

From: [Madison Trust for Historic Preservation](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Cc: [Richard Chandler](#); Advocacy@madisonpreservation.org
Subject: Letter re Legistar File 91234, Demolition Permit Application for Master Hall
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 8:40:15 AM
Attachments: [2026-03-16 MTHP Letter-Legistar No 91234.pdf](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Please find attached a letter from the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation President Rick Chandler regarding Legistar 91234, demolition permit application for Master Hall, 415 W. Gilman St.

Please contact me if you have any issues with the attachment.

Thank you,
Jennifer

Jennifer Gurske
Program Director
Call/Text: (608) 441-8864
www.madisonpreservation.org





March 16, 2026

To: City of Madison Plan Commission

Re: Legistar Item 91234
Demolition Permit Application for Master Hall (415 W. Gilman St.)

Dear Plan Commissioners:

The Madison Trust for Historic Preservation, representing more than 500 members, calls upon you to deny the pending demolition permit application for Master Hall, an important historic resource.

In accordance with the demolition ordinance, you have been advised by the Landmarks Commission that Master Hall has “historic value for its significant Brutalism Expressionism architecture, intact quality, significance related to the social context of Madison, and potential eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or as a local landmark.” Note that this Landmarks Commission finding is at the “A” level of the A-B-C historic value scale.

Since the Landmarks Commission’s deliberations in January, the Madison Trust has sponsored additional research into the building’s history. Not only has this additional research substantiated the original findings, but it has resulted in a formal nomination for Master Hall as a Madison landmark. That nomination was filed on February 27 and is currently under review by the Preservation Planner.

The detailed grounds for Master Hall’s recognition are in the full nomination, which we will send to you under separate cover. I would like to call your attention to MGO 28.185(6)(c) Standards of Approval 2 which addresses factors that might outweigh the public interest in preserving historic resources. Sub 2.ii suggests that demolition may be justified if “the building has been so altered that it cannot convey its historical association or architectural significance.” Master Hall, as was noted by the Landmarks Commission, is remarkably intact. A passerby in 2026 sees the same building as one from the time of Master Hall’s construction in 1965.

(Continued)

This is a good example of a building that performs the educational function of historic resources as listed in the demolition ordinance. The city recognizes that historic resources are cultural and economic assets that tell the story of Madison, reflect diverse cultures and histories, attract residents and visitors, create jobs, and stabilize and improve property values (MGO 28.185(1)).

Master Hall has already been acknowledged as an important historic resource. If you deny the demolition permit, Master Hall is very likely to become a recognized Madison landmark. We call upon you to preserve it.

Sincerely,

Rick Chandler

Rick Chandler
President
Madison Trust for Historic Preservation