AGENDA # 4

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION	**PRESENTED:** September 19, 2011	
TITLE: 1122 Spaight Street – Third Lake Ridge Historic District – Demolition of existing residence and construction of new residence, 6th Ald. District. Contact: Amy Hasselman, Architecture Network (23871)	**REFERRED:** **REREFERRED:** **REPORTED BACK:**	
AUTHOR: Amy Scanlon, Secretary	**ADOPTED:**	**POF:**
DATED: September 19, 2011	**ID NUMBER:**	

Members present were: Stu Levitan, Chair; Erica Gehrig, Vice Chair; Robin Taylor, Christina Slattery, David McLean, and Michael Rosenblum.

SUMMARY:

Amy Hasselman, 116 E. Dayton Street, presented information on the proposal. Ald. Rummel forwarded an e-mail that she would like Commission to tour the property. Connor and Abigail Sabatino considered restoring the house, but found that it wasn't feasible, so they hired an architect to design a new home on the lot that would fit into the historic district. Ms. Hasselman distributed pictures of neighborhood homes and noted the challenges of restoring the existing house. Surrounding homes were built between 1881-1930's. Stuart Levitan asked if the adjacent houses were original. Ms Hasselman stated that she believed that they were original to the neighborhood as lots were subdivided. The house at 1122 Spaight was built in 1899 and resided in or around 1950 with asbestos siding, and has a stone foundation. Research into building inspection notices state that porch and water problems date back to 1950's. Levitan asked for ballpark estimate for restoration. Hasselman did not have a ball park figure and she stated that it would require taking off all appendages and jacking up the house on a new foundation. The house would also need an entire new electrical system, plumbing and sewer. Both first and second floor would have to be reconfigured to modern standards. After all of this work, the house would still end up with only 1200 square feet.

Levitan wants to have a dollar estimate for restoration/rehabilitation next time they appear before the Commission, and would also like to see data on tax assessment of neighboring houses.

The owners noted that the property rents now at $960. 3 bedrooms and 1 bath and the living room has windows covered is now a bedroom.

Connor and Abigail Sabatino, 508 S. Ingersoll Street, appeared in support of this project. Mr. Sabatino said they started looking in 2010 for a house in the neighborhood that they could restore. After many failed attempts they put an offer on this house contingent upon approval of a demolition and new house on the lot.

The Sabatinos have met with neighbors on several occasions and passed around items of support. Only 1 neighbor has opposed so far. They have approached Ald. Marsha Rummel.

The Marquette Neighborhood Association submitted a written statement and did not support the precedent of tearing down properties. Mr. Sabatino noted that the vote was very close, and was decided by a tie breaking vote by the president.

The Sabatinos noted that the house has been on the market for over a year, despite the neighborhood being a very desirable area.

Amy Hasselman stated that she believes that the ordinances standards of demolition could be met.

Levitan stated that the Commission was here tonight to take the temperature of this project and get the reaction to a preliminary design. He noted that tonight was only an informational presentation and no neighbors have been invited to a public hearing at this point. A public hearing has to occur before any decision is made.

Jason Tish, of the Madison Trust, noted that it is a small Victorian house, and that there is a lot of diversity in this historic district.

Erica Gehrig said that 3 homes have been demolished during her tenure on the Landmarks Commission. She said that she doesn't want any more demolished, but has seen all of the ones that have been demolished and agreed they had to be torn down. The neighborhood association also supported the past demolitions and didn't support this one, which gives her some concern about this project.

Amy Hasselman stated that from their discussions, half of the neighbors didn't want to lose any more houses. The other half said that they don't want to lose any more than we have to but the rest of neighborhood is in great shape. She believes that the loss of this house wouldn't hurt the larger neighborhood.

Robin Taylor said that she was worried about losing the building because of its location and association with Orton Park, but also knows that it has been a rental, and touring the house could be very helpful. If it can't be refurbished then it could be demolished.

Levitan asked if the location across from Orton Park matters. Gehrig stated that it has 4 layers of historic protection; Local District, National District, as well as adjacency to 2 local landmarks (house and park).

David McLean stated the historic fabric is really important to show the progression over time.

Michael Rosenblum asked if there anything worth salvaging in the house? If demolition was allowed, could anything be reused?

Ms. Hasselman stated there are some trim on the inside, front entry door, molding on inside, parts on front porch that could be incorporated into a new design. The average square footage in that district 2566 square feet. The new house being proposed is on the modest side, not as large as the landmark next door. More modest homes down the block. The do not want to compete with the neighborhood. The proposal is a modified Queen Anne style, similar to scale of neighborhood.

Mr. McLean asked about the demolition being approved, would want to see the rhythm of the neighborhood maintained. One of the current house's appeal is the void between the houses.

Mr. Levitan asked the Commission that if a demolition was approved, should a new house be similar in style to the neighborhood or more contemporary. He personally would not look favorably on a modern design. The

neighborhood has some tudors, arts and crafts with no uniformity. Mr. McLean would also prefer the proposed design over a modern style.

Mr. Levitan asked if anyone was opposed to this style. In general the Commission generally agreed that a Queen Anne style would be okay. However, many of the Commissioners were not sure that they could support demolition of the existing house without knowing more. They generally agreed that touring the house would help them view the current condition.

Ms. Slattery noted that she has concerns about the demolition as relating to Standards F and B.

Gehrig noted that, at this time, she opposed the demolition on the grounds of Standard A, as detrimental to the public interest.

Levitan noted that the ordinance also gives importance to property values and pride and strengthening the City.

Mr. Sabatino asked the Commission to read the neighborhood's letters regarding this property.

Levitan noted that Ald. Rummel sits on all 3 land use commissions, and that her opinion will be weighted greatly.

Mr. Sabatino said he is uncomfortable discussing Ald. Rummel's opinion without her being here. However, they have been consulting with her.

Gehrig noted that Ald. Marsha Rummel e-mailed to say she is interested in touring and seeing the economic feasibility of restoration.

Mr. Sabatino said that the owner has given them a key and that they could give the Commission a tour.

Levitan would like to schedule a tour. Amy Scanlon will send out a poll for a tour time.

The Sabatinos noted that they would like to come back to the Commission on October 24th for the public hearing.