

AGENDA # 2

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION	PRESENTED: October 6, 2014
TITLE: 1018 Williamson Street –Third Lake Ridge Historic District – Demolition of resident. 6 th Ald. Dist. Contact: Jim Glueck, Glueck Architects (35572)	REFERRED: REREFERRED: REPORTED BACK:
AUTHOR: Amy Scanlon, Secretary	ADOPTED: POF:
DATED: October 6, 2014	ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Stu Levitan, Chair; Erica Fox Gehrig, Vice Chair; Christina Slattery, Jason Fowler, David McLean, Marsha Rummel, and Michael Rosenblum. Rummel left after the discussion of Item 4 (35575).

SUMMARY:

Jim Glueck, registering in support and wishing to speak. Glueck provided a brief history of the request for demolition and the condition of the building. Glueck explained that the house was gutted before it was purchased by the current owner in 1992. The Landmarks Commission approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition in 1993. The current owner did not cause the deteriorated condition and recently had a new roof installed and completed some foundation repairs. Glueck explained that the Building Inspection work orders were received and Preservation staff and Building Inspection staff toured the property.

Levitan asked how much it would cost to restore the building to a functioning building. Glueck explained that it would cost more to rehabilitate the existing structure than to build new as it needs a new foundation and all utilities. He explained that the current building is a wood frame shell without one load bearing wall. He explained that there is a nice original staircase that should be salvaged. Glueck explained that at least \$100,000 would need to be spent on the building and given the foundation issues, that number would increase.

Levitan asked what the new use would be if the demolition request was granted. Glueck explained that it would be green space and that gardening may be allowed with a review by Zoning. Glueck explained that parking is not allowed on the site by Zoning.

John Coleman, registering in opposition and wishing to speak. Coleman explained that he serves on MNA Board and he referenced the letter that was provided by MNA. Coleman explained that this is demolition by neglect because the building has been vacant for as long as he has lived in the neighborhood. He believes the building can be rehabilitated and that it has been gutted could be an asset so that those costs do not have to be spent. MNA has contacted housing development companies to discuss options to purchase the property. Coleman requested that opportunities for rehabilitation be investigated.

Lindsey Lee, registering in support and wishing to speak. Lee explained that because the property owner received a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition 20 years ago, the building is not a candidate for demolition by neglect. Lee described the larger context of the property and explained that the lot is very narrow and the desirability of this lot would not be as great as other buildings. Lee explained that the current property

owner played a major role in preserving the Williamson Street corridor by purchasing properties and opening an independent business which has acted as a catalyst for the area.

Ginny Way, registering in opposition and wishing to speak. Way explained that the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation understands that the building lacks certain architectural characteristics, but that it is a historic part of the historic district in which it is located and the loss of this building or any other will diminish the historic integrity of the district. Way suggested that the property owner rehabilitate the existing building or consider selling it to a party who is interested in rehabilitating a single family residence of 1000 square feet on Williamson Street. Way explained that it would be unfortunate to lose a building that conveys the historic character of the Third Lake Ridge Historic District.

Rosenblum asked if there was an attempt to sell the property or find a buyer to rehabilitate the property. Glueck explained that he was not aware of an active pursuit to sell the property, but that he believes that might be a possibility.

Levitan asked if the best use was of a garden, why the property owner would not find that selling it would be in his best interest. Glueck explained that selling the property may be an option. Rummel explained that she believed the property owner was agreeable to selling it when she toured the property with him. Rummel explained that once this historic house form is removed from this site, a similar form would never be allowed to be reconstructed there so efforts should be made to retain it.

Levitan explained that we cannot judge an application on the bad or good acts of the applicants or property owners. The application must be based on the standards in the Ordinance. The involvement of the property owner in other aspects of the preservation of the Williamson Street area should have no relevance to this demolition request.

Rosenblum explained that things have changed, but a Certificate of Appropriateness was issued 24 years ago and no effort has been made to act on that certificate or maintain the building. Levitan asked how the Commission could hold the property owner harmless, but move forward with selling the property. There was general discussion about the process to suspend action for 12 months. Staff explained that extensions on work orders are typically granted when an owner shows a good faith effort to comply with the process and that by applying for a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition, the property owner has shown that effort.

Glueck explained that his only concern would be that Building Inspection might say that the building is unsafe and repairs will need to be made to it instead of being allowed to demolish it. Levitan explained that public health and safety issues outweigh Landmarks issues and if the building is found by Building Inspection to be dangerous, there are provisions in the ordinance that allow for its removal.

Glueck explained that the best use of the property may be to construct an addition on to the neighboring building on this lot. Staff explained that an application for that project would be reviewed by the Landmarks Commission.

ACTION:

A motion was made by Rummel, seconded by McLean, to suspend action on the request for demolition for one year to allow for the sale and/or rehabilitation of the property and during that time period, the Preservation Planner will act on behalf of the Commission to work with the applicant to prevent further deterioration and with other City agencies to have a unified understanding of the City's response. The motion passed by voice vote/other.