

Suggested changes to the purpose and intent section of the Madison draft ordinance
dvm, August 14, 2014

1. Recognize that the city's historic resources are economic assets that can attract residents and visitors, create jobs, increase property values, and stimulate business and industry.

This suggestion would replace “c” and “e.” Such language clearly and concisely states one of the most fundamental justifications for historic preservation—economic growth—and acknowledges four means by which it can achieve this goal. This is a much stronger and more complete statement of what historic resources can do than the current language: “stabilize and improve property values.”

2. Create a confident investment climate for the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction of historic resources.

One of the goals of a historic district is to encourage owners to fix up their properties. But this will not happen if owners do not believe that the city will consistently enforce its historic preservation rules. Conversely, if owners are confident that the city is serious about enforcing its preservation rules, they will invest. This fact is so important that it deserves to be explicitly included in the purpose and intent section.

3. Conserve valuable material and energy resources by ongoing use and maintenance of the existing built environment.

This language comes from the New York State model ordinance and is conspicuously missing from the draft ordinance. Such language should be added because it speaks to the strategic role that historic preservation can and should play in achieving a *sustainable* economy.