

Landmarks Commission
February 17, 2014

John Freiburger

My name is John Freiburger. I am a principle of FCC, Inc, a consulting firm that has been engaged in the review of the condition of buildings since 1972. Our firm and I are best known for the administration of historic restoration projects. These projects include the Spring House Tavern, The John and Mary Smith Homestead, F. L. Wright's Jacobs II House, F. L. Wright First Unitarian Meeting House, The Williamson and Geiger Blacksmith Shop and The Bob Lafollette house. I have attached a longer list as an appendix.

I would like to speak tonight to the consideration of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the requested demolition of 127 W. Gilman St. Specifically I will speak to condition 'f' of the ordinance standards you will be considering. This is the standard for considering whether a structure is in such deteriorated condition that it is not structurally or economically feasible to preserve or restore it.

I reviewed the three reports the applicant has provided the Commission. In addition, I reviewed the municipal file regarding the building, including the work orders issued to the owner from 1995 to the referral to the City attorney for non-compliance in July 2014. I also visited the site and viewed the house from the city sidewalk and reviewed photos provided of the rear and side of the house provided by Mr. Arlan Kay. I am relying on those items of information as the basis for my remarks.

The first part of standard 'f' is whether or not it is structurally feasible to restore the building. None of the three reports state that the structural deficiencies noted cannot be repaired. In fact I can testify, to a reasonable degree of professional certainty, that the house is structurally restorable and that the restoration would not be out of the ordinary in the construction industry.

In the past few years, we have lifted and entirely replaced the foundations under two lakeside homes that were in significantly deteriorated condition. The Blank House on Lake Ripley sat above a water filled crawl space and significant decay had developed in the first floor framing. Yet we were able to lift the house, repair the decayed framing and install a new foundation, despite working in marshy soils where dewatering was required and building to Department of interior Standards for foundations placed in a flood plain.

On Lake Waubesa, working on sandy soil with a water table two feet below grade, we again raised a house and placed an entirely waterproof foundation under it, correcting decayed and crooked framing in the process. One of our best known projects is the lifting and moving of the 520,000 pound Mary Smith Homestead off the Highway 51 right-of-way. We moved the masonry house down a slope, across a stream, up a slope and placed it over a new foundation.

In comparison to these three projects, the lifting, repair and provision of a new foundation for 127 Gilman is the proverbial "piece of cake". Our estimate for the cost to raise and repair the framing while providing a water tight foundation in which rentable space can be developed, is between \$67,000 and \$100,000, depending upon design considerations, such as egress windows, added below grade access, etc. The investment in restoring the foundation could provide up to 1400 square feet of additional rental space, a valuable commodity in the Mansion Hill rental market, thus the repair would reap an increase in value and income, and not just be remediation of deferred maintenance.

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Freiburger Construction Consulting, Inc. is a corporation incorporated under the provisions of the Wisconsin Statutes. Annual Wisconsin Domestic Corporation Reports are filed with the office of the Secretary of State each year as required by s 180.1622. The filing year is from July 1 through June 30 with locator number F022097.

Freiburger Construction Consulting, Inc. is engaged in the following business:

1. Inspection of single family residences and the preparation of condition reports.
2. Inspection of commercial buildings and the preparation of condition reports, estimation of costs to cure defects, and the compilation of maintenance and replacement schedules.
3. Inspection of multi family residential income property and condominiums, preparation of condition reports, compilation of maintenance and replacement schedules.
4. Construction management with special emphasis on historic restoration, including design and tax credit planning.
5. Construction management of multi family residential income and light commercial projects, both new construction and rehabilitation projects.
6. Litigation support regarding construction defects, structural failures and deficiencies, or cases of failure to perform to professional or industry standards by contractors or manufacturers.
7. Resolution of construction related disputes through mediation.

Historic Restoration Project Construction Management

June, 1980 to June, 1981	SUBURBIA BUILDING. Madison, WI. Rehabilitation and adaptive reuse for a residential and commercial building, project received Capital Community Citizens award.
May, 1982 to November, 1982	14 BROOM STREET. Madison, WI. Restoration and adaptive reuse of an Italianate landmark, received Capital Community Citizen award
June, 1982 to December, 1982	FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT JACOBS II HOUSE. Middleton, WI. Structural, interior, and exterior restoration of a National Historic Landmark home, project received several awards and citations
June, 1983 to December 1993	STEVENS HOUSE. Madison, WI. Restoration of interior and exterior of a landmark Prairie style stone home
June, 1986 to March, 1995	HOLDEN HOUSE. Madison, WI. Restoration, lead abatement, remodeling and addition to a home in University Heights Historic District
October, 1987 to March, 1988	HEBERLEIN HOUSE. Lodi, WI. Restoration and addition to a Queen Anne Style home
April, 1991 to July, 1991	PIEROTTI HOUSE. Madison, WI. Remodeling of a portion of a Tudor Revival home in the University Heights Historic District

April, 1999 to June 2003	PARKER HOUSE, Janesville, WI. Project management of the restoration of an 1845 Greek Revival house, the largest intact example in Wisconsin including mechanical systems, structural problem remediation and masonry restoration.
May, 1999 to present	SPRING HOUSE, Madison, WI. Project management of the restoration of and construction of a carriage barn for an 1854 Inn and stage coach stop, now a private residence on the National Register of Historic Places.
January, 2001 to April 2002	VAN SLYKE HOUSE Madison, WI. Project management and design work for restoration of a landmark home which had been made into apartments. Significant stonework involved as well as all new mechanical systems and general restoration of plaster and finishes.
January, 2001 to Dec 2001	STEINMANN HOUSE, Monticello, WI. Consulting regarding restoration of a Queen Anne Landmark and associated carriage shed and outbuildings.
February 2002 to August, 2006	WHITSON HOUSE, Madison WI. Consulting and construction management for the restoration of a 1905 Claude and Starck including all mechanical systems, all interior and exterior finishes. Project received Capital Citizens and Wisconsin Trust awards for historic restoration
March 2001 to March, 2007	SMITH HOUSE, Sun Prairie, WI. Design and construction management to move and restore an Italianate National Register house
September, 2003 to Dec, 2006	THE CANNERY, Sun Prairie, WI. National Historic registration and preliminary design and costing for the conversion of an historic cannery building to brew-pub and residential income property
June 2005 to present	THE FRITZ HOUSE, Belleville , WI. Restoration of interior and exterior of an Arts and Craft bungalow with attention to water, mold and air quality issues
February, 2005 to November 2006	THE PLOW INN, Madison, WI. Construction management and engineering to restore the rotating masonry walls of a 1852 stagecoach inn
June, 2006 to Sept, 2007	THE UNITARIAN MEETING HOUSE, Madison, WI. Restoration of Frank Lloyd Wright designed Meeting House including design and coordination of electrical, structural, air barriers, insulation and HVAC systems for the restoration of a national landmark
May 2010 to August, 2011	THE WILLAIMSON GEIGER SHOP, Madison, WI., Restoration of 1846 commercial/residential property, including structural, facade, mechanical systems and the award of a facade grant from the City of Madison
June 2010 to December 2011	NAKOMA WALL RESTORATION, Madison, WI, Restoration of a Frank Lloyd Wright designed and supervised wall system fronting Nakoma Road and protecting an historic neighborhood and national landmark site including engineering and supervision or rotation of collapsing wall and its masonry restoration
April 2012 to September, 2012	THE T. E. JONES HOUSE, Madison, WI., Restoration of a Law & Law designed Tudor Revival home with significant structural issues including structural design, specifications, project management and landmark tax credit management
June 2012 to present	THE PIERCE APARTMENTS, Madison, WI, restoration of a 1923 Arts and Crafts historic landmark masonry apartment building including mortar designs, project specifications and grant writing
June 2012 to present	The KNOWLTON HOUSE, Madison, WI, restoration of a an early Historic Heights home. including replacement of a non-historic attached garage



Front of 5908 Lake Edge, McFarland, a “pump and dump” project where the residential space was remodeled and the defective foundation left in place. The house was raised and placed on a new foundation.



What passed for a foundation at 5980 Lake Edge, a collection of concrete blocks resting on wet soil. Note limited working room. Due to the soil and water table issues, a floating slab system was used to support the foundations. The framing was significantly twisted, but was not difficult to restore.



Lake Ripley House resting on a shallow foundation over a wet crawl space in a flood plain. Much of the framing of the first floor had rotted away.



Lake side of that house. Clearance in the crawl space was only eighteen inches. House was raised five feet and placed on a new engineered flood resistant foundation. The work required a dewatering system as the water table was a foot below the yard and significant soil issues existed, requiring an engineered foundation based on a floating slab.



The structural masonry Smith House lifted and ready to be wrapped with steel cables prior to its move off the Highway 151 right-of-way. The 520,000 pound structure was moved several hundred meters without damage and placed on a new ten foot tall basement foundation.