

To: Madison Landmarks Commission
From: Gary Tipler, gtipler@tds.net
Date: September 19, 2011

RE: 1112 Spaight Street

Dear Commission members:

I'll share what little I know about the building's history and condition, with an interesting link to a good City of Madison plan read at the end if you haven't seen it, lately.

1112 Spaight appears to have been built in 1889 by Christian Koffshinsky, an immigrant and a recognized iron molder, listed in the Iron Molders' Union of North America. The Koffshinsky family lived in it for about 20 years. Some family members lived nearby concurrently and during subsequent generations.

It is the second oldest frame house on Orton Park, and the third oldest house on the park.

The interior floor plan is a side-entrance, upright-and-wing type of house plan (Architectural historian jargon. See Fred Peterson's book *Homes in the Heartland*.) It is nearly original in layout, and could be adapted to modern use. It had a front entrance to the front parlor, likely for visitors, and a secondary entrance to the "family parlor". Both front and side door are original and have deep moldings. It has an enclosed stair entered from the front. It originally had three bedrooms, though two were combined at some point. It was originally heated with coal stoves so had no fireplaces. It has a stone foundation wall, and because it sits low on the lot... and its basement floor was cast in later years to accommodate drainage. The basement has a walk-out entrance to a half flight of steps to the back yard.

The interior trims and doors are mostly original or early, but the paint and plaster finishes are in need of replacement. The newer kitchen within the original rear one-story kitchen wing is outdated and in need of replacement. The second floor bath is outdated and similarly needs to be replaced. The exterior is covered with ceramic shingles that cover lapped wood siding. Though the bottom of the posts and deck of the front porch are deteriorated and sunken several inches, the original decorative spindle frieze of the upper porch is relatively intact.

There is a second house/building at the rear of the property, though it hasn't been habitable for some time. It is the small one-room house at the rear of the lot, which appears to have been moved from 1118 Spaight(?). It has remains of early 1890s interior finishes, but may have had a rear wing that was removed for the move to this lot, likely done when the lots next door were built upon. It's an attractive shed, for what it's worth, and contributes to the character of the historic district, as well.

1112 Spaight is "contributing" to the character of the Third Lake Ridge Historic District. The district is based on the range of building types representing the development of the neighborhood and not based on high styles of architecture.

A great read on the history of the neighborhood is found in the "Third Lake Ridge Historic District Plan", written in 1978. At the very end is the ordinance.

<http://www.thirdlakeridge.org/build/TLRHistoricDistrictPlan1978.pdf>

This is an interesting and complex discussion and merits neighborhood focus meetings on the topics. It shouldn't be limited to the discussion of one property or personalities and maybe not even one neighborhood, because the implications are far too broad.

Gary Tipler