described later in the structural discussion.

Almost all of the plaster wall and ceiling surfaces exhibit some degree of cracking and delamination. This can also be attributed to structure movement as well as the age of the lath and plaster itself. Gypsum wall board for wall and ceilings has been installed in some areas to conceal plaster issues.

It appears that significant portions of any custom detail, built-ins, pocket doors and decorative woodwork have been removed. Many rooms retain maple or oak wood floors under carpet. There are some fragments of decorative base and trim remaining as well as the front stairs and railing. Interior doors are mostly four or five panel typical of the period of original construction, but the property has a variety of doors including contemporary flush doors.



View of the interior of entry vestibule. The stair is likely original to the building. One of the few significant original elements remaining.

All the kitchens have some contemporary low budget cabinets, laminate counter tops and vinyl floors. The bathrooms of these units are typically in poor to fair condition with leaks present and the need for constant caulking and minor repairs evident. Water leakage was observed and is anticipated to be causing deterioration of adjacent windows, wall, floors and wood framing in some of the bathrooms observed.

The existing mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems are apparently functional and apparently generally code compliant. The age and state of maintenance of the equipment indicates upgrades and replacement that are not too far in the future. Little thermal insulation was observed.

Hazardous materials are likely present. Given the age of the buildings lead paint and asbestos containing materials are likely present throughout.

The interior of the 506 property is in poor condition. An extensive level of additional repair and rehabilitation work is required in the building.

Structural

The building is a wood framed building with rubble stone masonry foundation walls. The accessible areas of the foundations appear to be limestone and mortar construction. The rear half of the building and the back room are crawlspace and not accessible.

Generally, the accessible framing of the first floor appeared to be 2x10 or 2x12's at 16" spacing. Nearly the entire underside of the accessible floor is concealed in plaster and metal lath.

Although not accessible to view, it is possible due to the age of the building that portions of the framing may contain timber sills or other framing members.

The floor and roof framing members appeared to be covered in 1x decking. Several wood columns and beams are present in the basement to provide support to the first floor (and likely second).



View of one of the second floor bathroom areas.



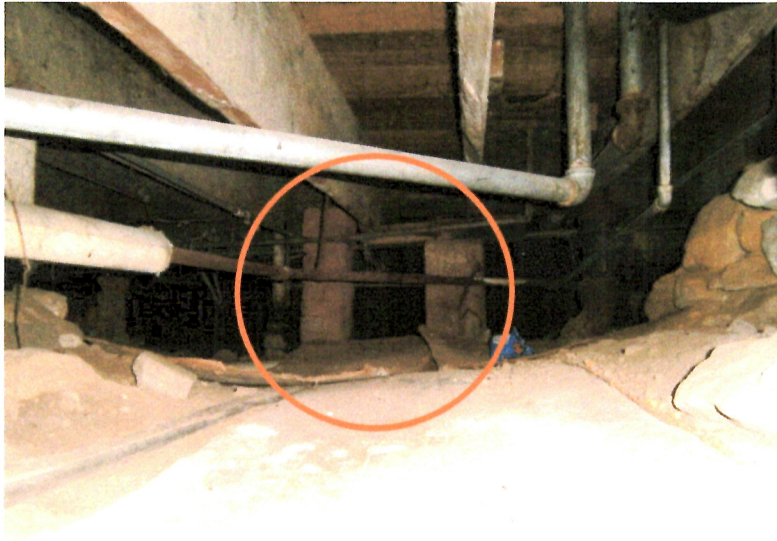
Image showing the foundation wall at the transition of the basement to the crawlspace. Most of the mortar appears to be deteriorated and eroded away.



Image of the basement. Limestone walls are shown as well as wood beams and columns.

The second floor and walls are completely concealed in finishes. The walls are likely 2x framing and the second floor is likely framed similarly to the first floor.

The roof structure is accessible to view from a small attic hatch. The framing found is 2x4 at approximately 16" centers. The roof framing is covered in 1x decking.



View of the crawlspace. Note the isolated pier-like supports near the center of the building.

The entire house appears to be leaning to the northeast. Significant deviation from plumb was discovered at both corners the outside walls along the front of the home. The magnitude of the deviation was approximately 4 to 6" from top to bottom.



Image showing the leaning of the home.

The accessible foundation walls were in fair to poor condition. Significant mortar and stone deterioration is present as well as signs of moisture infiltration. Although no sign of inward movements or significant cracking was noted, there is concern over the general sloping of the floors above. Sloping floors usually means sloping foundations and settlements. We do not know the reason for the sloping/possible settlements.

What could be seen of the first-floor framing appeared to be in fair condition. It was found that the floors on first and second were significantly sloped from the front to the back of the building. Most of the sloping appeared to be in the front portion and middle portion of the building. The magnitude of the slope was approximately 20" from front to back.

In addition to the general slope of the floors, there is some localized deformation and undulation in the floors. Similar deformations were noted on the second floor. The condition of the second-floor framing could not be determined. Sagging was noted in the roof framing. The magnitude of the sag appeared to be several inches in the center of the rafter spans.

Some "tenting" or high spots were noted over rigid walls below roof or attic floor framing members. Otherwise, the roof framing appeared to be intact and functioning as intended; no severe changes in the roof planes that might suggest fractures or failed connections. The roof framing has undersized members resulting in some noticeable roof ridge deflections.

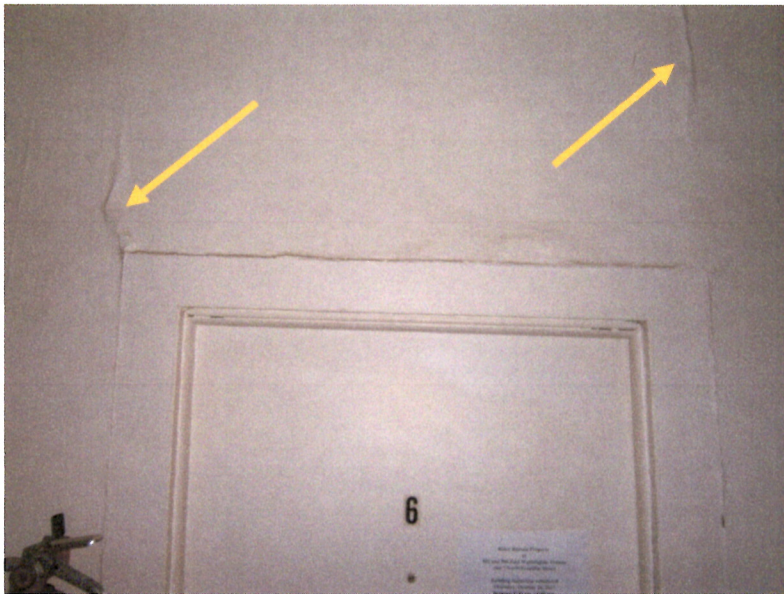


Image showing racking in walls of second floor.

The original plaster appears to have been covered in drywall to conceal cracking.

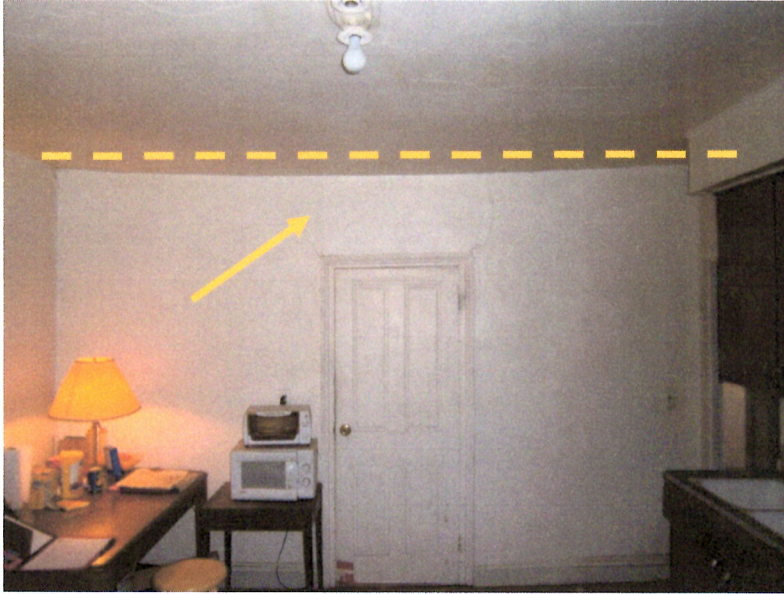


Image taken on the second-floor kitchen. The wall in the image spans parallel with the joist span; the wall has sagged with the floor framing. The sag in the joist can be seen in the ceiling line. Note extensive cracking in wall.

Some deterioration may be present in lower portions of the wall or floor framing along the back portion of the home within the crawl space area. The grade along these walls is quite high and algae and dirt is present on the siding along this wall. This is evidence of moisture intrusion into the structure.



Image showing the high grade along the back of the building allowing moisture penetration into the foundations

Overall the condition of this property is fair to poor. The interior is in poor condition and the foundation walls and structure require significant structural remedial work to correct deflections, settlement and sagging issues. The aluminum siding is likely concealing other deterioration issues. The roof is nearing the end of serviceable life.

It must be acknowledged that the degree of repair and rehabilitation required in this building, since it needs deferred maintenance and code related upgrades, may not be cost effective. Rehabilitation may not cost effectively extend the service life of the building.

502 East Washington Avenue
Constructed 1884 (City records)

Architecture

The architectural style of this property is of hybrid design. It is Italianate with Queen Anne features, or an Italianate/Queen Anne hybrid. The date of construction relates to both styles (an overlap of the later part of the Italianate era and the early part of the Queen Anne era)

The paired doors and the window hoods are Italianate features, as is the roof form and the continuous wall plane (in other words, it does not have the irregularities in the wall plane that is a characteristic device in the Queen Anne style).

The shingled gable is a characteristic of the Queen Anne. The design of the porches could be either Italianate or Queen Anne.



View of west side and rear areas of 502 East Washington Avenue

The exterior walls are constructed of brick masonry bearing walls with interior 2 by 4 stud walls and plaster. The stone and brick façade house is in generally good condition. Certainly, in generally better condition than the other properties. Overall the condition is good with original finishes and materials highly intact and requiring only cosmetic repairs.

This building has the most original architectural interior treatments remaining of the three buildings. The house has tall ceiling on the first floor and retains a significant amount of original flooring, woodwork, surrounds, doors, trim and a few built-in cabinets.

The original kitchen area remains relatively intact as does the majority of first floor walls. A small toilet room has been added between the dining area and the entry.

The second floor is also relatively intact with the servant's quarters in the back of the house and large bedrooms in the front. The second-floor bath is vintage 1960.



View of typical first floor door, base, plinth and casing detail



View looking from kitchen in to dining room



View of the front entry that features double entry doors and a stair to second floor.

The exterior brick work is covered with a thin layer of paint. Possibly milk paint. The original red/orange brick is quite soft and vulnerable to water penetration and therefore deterioration. Several isolated areas of brick deterioration were observed.

The wood porches are in good to fair condition with some structural repairs needed. The wood windows are in fair to good condition and protected by combination aluminum storms.



View of the southwest corner of 502 East Washington Avenue

Structural

The building appears to be a wood framed building with brick bearing walls. The foundations are constructed of rubble limestone with decorative cementitious parging. The foundations are approximately 12" thick. The brick walls of the home appear to be approximately 8" thick. The exterior doors and windows have lintels of local stone.



Image showing the rubble limestone foundation walls.



Image showing the brick water table and the top of the rubble limestone foundations.

The floor framing is accessible to view and composed of 2x10 framing at 16" centers. There is a central wood beam line on columns and footings down the center of the home from front to back. The framing at first floor is accessible to view. The floor framing at second floor is concealed.

Three wood porches are present constructed in light wood 2x framing with 1x decking; one at the side along N. Franklin Street, one at the front along E. Washington Ave., and one at the back of the home. The porches at the side and back had a wood framed floors, the front porch floor was a concrete stoop.

The stone foundation walls of the building are in good to fair condition. No cracking or bulging was noted. Some degradation of mortar and moisture infiltration was noted. A portion of the floor slab on the south half of the building had been excavated and was missing.



Image showing mortar deterioration at the base of the basement foundation walls.

Some delamination was noted in the brick walls on the building exterior. The affected areas were low to the ground, and damage was likely caused by higher than normal absorption of water combined with freeze thaw.



Image showing the face delamination on the brick walls of the buildings west side.

Some plaster cracking was present on walls of the interior of the home. Cracking was more prevalent on interior wood framed walls than on the exterior brick walls. Most of the cracking was located around doorway corners where the depth of the plaster was not as deep as the adjacent full wall heights.

The first-floor framing was generally in good condition although some deterioration was present in joist framing. The framing ends encased in the exterior brick walls was not accessible to view.

The floors appeared to be quite strong and were relatively level for its age. No significant deformations were noted in the floors.



Image showing the rotted joist bottom (at the right).

The second-floor framing was not accessible but appeared to be quite sound and functioning as intended. No abrupt changes in levelness were noted and the floors appeared to have only minor sagging.

The roof was accessed from a hatch in the upstairs hallway. The framing was found to be 2x4 at 16 to 18" centers with 1x decking. The roof appeared to be quite square and planer with no significant issues.



Image showing the roof framing through the hatch.



Image showing the northeast face of the building. No cracks were found in the masonry and the roof segments were generally planer without sags.

The side porch had a dip in the rear at the back column. The cause of the dip appeared to be related to deterioration in the floor framing but may also be related to settlement in the corner support pier. Some floor framing of the side and back porches appeared to be in poor condition.



Image showing the dip in the outer corner of the roof.

The existing mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems are apparently functional and apparently generally code compliant. The age and state of maintenance of the equipment indicates upgrades and replacement that are not too far in the future. Little thermal insulation was observed.

Hazardous materials are likely present. Given the age of the buildings lead paint and asbestos containing materials are likely present throughout.

Overall this house is in good condition for its age. The foundations and brick masonry walls are in good overall condition but require some repairs. The roof is functioning adequately at present. The porches need some repairs.

7 North Franklin Street

Constructed 1879 (City records) Circa 1853 (WHS Property Records).

Architecture

This property is typical vernacular small-scale worker housing of the late 1800s in Madison. Small in scale, simple rectangular shape, essentially a floor and a half in height and with minimal distinguishing architectural features.

Within the 7 North Franklin Street property, the majority of the first floor has been remodeled. No remnants of the original interior remain on this level except for the transom over the front door and possible portions of the stair to second floor. This remodel was likely done in the early 1960s given the types of materials used. It is likely that the small first floor bathroom (constructed within the footprint of the side porch) was added at about the same time. The kitchen remodel also dates from this time.

The house is likely balloon framed given its age. The exterior wall framing extends from the first floor to the roof line. The roof line appears to be slightly deflected near the midpoint of the ridge.



View of the front of 7 North Franklin Street



View of the interior of the first floor of 7 North Franklin Street

The house has a partial basement and partial crawl space. A portion of the foundation walls are local stone the remainder is concrete block. This indicates a significant reconstruction effort for the foundations was undertaken at some point after the early 1900s when concrete block was readily available.

The exteriors of the house retains its primary form but has lost portions of the defining elements, details and finishes as they are covered by an asphalt fiber board siding. The front and side porches appear to be original to the house, but need structural repairs. Windows are non-original vinyl units.



View of second floor level. Note the low ceilings and half height side walls.

The second floor features low ceilings and half height side walls. There two bedrooms and no baths on this level.

Structural

The foundations of the building are composed of two types of materials, rubble stone and mortar for the lower portion of the wall and three 8" tall courses of concrete block (CMU) with mortar for the upper section. The upper section appears to have been added in more recently than the original construction, possibly as a repair for deteriorating sections or to elevate the home from grade and create basement headroom.



View of the original stone foundation walls topped with concrete block walls.



View of the partial brick wall separating the basement from the crawl space.

The first-floor framing is a mixture of different types of framing. It is believed that the framing is mostly 2x8 framing with some 2x10 sisters added in some joist spaces at half spacing. Some timber sills or other framing may be present as well (noticed along the stair to the basement).

The second floor and roof framing are concealed behind finishes and not reviewed. The roof appears generally straight. The brick chimney has been covered with a parging and likely needs some repairs.

The walls of the home appear to be 2x framing at unknown spacing. The studs are likely covered in 1x sheathing.

Porches were present on the front and side of the home (at the rear of the building). The framing appeared to be 2x framing likely covered with 1x sheathing, all concealed within finishes. Brick piers support the porches and are settling unevenly.

The foundation walls of the home were generally in poor condition. A separation wall in the basement constructed of brick (only 4" thick) was in a state of partial collapse. Soil from the crawl space was spilling into the basement space. Column foundations supporting the floors are likely being affected by the shifting soils in this area jeopardizing their support and stability.

The exterior foundation walls were marked with significant signs of water infiltration and the parging coat was delaminating significantly in many areas. Mortar was missing in many cases from the concrete block portions of the walls. Cracks in the CMU in some cases had been filled with injected foam insulation.

Wood structure above basement level performing adequately and functioning as intended.

The kitchen has some 1960 era low budget cabinets, laminate counter tops and vinyl floor. The bathroom of this house fair condition.

The existing mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems are apparently functional and apparently generally code compliant. The age and state of maintenance of the equipment indicates upgrades and replacement that are not too far in the future. Little thermal insulation was observed.

Hazardous materials are likely present. Given the age of the buildings lead paint and asbestos containing materials are likely present throughout.

Overall the condition of this house is good to fair. Some rehabilitation work is necessary, but it is does not appear to be not extensive.

Findings

Architectural Significance

The architectural significance of the 502 East Washington Avenue property is high. This is a highly intact example of an Italianate/Queen Anne hybrid style residence. Although the property cannot easily be associated with the original designer or architect and it likely it was simply builder designed and constructed from pattern books of the period.

Both 506 East Washington and 7 North Franklin Street were originally modest vernacular residences in a modest neighborhood. They were typical worker housing possessing some level of craftsmanship and detail but not of a high quantity or quality. Both may have originally been a rental property. One can assume therefore that is why they are of small scale and of very modest design and detail.

Architectural Integrity

The overall architectural integrity of the two properties at 7 North Franklin and 506 East Washington Avenue is low. Most of the original character defining elements have been removed or covered over. I estimate that less than 25% of the character defining features or elements, interior and exterior, remains intact on any of these properties.

The overall integrity of the property at 502 East Washington Avenue is very high. Perhaps as much as 80% of the interior character defining elements remain in place and are in good condition. The exterior retains about 90% integrity, although the original red/orange brick has been coated with a thin paint. This was likely done early in the buildings history.

Architectural Context

It is my opinion that the architectural context of all these properties is quite good. For the first part of their history, these buildings were part of a dense residential area with some businesses intermixed. This area is now known as the James Madison Park Neighborhood. Directly across East Washington Avenue is the First Settlement Neighborhood. These two neighborhoods are the contextual area for these three properties.

Originally dominated by single family homes with a few rental units, the area has remained primarily residential rentals. There are few recent intrusions in the cohesiveness of this residential area. These include the Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce and Wisconsin Chiropractic Association buildings, 20 North Blair Street apartments, and several large apartment buildings on North Franklin Street.

The overall street character and general feeling of this area is generally good, except along East Washington Avenue between Blair Street and South Franklin Street.

The area immediately east of Blair Street, although not part of the "Neighborhood" is related contextually. The area is dominated by more contemporary buildings and large parking lots clearly different and much less historic than the tree lined neighborhood streets of the Capitol Neighborhood area.

Summary

7 North Franklin

Typical vernacular single-family rental residence from the mid-19th century, some association with Governor Farwell possible, not noteworthy architecturally as it was built for rental purposes, moderate loss of integrity, minimal rehabilitation and code related upgrades required for continued use. I would not consider the retention of this building mandatory.

502 East Washington Avenue

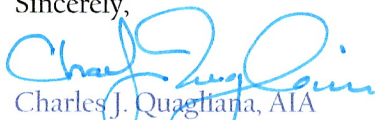
Constructed 1884. Atypical Italianate/Queen Anne hybrid, not noteworthy historically, moderate level of interior architectural features of value, retains a high level of integrity both interior and exterior, in generally good condition, minimal repairs necessary for continued use. Preserve.

Appropriate preservation actions could include the relocation of this house. Responsible people want to be good stewards of the built environment. This stewardship includes preservation and rehabilitation of worthy buildings. The house involved here represents an opportunity to serve both contemporary needs and preservation objectives. The objective would be to preserve the building by relocating and rehabilitating it on a compatible site.

506 East Washington Avenue

Constructed 1849. Typical vernacular residence from the mid-19th century, some linkage to Governor Farwell possible, not architecturally significant, significant loss of integrity, extensive rehabilitation and code related upgrades required to retain this property. Rehabilitation for suitable compatible uses may not cost effectively extend the service life of these buildings. I would not consider the retention of this building mandatory. Deconstruction (with documentation of original construction) is a reasonable option.

Sincerely,


Charles J. Quaghiana, AIA
Preservation Architect

End: 11/28/2017