



Project Name & Address: 4301 Cherokee Drive

Application Type: Demolition Historic Value Review

Legistar File ID # [93593](#)

Prepared By: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner, Planning Division

Date Prepared: July 1, 2026

Summary

Relevant Ordinance Section:

28.185(7) Review for Historic Value. Every application for demolition or removal of a principal structure shall be reviewed by the Landmarks Commission, which shall provide input to the Building Inspection Division regarding the historic value of the property with the building or structure proposed for demolition or removal.

- (a) If the Landmarks Commission determines that the property with the proposed demolition or the structure proposed for removal has no known historic value, the demolition or removal may be approved administratively under sub. (8)(b) below, provided that at least one of the standards for administrative approval have been met.
- (b) If the Landmarks Commission determines that the property with the proposed demolition or the structure proposed for removal has historic value, then the Plan Commission shall approve the demolition or removal under sub. (9) below, after considering input from the Landmarks Commission.
- (c) Nothing in this subsection eliminates the requirement in MGO Secs. [41.09](#)(1)(c) and [41.12](#)(3) that the demolition of landmark structures or structures in historic districts must also be approved by the Landmarks Commission through the issuance of a Certificate of Approval.

41.28 HISTORIC VALUE ADVISORY RECOMMENDATION

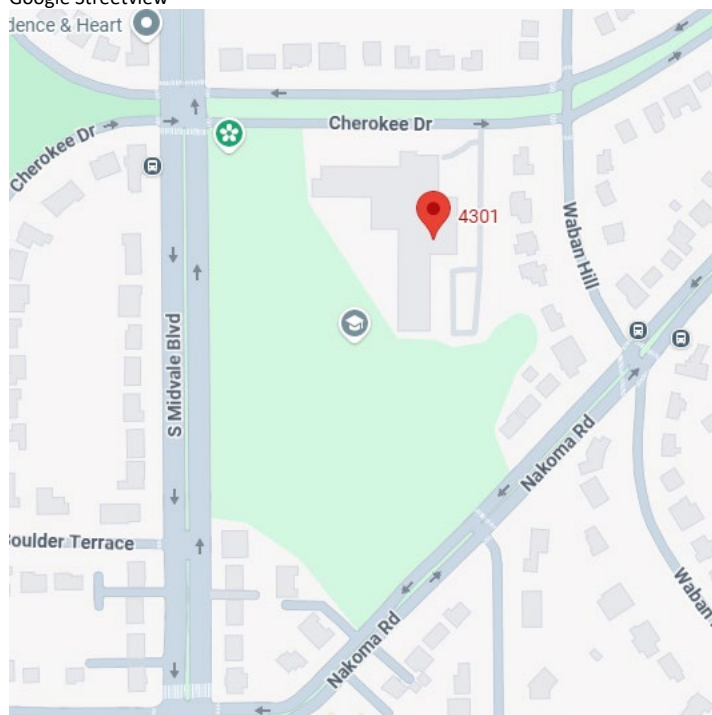
- (1) Review for Historic Value. Following a review of MGO Sec. 28.185 applications for demolition by the Landmarks Commission and based upon application materials, and a report by the City's Preservation Planner, and any public testimony, the Commission shall review [MGO Sec. 28.185](#) applications for demolition and assign one of the following Categories to each principal building proposed for demolition:
 - (a) Category A Demolitions: denotes that the Landmarks Commission finds that the building has historic value based on architectural significance, cultural significance, historic significance, as the work/product of an architect of note, its status as a contributing structure in a National Register Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and/or as an intact or rare example of a certain architectural style or method of construction.
 - (b) Category B Demolitions: denotes that the Landmarks Commission finds that the building has historic value related to the vernacular context of Madison's built environment, cultural practices, or as the work/product of an architect of note, but the building itself is not historically, architecturally or culturally significant.
 - (c) Category C Demolitions: denotes that the Landmarks Commission finds that the building has no known historic value. This category may also denote sites or properties that have historic value, and the significance will not be negatively impacted by the removal of the building itself. This category may also include sites or properties that have archaeological or other site findings of significance, but where removal of the building itself will have no impact.
- (2) Presence of Archaeology. When applicable, each finding shall also note the presence of an archaeological or burial site on the site of the building proposed for demolition.

4301 Cherokee Drive

School building with unknown date of construction for rear wing to be demolished.



Google Streetview



Google Earth

Applicant: Madison Metropolitan School District

Applicant's Comments: Madison Metropolitan School District is proposing to construct a new Middle School on the existing site located at 502 Pflaum Rd, Madison, WI 53716. The new school will be constructed to the West portion of the existing school while it is in use. Upon completion of the new construction the existing building will then be demolished with additional parking and green space constructed on the site between the middle school and La Follette High School.

Staff Findings: There is no preservation file or state site file for this property. There is no previous identified archaeology. The building was designed by Siberz, Purcell, Cuthbert Architects, which designed numerous school buildings for Madison Metropolitan School District. They also designed numerous churches and buildings for the Edgewood campus, in addition

to many residential commissions. Lewis Siberz got his start by working for noted Madison architect, Frank Riley. He eventually took over the practice from Riley and that firm eventually became the one that designed this building. The early work of Siberz and his firm tended to feature period revival buildings, which were popular at the time. They shifted to expressive Midcentury Modern designs, including the Sinsinawa Chapel. While this building is located just outside the boundary of the Nakoma National Register historic district and while it served that neighborhood, it features a later period of architecture than the period revival homes that typify that historic district. This Curtain Wall style of school building was designed by an architect/architectural firm of note, although this firm designed many school buildings in Madison. It is part of the vernacular context of mid-twentieth century Madison.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends a finding of (b) that the building has historic value related to the vernacular context of Madison's mid-twentieth century built environment, and as the work/product of an architect of note (Siberz, Purcell, Cuthbert Architects), but the building itself is not historically, architecturally or culturally significant.

Lewis Siberz, 85, prominent architect, dies

Lewis A. Siberz, 85, an architect who designed many hundreds of school buildings, churches and homes in Madison and Wisconsin, died Tuesday after a long illness.

Siberz was involved in 19 school projects with the Madison School Board, including Cherokee and Sherman schools.

He designed a number of projects for the Dominican Order, including the Sinsinawa chapel and other buildings. Sinsinawa is in the southwest corner of Wisconsin, a few miles east of Dubuque, Iowa.

He had an architect's license in five states. His family estimated that he was responsible for designing 85 homes in Maple Bluff and other homes in Shorewood Hills and Nakoma.

Siberz was born in Baraboo, was a World War I Army veteran and studied architecture at the University of Notre Dame, University of Illinois and University of Wisconsin.

In 1923 he was hired by Frank Riley in Madison, and in 1930 he became Riley's partner. Siberz went into business for himself in 1937 and later helped form the firm of Siberz, Purcell and Cuthbert.

SIBERZ, LEWIS A
MADISON
b. 4/7/79 BARABOO
d. 9/18/1984 Madison
NIST Obit, 9/20/84
SEE RILEY and Siberz
'56 AAD SOS