

From: [Alex Saloutos](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Cc: [Glenn, Carmella](#); darrin.wasniewski@gmail.com; [Field, Derek](#); ergnam-msn@proton.me; [Guequierre, John](#); nicole.solheim@gmail.com; pwheck@gmail.com; srsande608@gmail.com; bhasin2@wisc.edu
Subject: Public comment regarding 415 W Gilman Street, Legistar ID Nos. 91234 and 90614
Date: Monday, April 13, 2026 5:09:25 PM
Attachments: [260413 LEGISTAR91234 MEMORANDUM PLANCOMMISSION.pdf](#)

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Commissioners:

Attached are my public comments regarding the demolition permit and conditional use permit applications at 415 West Gilman Street, which are on tonight's agenda. The staff report has three deficiencies that prevent the Plan Commission from making the findings required by law. I respectfully request that the Plan Commission refer these applications and direct staff to prepare a supplemental report.

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the letter 'A' with a horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Alex Saloutos
Phone: (608) 345-9009
Email: asaloutos@tds.net

M E M O R A N D U M

Date: April 13, 2026

To: Plan Commission

From: Alex Saloutos

RE: **415 W Gilman Street—Consideration of a demolition permit (Legistar ID No. 91234) and conditional use permit (Legistar ID No. 90614) (District 2)**

The staff report for the demolition permit and conditional use permit applications at 415 West Gilman Street (Legistar ID Nos. 91234 and 90614) has three deficiencies that prevent the Plan Commission from making the findings required by law.

The plan consistency analysis omits the Historic Preservation Plan. The demolition permit approval standard in MGO § 28.185(6)(c) requires the Plan Commission to consider the City's adopted plan recommendations. The Common Council adopted the Historic Preservation Plan in May 2020, directing staff to implement its recommendations.¹ The Historic Preservation Plan does not appear anywhere in the staff report's plan consistency analysis. The Landmarks Commission unanimously found Master Hall to have Category A historic value, and the staff report's plan consistency analysis does not engage with a single goal, strategy, or recommendation in the Historic Preservation Plan.

The plans the staff cited were read selectively. The staff report acknowledges, in passing, that the Downtown Plan requires consideration of historic resources when determining whether a building may be built to the maximum height for a given site. It does not analyze what that means for the proposed demolition of Master Hall, a Category A historic building with potential eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Comprehensive Plan's Culture and Character element establishes that Madison will be a vibrant and creative city that values and builds upon its cultural and historic assets, and that Madison will have a unique character and strong sense of place in its neighborhoods and the city as a whole. It includes a strategy to preserve the historic and special places that tell the story of Madison and reflect racially and ethnically diverse cultures and histories. The staff report's plan consistency analysis does not address any of these.

The staff report applies the wrong legal standard to the conditional use. Wisconsin Statutes § 62.23(7)(de) requires the applicant to demonstrate through substantial evidence that all requirements and conditions of the conditional use ordinance are satisfied. The staff report acknowledges this, noting that "state law requires that conditional use findings must be based on 'substantial evidence' that directly pertains to each standard and not based on personal preference or speculation." It then substitutes staff conclusions for that examination. Stating that staff believes the Plan Commission can find a standard met is not a finding that the applicant has demonstrated compliance. It is a statement of the staff's opinion.

For the foregoing reasons, the Plan Commission should:

1. Refer this application to a future meeting and direct staff to prepare a supplemental report that addresses the three deficiencies described above.
2. Direct the supplemental report to analyze the application's consistency with all applicable plans in their entirety, including the Historic Preservation Plan, with a complete and even-handed reading of all relevant goals, strategies, and recommendations.

3. Direct the supplemental report to examine the record for substantial evidence of compliance with each applicable conditional use approval standard.
4. Consider adopting standards for the preparation of staff reports that require: (1) analysis of all applicable plans, including supplements to the Comprehensive Plan; (2) a complete and even-handed reading of each plan's relevant goals, strategies, and recommendations, including those that weigh against approval; and (3) identification of the evidence in the record supporting each applicable approval standard, with staff's conclusions distinguished from that evidence.

¹ The Historic Preservation Plan was adopted by the Common Council on May 27, 2020, Legistar File No. 59575.

Relevant Links

Legistar ID File No. 91234:

<https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7780134&GUID=9C8D3173-B7A2-4E4E-9EF5-F68F65FAAA63&Options=&Search=>

Comprehensive Plan Part 1: <https://plans.cityofmadison.com/interactive-comprehensive-plan?document=1#page=1>

Comprehensive Plan Part 2: <https://plans.cityofmadison.com/interactive-comprehensive-plan?document=2#page=1>

Historic Preservation Plan: https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/documents/historic-preservation/historic-preservation-plan/Historic_Preservation_Plan.pdf

Staff Report: <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=15314309&GUID=61BAA3AD-77BA-4A79-ADA0-93CC333734BF>

Landmark Nomination:

<https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=15315810&GUID=D3871B3A-44B7-4B4F-BBB5-96F520D19286>

¹ The Historic Preservation Plan was adopted by the Common Council on May 27, 2020, Legistar File No. 59575.