

Bailey, Heather

From: Linda <lehnertz.l@att.net>
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 2:51 PM
To: Latimer Burris, Amani; jmorrison@knothebruce.com; knkaliszewski@gmail.com; taylorm@firstweber.com; rba@stonehousedevlopment.com
Cc: Bailey, Heather; Rummel, Marsha
Subject: Legistar 79566 and 75031

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The East Wilson Street historic district was created to recognize the commercial history that served the railway depot.

“The East Wilson Street historic district is significant to the commercial history of Madison as the commercial area that grew up to serve the main depot of the Chicago and North Western Railway and the east depot of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad. The passenger and freight depots of the Chicago and North Western are significant reminders of the most important mode of transportation in Madison in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In addition, three of the buildings within the district are architecturally significant. (13 total properties, 9 contributing, 4 non-contributing.)”

Of the 265 feet of street frontage on the 500 E Wilson block, the proposal would demolish 70 frontage feet of contributing resources and 84 frontage feet of non-contributing resources. As noted in the National Register application, “although the [non-contributing] buildings’ material and design jar with its more intact neighbors, at least its height and setback lend some continuity to the streetscape.”

That continuity would be non-existent if a 6-story building was to be built, one that would be double the height of the sole historic resource that would remain on the block. The 6-story building would take up 58% of the street frontage of the 500 block, with a vacant corner at one end and the Ruby Marie at the other corner. The 6-story building has a minimal set-back, one which does nothing to create a sense of continuity for the height of the two national register blocks. The height would also be mid-block, while historically it was corner buildings which were the tallest.

The presentation materials claim that the building façade would be broken down into 6 sections. It appears the difference would be some sort of a perhaps 1-foot wide architectural detail added to the façade to separate the sections. With buildings that currently are 20-44 feet in width, that separation detail may not be enough to convey a sense of separate buildings as opposed to one massive building.

The demolition staff report states that the applicant is claiming “functional obsolescence and structural defect” for the non-contributing buildings and “functional obsolescence” for 506 E Wilson. One could say that any old building is functionally obsolete. As to structural defects, there is nothing in the record to support that claim.

The new residential building would be 8 stories, or 6 stories higher than those historic resources in the First Settlement historic district which are within 200 feet, and it would also be about 230 feet in length along S Blair. Although an extra story (or 2, if there was significant stepback) have been approved on Williamson, it is hard to see how that size of a building could be visually compatible in terms of visual size or building form.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Lehnertz

Bailey, Heather

From: Rummel, Marsha
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 2:41 PM
To: Bailey, Heather; Brian Munson
Cc: Juli Wagner; Latimer Burris, Amani; firstsettlement@capitolneighborhoods.org
Subject: Wilson + Blair land use and demolition comments for Landmarks 9/18/23

Greeting Landmarks Commissioners-

I will try to attend tonight but I have another committee commitment at 5:30. Hopefully it all works out..

RE Wilson + Blair

7. 79566 134-150 S Blair-Land Combination & New Construction in the First Settlement historic district (District 6) INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION
8. 75031 Buildings Proposed for Demolition - 2023

I am pleased that the JCAP Real Estate has proposed two buildings instead of one building and proposes affordable housing. The affordable housing component based on the new ordinance for bonus floors in the downtown core was widely appreciated by residents who attended the neighborhood meeting last month. The two (or technically three) building solution solves many of the issues with previous iterations as the staff report has mentioned.

My comments are general and not necessarily all related to Landmark's purview but please address as you can.

I encouraged the development team to provide a 'Living Street' between the two buildings that provides a public amenity for pedestrians, residents, and guests of the hotel and bar establishments. In my opinion, the Blair St end is more successful than the S Franklin end. Some of the issues with the parking garage entry, trash and delivery, and hotel drop off have been addressed but the this area still needs attention to reduce the impact to the immediate neighbors on S Franklin and create an active and safe place for people.

The residential building's transition to Germania condos is improved compared to previous iterations but creating as much breathing space as possible remains a goal. I agree with the staff report that the Blair St facade needs more articulation at the base and recommendations for increased setbacks.

I have asked the developers to consider whether another building entrance on Blair St facing Railroad St could be incorporated. Adding another entrance could provide an alternative to the S Franklin exit which nearby neighbors have expressed concerns about and remains an outstanding issue and a new entrance could add more options for access onto Blair St away from the E Wilson/Nolen/Willy intersection.

In my initial conversation with the development team, I urged them to consider preserving the Come Back In façade (506 E Wilson). It is a beautiful building. The preservation file notes: "...the Herman Klueter Building, an Italianate brick building that served as various grocery stores or meat markets until 1925 at which point it was converted to a restaurant, the purpose it serves today. WHS site file notes it is a contributing resource to the East Wilson Street National Register Historic District, and adds that this property served as two prominent lesbian bars in the 1980s (Emily's and Cheri's), which were among the only to cater to this clientele."

At the August 9 neighborhood meeting, there was encouragement to preserve/adapt/reuse the historic E Wilson facades and not much appreciation for the design of the proposed hotel. One resident mentioned that under EIFS, there was brick on the Essen Haus building. I know it is not in a landmark district and I understand your recommendations are only advisory but I urge you to advise the team to do more due diligence to try to reuse the historic resources on this block. I oppose the demolition of these buildings without more review regarding options and opportunities.

Per your 2019 findings, 506 and 518 E Wilson are contributing buildings in the national register district, two of the other buildings have historic value related to the vernacular context of Madison's built environment and the product of an architect of note. Only one of the five buildings proposed for demolition, 510 E Wilson, is described as having no known historic value. Under the demolition item, I hope you will renew your 2019 findings for the block that the buildings contribute to our local history. It would be great if you could advise the development team that an effort should be made to create a new building that incorporates our history to the railroad through a creative approach to reusing the existing historic resources.

Thank you for your service-

Marsha Rummel
District 6 Alder

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Bailey, Heather

From: Gary Tipler <garytip8778@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 2:18 PM
To: Bailey, Heather; Rummel, Marsha
Subject: Landmarks Items 7 & 8. Demolition of Historic Buildings. 134-150 S Blair-Land Comb, New Construction, in the First Settlement historic district
Attachments: 1925 E Wilson E 500_Robt LaFollette caisson June 20 1925.jpg; 1918 Wilson E Thos Lloyd Jones 1918 Snoko Coll WHS-55076.jpg; 1899 Germania House Wilson 500 block 0796.jpg; 1874 Williamson Wilson_Dahl WHS-11269.jpg; 1918 Germania Wilson E 500 Thos Lloyd Jones Snoko Coll WHS-55076.jpg; 1931 Wilson E 09-17 McVicar WHS-6377.jpg; 1955 June ED Wilson E 500 David Mack 0794.jpg

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INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION

7. 79566 134-150 S Blair-Land Combination & New Construction in the First Settlement historic district (District 6)

REGULAR BUSINESS

8. 75031 Buildings Proposed for Demolition - 2023

- 518 E Wilson, J.B. Drives Commercial Building, Contributing, Ease Wilson Historic District, National and State Register of Historic Places

- 506 E Wilson, Herman Kleuter Grocery, Contributing, Ease Wilson Historic District, National and State Register of Historic Places

On the proposed demolition of the buildings on the 500 block of East Wilson

As a former resident of 511 East Main Street for 14 years and one who spearheaded research for the development of the First Settlement Historic District beginning in 1983, and one who has participated in the development of First Settlement Neighborhood and the Blair Street Gardens Wilson Green across from the Cardinal and the Essen Haus, I would like to briefly share my thoughts.

So much has changed on those blocks of East Wilson, so why is retention of these buildings important?

These historic districts were created at the request of the neighborhoods and Landmarks Commission to stimulate high-quality retention and renovation of old buildings that played a part in the historic development of the neighborhood and Madison. Their renovation has been intended to enhance the quality of living in the neighborhood and serve as an asset to downtown and the city. Since 1983, new residential developments compatible with those goals have filled in some of the gaps that were created on the other streets near and adjacent to the 500 block of East Wilson.

These existing buildings offer the scale, sense of history and place that have been touted as the keystones to the most desirable urban neighborhoods throughout the country -- as they do for First Settlement Neighborhood and downtown Madison.

The overwhelming mass of this proposed development would introduce a host of challenges to the quality of life, livability of the neighborhood and investments by existing property owners with the prospect of wide-cast

winter shadow, noise, parking issues, and construction vibration that could endanger the foundations and plaster of old and new buildings alike (this is based on the experience of many homeowners in downtown Madison).

The buildings listed above at either end of the row proposed for demolition are Contributing to the Historic District and still retain essential characteristics. I believe that the Comments and decision of the Landmarks Commission are sent to the State Historic Preservation Office and to the National Park Service that reviews National Register District changes. Demolition and removal of designated building in a district may have an impact on Federal programs that may interface with this proposed project and city or state infrastructure supporting it.

What options may be considered? Facade only preservation is a last ditch effort to retain the exterior building architecture. In contrast, partial building preservation is preferable when whole buildings can't be retained. National Register standards apply to the Historic Preservation Tax Credit program when as much as 30 percent of a building is removed -- usually the portions of a building that are not visible from the public right-of-ways. Full building retention of the historic buildings and compatibly-scaled new construction may be a consideration to fill the voids in the streetscape.

A sense of place, history and scale are essential to enhance the livability of the neighborhood. All are absent in the proposed new building.

I've attached a few photos of the 500 block of East Wilson over the years. Note that the original red brick Germania House hotel was given facelifts a few times, but still retains much of its original structure, though hidden.

Thank you for your consideration.

Gary Tipler
Madison



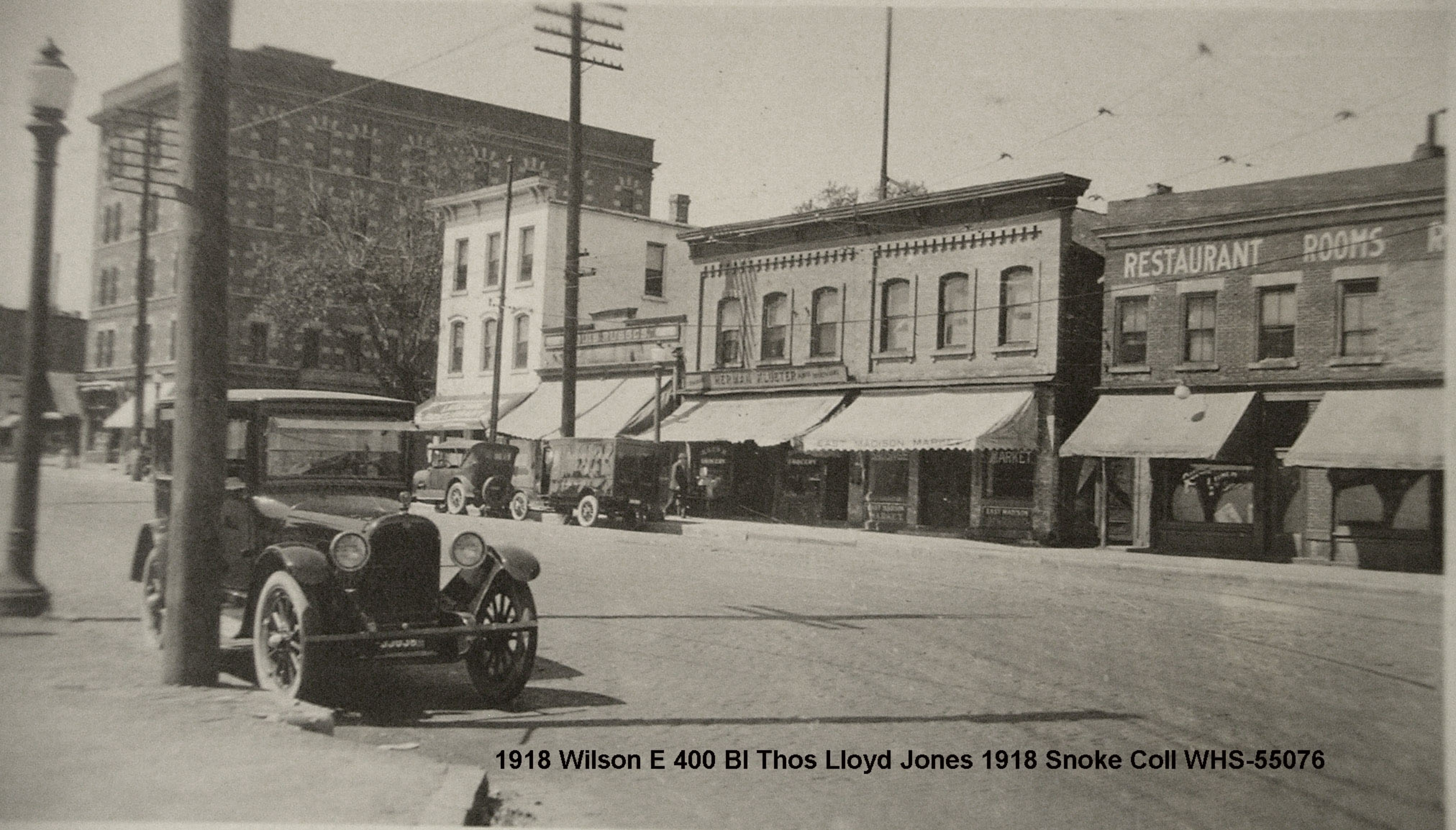
1874 Williamson to Wilson. Andreas Dahl, WHS-11269



Circa 1899, 500 Block East Wilson. Unk. Likely WHS.



1918 Thos Lloyd Jones, Snoke Collection WHS-55076



1918 Wilson E 400 BI Thos Lloyd Jones 1918 Snoke Coll WHS-55076

Robt LaFollette caisson June 20 1925





THE
MUSEUM
OF
CINCINNATI



1955 June Wilson E 500 David Mack