

**Cnare, Rebecca**

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**From:** Bloch, Jodi [jbloch@wha.org]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:40 PM  
**To:** Konkel, Brenda; dan.stephens@wisconsin.gov; stuartlevitan@sbcglobal.net;  
ctaylor@restainobunbury.com; michaeljrosenblum@yahoo.com; christina.slattery@meadhunt.com;  
m.gehrig@att.net  
**Cc:** Cnare, Rebecca; Peter.Bloch@averydennison.com; peter@schorrconstruction.com  
**Subject:** Landmarks Commission Meeting - More information on 207 N. Spooner St. (Bloch's)

Landmarks Commission Members,

We appreciate you taking the time to review our proposal for 207 N. Spooner Street which you will be discussing further at tomorrow's meeting. We are attaching our responses (in red) to the staff's memo to you from 2-23-09. We are also attaching additional letters of support from neighbors in close proximity to our home as well as emails of support below from others.

We felt it was important that you have the opportunity to see our response and these additional letters/email comments of support prior to the meeting. We are also bringing copies of these additional materials to the meeting for you.

Again, thank you for your careful consideration and time in reviewing our proposal and we look forward to discussing this further with you tomorrow.

Respectfully,

Peter & Jodi Bloch  
608/238-9699  
[jbloch@wha.org](mailto:jbloch@wha.org)

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As neighbors of Peter and Jody Bloch, we are writing in support of their proposed plan to renovate their attic. We have absolutely no objection to this plan, and also commend them for their high degree of commitment to maintaining the historic integrity of their home and its fit in our neighborhood.

Sincerely,  
Helena Scherer-Jones & Reed M. Jones  
211 North Spooner Street

As neighbors of the Blochs, who live right across the street at 206 North Spooner Street, we have no objection at all to their planned house addition. The addition will not adversely impact the neighborhood in any way. In fact if anything it may add value to the block and we applaud their initiative and creativity--Raphael Kadushin and Thomas McGhee, 206 North Spooner Street

Peter-

We were able to review your remodeling plans for your house. My wife

2/23/2009

The criteria for height, additions visible from the street and alterations to street facades, and roofshape in the University Heights Historic District (Sec 33.19(12)(d) read as follows:

**1. Height.** All additions shall be no higher than the existing building; however, if the existing building is already a nonconforming one, no addition shall be made thereto except in accordance with Section 28.05(3)(c) of the Madison General Ordinances. Roof additions resulting in an increased building volume are prohibited unless they meet the standards in Section 33.01(12)(d)7. and are permitted under Chapter 28 of the Madison General Ordinances, or approved as a variance pursuant to Sections 28.08(2)(e) and 28.12(8)(d) or approved as a conditional use or as part of a planned residential development in accordance with Section 28.085(e).

The addition will be 7'6" higher than the current ridge of the roof. The first floor of the house is several feet higher than the sidewalk, which will help to reduce some of the visibility of the higher roofline of the addition from the street. The slope of the roof and the dormers will also mask some of the new massing, but the addition will still be a very visible addition from both the sidewalk in front of the house, as well as the houses across the street. The architect has provided a rendering of how the new addition will appear to the surrounding area.

- The addition will be visible from the street, but height and visible changes to the façade are separate issues.
- The Landmarks commission has granted variance on height for past projects – most recently on 1915 Kendal, and at 1725 Chadbourne. The approved 1725 Chadbourne project mirrors the proposal at 207 Spooner in that the added height provided for the addition of dormers on both the front and back of the home for added living space. In addition, 1725 Chadbourne also sits on a corner lot.
- The proposal meets city ordinances, and we are only seeking variance to the added restriction of height placed on our residence by its location in University Heights.
- The proposed new height is still less than the two closest adjacent structures and is minimized by the elevation. The proposal does not exceed the 35' limits established by the city building codes.

**2. Additions Visible from the Street and Alterations to Street Facades.** Additions visible from the street, including additions to the top of buildings or structures, and alterations to street facades shall be compatible with the existing building in architectural design, scale, color, texture, proportion of solids to voids and proportion of widths to heights of doors and windows. Materials used in such alterations and additions shall duplicate in texture and appearance, and architectural details used therein shall duplicate in design, the materials and details used in the original construction of the existing building or of other buildings in University Heights of similar materials, age and architectural style, unless the Landmarks Commission approves duplication of the texture and appearance of materials and the design of architectural details used in the existing building where the existing building materials and architectural details differ from the original. Additions and exterior alterations that exactly duplicate the original materials in composition are

encouraged. Additions or exterior alterations that destroy significant architectural features are prohibited. Side additions shall not detract from the design composition of the original facade.

The proposed new dormers' detailing and design will be in keeping with the style of the house and the neighborhood, as required by ordinance. While the existing small dormer does have wood slat siding, it is not visible from the street. The new dormers, however, will be adding a large amount of cement-board siding (painted to look like wood siding) visible from the street frontage, which will be a departure from the original appearance of the building.

- The existing rear dormer is visible from Summit Avenue
- The proposed project creates new dormers that are sided or faced with cedar shake – these materials are historically appropriate for the home and neighborhood where many such examples can be seen on existing brick homes.

**3. Roof Shape.** The roof shape of the front of a building or structure shall not be altered except to restore it to the original documentable appearance or to add a dormer or dormers in a location and shape compatible with the architectural design of the building and similar in location and shape to original dormers on buildings of the same vintage and style within the district. Alterations of the roof shape of the sides or back of a building or structure shall be visually compatible with the architectural design of the existing building.

The roof shape will be altered from an existing 5/12-pitch to a proposed 12/12-pitch. This is a significant difference from the original shape. At the existing 5/12-pitch, the view of the roof fades quickly away into the background. At a 12/12 pitch the roof will have a much larger presence on both street frontages.

- The proposal details a change in roof pitch to accommodate the addition of dormers, and maintains the historical hip style of the roof.
- Any dormer changes original shape. The guideline sets out that a change in shape is allowable for the addition of dormers if they are in a location and space compatible with the architectural design of the building and similar in location and shape to original dormers on buildings of the same vintage and style within the district. The staff states above in #2: "The proposed new dormers" detailing and design will be in keeping with the style of the house and the neighborhood, as required by the ordinance".

During the Informational Presentation of this project at the January 26th, 2009 Landmarks Commission meeting a recently approved height variance in the University Heights Historic District was raised. In the motion approving that project, the Landmarks Commission noted that, "although the project technically violated the height requirements, the Commission agreed that it met the intent of the criterion since the height of the new addition will be almost impossible to see from the street." The

proposed addition at 207 N Spooner will be easily visible from both Spooner Street and Summit Avenue, as the house sits on a corner lot.

After reviewing the proposal against the criteria of the University Heights Historic District, staff does not believe that the application meets the criteria listed above, especially the underlined passages of criteria 1, and 3, and therefore recommends that the Landmarks Commission deny the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

- **We feel that the staff has misclassified our house as mediterranean revival architecture. We feel our house better represents colonial revival architecture. To be sure the home is a “blend” of architectural elements including:**
  - **Craftsman style windows and front door**
  - **Colonial entrance portico with barrel vaulted copper roof, side lights and fan detail above the door**
  - **Colonial revival symmetry and use of brick**
  - **Colonial style color scheme of brick with white trim.**
- **Regardless of colonial or mediteranean revival style, examples of steeper pitched roofs that have dormers can be found in both. We believe that the proposed additions will enhance our home and the neighborhood.**

**Cnare, Rebecca**

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**From:** Lynn Gilchrist [logilchrist1@charter.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 19, 2009 10:14 AM  
**To:** Cnare, Rebecca  
**Subject:** 207 N. Sponer St. Public Hearing  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

I have reviewed the plans and staff comments with which I agree.

I would also like to raise my concern that the dormers should be faced with brick, not cement siding. It presents a tacky and cheap look.

And I say this as an owner of a brick house which was allowed under a previous owner to put up a new garage using siding and not brick. Architecturally and quality wise, a big mistake.

In this neighborhood, because of the topography, we see more of the side and backs of homes than in other residential areas. When materials are compromised such as is proposed here, I believe that the neighborhoods suffer.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Gilchrist  
113 Ely Place  
Madison 53726

RE: Bloch proposal

Dear members of the Landmarks Commission:

We are writing in support of the Bloch proposal to add living space to their home by raising the roof line and adding dormers. We own the Ely House, a National and Madison landmark, located at 205 N. Prospect Avenue, just around the corner from the Bloch home. We have lived in this home for nearly 40 years and have invested heavily in time, effort, and money to improve and preserve its historic character. We care deeply about our neighborhood.

We have admired the Bloch home for years and have been acquainted with all of its previous owners. About five years ago the Blochs completed a beautiful renovation of their home and tastefully designed and added a detached two-car garage to their property. The property was also re-landscaped at that time and the home now stands proudly at the corner of Summit Avenue and Spooner Street. Prior to these improvements, one could barely see the structure from the sidewalk or street.

We have reviewed the Bloch plans for creating additional room to accommodate their growing family. They reflect creative design that in no way detracts from the architectural features of the home. In fact, we believe that their plans represent an enhancement and further improvement over the current appearance, beyond what they have already accomplished with the previous building and landscaping changes.

We have had an opportunity to review the preliminary comments provided by the Commission staff and respectfully disagree with their conclusions regarding height, visibility, and shape of the new roof and dormers. We recently walked the sidewalk on both sides of the house and across the street. Due to the relatively high position of the house on the property, it is and will be quite difficult to see the proposed changes. If anything, the plans improve the overall appearance of the property without significantly altering its architectural features.

Further, it should be noted that a precedent has already been established for raising the roof line and adding dormers to gain more living space located in our immediate neighborhood just three blocks away at 1725 Chadbourne Avenue, directly across from Randall school. We carefully observed that addition as it evolved several years ago, and believe that it also improved the overall appearance of the home without altering its architectural features.

The improvements that the Blochs are contemplating will enhance their property and the neighborhood. They have already demonstrated their ability to accomplish a tasteful renovation. Their family is growing and they would like to remain in our neighborhood. We would like them to continue as our neighbors. Their children will attend the local schools. They will pay higher property taxes. Numerous neighbors have written letters of support, and we understand that no formal written objections have been filed.

Based on the above, we urge the Commission to grant issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for this project.

Sincerely,

Harvey and Trudy Barash

20 February 2009

To Whom It May Concern;

I am writing this letter in support of my neighbors' (207 North Spooner – corner of Spooner and Summit) request for a variance. I live at 1708 Summit Avenue, 3 houses down the street. I have discussed the plans with the home owner Peter Bloch. The addition and changes to the roof-line will not have significant impact on the “skyline” of our neighborhood. Given the position of his home between 2 hills, the changes will not be obstructive or obtrusive. Furthermore the design will be historically sensitive. The proposed improvements will make the home more family-friendly. This contributes to the vitality of our neighborhood community and our schools. Ultimately I feel this project will be an enhancement to the University Heights neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Juliet Gunkel  
1708 Summit Avenue  
Madison, WI 53726

## Cnare, Rebecca

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**From:** Chamond Liu [chamond.liu@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:18 PM  
**To:** Cnare, Rebecca  
**Cc:** Ruth Kearley; Peter Bloch  
**Subject:** Re: 207 N Spooner Plans

Dear Rebecca,

Peter and Jodi presented their proposal to us on January 28. We initially thought the siding of the dormers ought to match the brick facade of the house - most dormers in University Heights cohere with the main facade. (Our own stucco house is an example, as is the wood-sided addition cited at 1725 Chadbourne.) However, we have since been persuaded that there may be an exception for brick homes, based on the structural cost of supporting the brick.

Therefore we have decided to neither object to nor support the proposal. Because our home is directly across the street and the proposed addition is not easily overlooked (raising the height of the structure by 8 feet), we are only concerned that the outcome be historically correct.

But we ourselves do not feel qualified to make that judgment. Nor do we think that the testimony of others without particular competence in historical architecture should be considered. This is not a matter for the taste of today's neighbors. Instead we trust the Commission to do its best to ensure that a future architectural historian would not suspect a latter day change to the original home's exterior.

Sincerely,  
Chamond Liu & Ruth Kearley  
202 North Spooner Street

P.S. We agree fully with the sentiment expressed elsewhere that the Blochs are outstanding neighbors.

cc: Peter Bloch



RE: Bloch proposal

Dear members of the Landmarks Commission:

We are writing this letter in support of Peter and Jodi Bloch's proposal to add more appropriate living space to their home at 206 North Spooner. We live at 1717 Kendall Ave and frequently pass their house walking or driving through the neighborhood.

We feel strongly that not only are the changes proposed by the Bloch's appropriate for the size and the location of the home, we are confident that the Bloch's will have these changes implemented in an impeccable and attractive fashion as they have with the many renovations they have made to this property already.

As parents of small, school-aged children in a historic home, we empathize with the Bloch's attempt to balance architectural nuance with the practical needs of accommodating a modern family in an old home. With that said, I would like to see the Landmarks Commission approve projects that are designed to achieve improvements to a home's space so that growing families can feel comfortable staying in these homes for longer periods of time. We feel the Bloch's proposal is appropriate and is designed in a fashion consistent with the other, larger homes around this area.

Sincerely,  
Nick and Kristin Jackson

January 29, 2009

Re: The Bloch's proposed plan to raise the roofline at 207 N. Spooner Street

Dear Landmarks Commission Members:

Our names are Kathy and Tim Riddiough. We live at 177 N. Prospect Avenue, which is at the corner of N. Prospect and N. Spooner. Peter and Jodi Bloch are our nearby neighbors. Our backyard and driveway are directly across the street from their house. During warm-weather months, we spend a lot of time in our backyard and on our second floor deck, which have direct views to the Bloch's house.

This letter is in support of the Bloch's proposal to raise the roof-line on their home in order to provide additional living space. We have several reasons why we support this proposal.

First, as way of introduction, we have lived at our current address for seven years. In addition, from 1986 to 1991 we lived at 1717 Chadbourne Avenue (we moved far away from Madison for the interim 10 year period of time), so please accept this as proof that we know and love the University Heights neighborhood. We believe that we understand neighborhood issues and what it means to live in an historic neighborhood district. Also, Tim is a Professor and Director of the Graaskamp Center for Real Estate located in the Business School at the UW, so he feels qualified to comment on some of the technical aspects of the proposal.

We have reviewed the detailed exterior architectural plans for the renovation. The plans impress us with their attention to maintaining the architectural integrity of the original exterior design. Indeed, in our opinion the renovation plan represents an improvement to the original design. Furthermore, given the size of their lot and the scale of homes in direct proximity, there is nothing about the architectural design that strikes us as being out of scale or context with the neighborhood.

When we moved into our house in January of 2002, the Blochs were at the beginning stages of a major renovation that included a kitchen, bathrooms, basement, garage and driveway, not to mention a complete re-landscaping of the lot. We have had the opportunity to closely inspect both the interior and exterior renovations, and we were extremely impressed with the Bloch's attention to detail, the high quality (and expense) of the work, and their ability to integrate the garage and driveway portions of the project into the existing site. The upkeep of their property and the additional improvements have been meticulous. As neighbors who are concerned not only about maintaining the integrity of homes in an historic neighborhood, but also recognize the need to maintain and occasionally update the condition of aging properties in a mature neighborhood, we are very pleased with the outcome of the previous renovation. Based on this track record, we are confident that the Bloch's execution of the proposed project will be first rate.

We would also like to state for the record that the Blochs are terrific people and wonderful neighbors. They have two young children, are always friendly and visible, and are always ready to help out or just chat. We believe we speak for most (if not all) affected families in the neighborhood when we say that the Blochs are ideal neighbors and exactly the kind of family we want to keep in the Heights and the City of Madison.

We are aware that several nearby projects have been approved by the Landmarks Commission that provide a basis of comparison with the Bloch's proposed project. About five years ago, Kitty Rankin and the Landmarks Commission approved a similar project at 1725 Chadbourne Avenue. We know that house well, as we used to live only three houses down and were friends with the owners. The roofline of the house was raised and a full third floor was added. The renovated house is a distinct improvement over the previous design and is completely faithful to the historic character of the house and neighborhood. The owners gained significant space on the third floor, which we have seen, and which is a wonderful add-on to the pre-existing space configuration.

We are also aware that two other nearby projects that have gained Landmarks Commission approval in recent years. We all know about the house on the corner of Lathrop and Kendall (234 Lathrop). We only wish to add that the Bloch's proposed renovation is at a much smaller scale and is more faithful to the original design than the Lathrop-Kendall project. Our understanding is that an additional renovation has been approved at 1915 Kendall Street, which also accommodates a roof-raise.

Finally, we wish to make the following observations, and do so with all due respect and infinite deference to the Commission. We recognize that this is a time of transition with the leadership in historic district administration, and that in recent years there have been a number of controversial/difficult projects in the immediate vicinity of the Bloch's proposed project. But, we request that the committee balance these circumstances with the fact that this proposal has significant merit; indeed, strictly from an architectural design perspective, it represents an increment improvement to the neighborhood. It is not at all out of scale with the neighborhood or the lot.

Change in an historic neighborhood is a delicate thing, where decisions about design, scale, et cetera determine the kind of people (our neighbors) that reside nearby. This is especially true with University Heights, which is centrally located and mixes rental and owner-occupied property. We highly value the Blochs as neighbors and very much appreciate their sensitivity to the surrounding built environment. We respectfully ask that you approve their proposal.

Sincerely,

Kathy and Tim Riddiough