



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Draft LANDMARKS COMMISSION

*Consider: Who benefits? Who is burdened?
Who does not have a voice at the table?
How can policymakers mitigate unintended consequences?*

Thursday, June 13, 2024

5:00 PM

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Room 215 (Madison Municipal Building)

Special Meeting of the Landmarks Commission

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Present: 4 - Jacob Morrison; Molly S. Harris; Edna Ely-Ledesma and Katherine N. Kaliszewski
Excused: 3 - Amani Latimer Burris; Maurice D. Taylor and Richard B. Arnesen

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. [60576](#) Landmarks Commission Public Comment Period
None

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

None

2. [83865](#) Landmarks Commission Processes Training
Bailey provided information on the historic preservation program and Landmarks Commission procedures.
3. [83866](#) Five-Year Check-in on City of Madison Historic Preservation Plan
Bailey explained that the five-year check-in on the Historic Preservation Plan will be next year, and she hopes to have another small survey completed at that time, for which she will apply for a CLG grant. She requested ideas for topics they could propose for the survey, suggesting that it could be for a social group or a type of historic resource. Morrison suggested 1960s-80s architecture beyond just Brutalism because those buildings are in danger of being demolished. Kaliszewski agreed and suggested looking at the west side of Madison because of how far out it has expanded, and the area is slowly being redeveloped. She said they could more generally look at development in Madison and how it has moved out from the City center, but that this would be a large-scale survey that may need to shift to the 10-year HPP check-in. Harris said she agreed with all suggestions, especially the 1960s-80s period in history. She suggested looking at the Jewish and Italian communities or possibly underrepresented religions and those that have experienced discrimination. Ely-Ledesma said that related to Brutalism, they could also look at post-urban renewal. She also suggested that highways would be interesting from a Planning perspective, thinking about the impact of the infrastructure.

4. [83867](#) Historic Preservation Policy Discussion

Bailey presented on the policy and purpose of the Landmarks Commission, referencing the NAPC Messaging Guide and The Relevancy Guidebook (both attached to this item in Legistar). The commission discussed these materials.

Bailey asked if there were things they could be doing better that would be more valuable to the commission and their work. Morrison suggested they add further designations to the demolition review criteria that focus on cultural significance. He said that it is important to have an architectural point of view, and some buildings might be significant because of how they look and are used, but others are significant for things you can't see.

Ely-Ledesma said that the most challenging thing in this body is not having enough teeth within the code to go back to the values related to a future-focused approach, particularly in the context of housing. She said that she often considers the parameters and makes sure she is thinking holistically about the positive gain in context of preservation history, culture, and community. She asked what tools they can add to the toolkit to allow that conversation to be appropriate in the context of what they are allowed to do.

Regarding advisory recommendations to Plan Commission on demolitions, Kaliszewski proposed that they think about what items the commission can suggest to help mitigate the potential loss of a building. What kinds of things are they looking for that will highlight the history of the building but also be a useful item for the community.

Harris said they should think about ways to preserve cultural history beyond buildings. She said that throughout the readings and staff presentation, she found that communication is key between the commission and the public. She suggested they find ways to communicate beyond their meetings where they are addressing business. She said that she would love to hear more voices, including those who might have an opinion or know the history attached to something who might not typically attend commission meetings. She said that when she reads the demolition standard of "no known historic value," she wonders if there is something out there that we don't know about.

Kaliszewski asked if the public hearing postcards say that you can email comments to the commission because that might be an easier way for people to participate. Morrison said that they wanted to investigate a system that prevented groups from trying to weaponize historic preservation by trying to designate a property as a way to prevent redevelopment. Kaliszewski said that historic preservation is often reactive, and getting ahead of it takes advocacy in education, and people have to be interested in that education. She said there are Madison YIMBY groups they could reach out to and also have more guest speakers come to their meetings. She suggested they figure out how to more proactively landmark buildings way before there is potential for demolition. Bailey said that the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation has created a committee to do designations. Harris said that the landmark nominations are thoroughly researched and academically crafted, which is a huge undertaking and barrier. Ely-Ledesma asked about partnering with the architecture program at UW. Harris suggested looking at the UW Morgridge Center.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Harris, seconded by Ely-Ledesma, to Adjourn at 7:01 pm. The motion passed by voice vote/other.