



City of Madison

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

Monday, March 24, 2008

4:45 PM

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Room LL-130 (Madison Municipal Building)

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Present: 5 -

Brenda K. Konkel; Daniel J. Stephans; Stuart Levitan; Robin M. Taylor and Erica Fox Gehrig

Excused: 2 -

Michael J. Rosenblum and Christina Slattery

Guests: Ms. Eileen Mershart, Mr. Chris Schramm, Ms. Katherine Bentley, Mr. Richard Bentley, Ms. Leigh Richardson, Mr. Jim Skretny, Mr. Joe Lusson, Mr. Michael J. Collins, Mr. Stan Kaufman, Mr. Jim Campbell, Ms. Megan Decker, Mr. Greg Murray, Ms. Carolyn Freiwald, Mr. Tom Neujahr, Mr. Carlos Osorio, Ms. Sonya Newenhouse

APPROVAL OF February 25 and March 10, 2008 MINUTES

A motion was made by Levitan, seconded by Konkel, to Approve the Minutes of the February 25, 2008 meeting as written. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

A motion was made by Levitan, seconded by Konkel, to Approve the Minutes of the March 10, 2008 meeting as written. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

Public Hearings and Consideration of Landmark Nominations

1. [08715](#) Steinle Turret Machine Co., 149 Waubesa Street - Proposed Landmark Nomination
Contact: Becky Steinhoff, Atwood Community Center

A motion was made by Levitan, seconded by Konkel, to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER . The motion passed by voice vote/other.

No one wished to speak at the public hearing.

Note - The Landmarks Commission held a combined public hearing for the three following nominations. Following is the public hearing proceedings for all three nominations.

Mr. Levitan announced that he had a potential conflict of interest on these three agenda items and left the meeting.

Ms. Newenhouse spoke as the owner of the Winterbotham Building at 25-27 N. Pinckney St. She said that she had met with the Madison Trust people and had learned a lot about what it means to own a Landmark building. She said that now she is very comfortable about it and supports nominating as many historic buildings on the block as possible. She noted that once a building is demolished you can't get it back. She says that she would love to see a combination of modern and old in this block and noted that the other buildings in the block were some of the last remaining original structures on the Square.

Mr. Osorio spoke next. He owns the Maeder/Ellsworth Blocks at 21-23 N. Pinckney St. He said that he opposes the nomination because it includes two separate buildings. He said that he believes that the Ellsworth Block is worthy of being a landmark, but he questioned the eligibility of the Maeder Block, showing pictures from the turn-of-the-last-century which showed the original sandstone facade of the Maeder building, which had been completely remodeled in the early twentieth century. He said that behind the façade of the Maeder Building there is absolutely nothing of historical interest. He noted that the lower façade is completely covered with concrete.

Mr. Neujahr of Urban Land Interests spoke in opposition to the landmarking of the Hobbins/Olson and Veerhusen building at 7-11 N. Pinckney Street. He said that he was in agreement that the terra cotta on the second floor of the Hobbins section is beautiful and ought to be saved. He showed a drawing and a photo of the block to demonstrate that the terra cotta portion was floating in a sea of non-historic fabric. He said that he didn't want the entire building to be forced to be saved if the block is redeveloped. He noted that this particular block is the least developed of any on the square right now, saying that the back half of the block is mostly parking lot. He recommended that, if the Commission wishes to nominate something, it should nominate the historic part, which is only the second floor of the Hobbins Block, so that there was room to consider moving that part to another area on the block to make way for a new development.

Ms. Freiwald spoke as a representative of the Madison Trust. She said that it is important to consider the historic value of the nominated buildings and not discuss any potential future development proposals at this point. She suggested the Commission consider the bigger picture and look at the block as a whole. She noted that we have lost 75% of our older buildings on the square since the 1950s and 1960s.

Mr. Murray spoke as the lawyer for the owners of the Hobbins/Olson and Veerhusen building. He said that the owners are opposed to the designation for several reasons. He noted that the building no longer contains sufficient historic features to be considered historic, stating that only 25% of the façade is still remaining. He said that the burden of owning an historic landmark outweighs the benefits. He said that the building would be more difficult to maintain if it were made a landmark. He said that the historic fabric was so broken up that it no longer allowed for an architectural flow or vista. He said that the nomination only addressed the fact that the building qualified for landmarking as a good example of criteria #3 (architecture). He said that no historic owner or event is associated with the two original buildings, nor were they built by an important builder. He finished by stating that the owners did not get notice of this

meeting.

Ms. Decker spoke as the daughter of the owners of the building. She said that they wanted to be at the meeting, but that they were out-of-state. She noted that, although she did not dispute that notice had been sent to them, they had not actually received it. She said that her parents have owned the building since 1990 and are very proud of it. She said that it is used as a Class B office building, which means that it is more affordable than the more common Class A space. She said that the tenants were concerned that the additional regulation of being a Landmark would make their rents unaffordable. She noted that her parents have absolutely no intention of selling the building and said they would prefer to keep the status quo.

Mr. Campbell spoke as one of the owners of the two buildings at 7-11 N. Pinckney St. when they were remodeled in 1970 and 1980; he is currently the building manager. He said when they bought the properties they totally gutted the interior, including even adding another floor within the original two-story dimensions. He said that the section of the façade with the arches was the only historic thing left in the whole building; adding that they had retained that portion of the façade at the request of the Urban Design Commission. He is opposed to the nomination because of the limited portion of the building that is historically significant.

Mr. Kaufman spoke in favor of landmarking the three buildings. He said that the landmark ordinance requires the entire property to be landmarked, even if only part of it is described as historically significant. He said that the downtown has seen so many older buildings destroyed that the few that are left are all that much more precious.

Mr. Michael Collins, who owns 15 N. Pinckney Street, which is not one of the properties being nominated, said that he opposes all of the nominations. He said he is an architecture buff, but that only the facades have any historic value. He noted that nothing historic has ever happened in the block and that the most significant thing that can be said about it is that the owner of the grocery store at 23 N. Pinckney St. was the first seller of bananas in Madison.

Mr. Joe Lusson spoke as a representative of the Madison Trust. He said that he thought that minimizing the importance of this block was disrespectful not only to the people who brought the nominations forward but also to the buildings themselves. He noted that the nomination papers show that they are some of the most significant buildings remaining in the downtown. He said that it is critical to have these properties as landmarks so that the historic elements of them could be preserved and integrated into the new development. He noted that the Madison Trust had gone to great lengths to reach and talk to the owners of these buildings, and that the manager of 7-11 N. Pinckney Street had received a copy of the nomination. No one else wished to speak at the public hearing.

Ms. Gehrig started the Commission discussion by stating that she thought the buildings eminently qualified to be landmarks under criterion #3, as important examples of turn-of-the-century commercial buildings. She also noted that the terra cotta façade is an excellent example of the work of noted local architects Claude and Starck. She noted that the second story façade of the Olson and Veerhusen building retains its historic scale, and its second story brick walls with its original window openings. She noted that there have been several commercial buildings that have been landmarked even though the first floors have been changed over the years. Ms. Rankin gave the example of the Lamb Building on State Street, a Landmark that has a modern first floor façade. Ms. Rankin also noted that the Landmarks Commission

approved retention of only the façade of the Yost's-Kessenich's Building when the Overture Center was built because behind the façade there was almost nothing left of the original building.

Ms. Rankin explained that the Landmarks Commission regulations are typically not onerous for tenants, noting that when a building permit is applied for, the building inspectors determine whether or not exterior work will be done and she said that a high percentage of the projects are approved on the spot as not having an exterior component. She added that for those projects that are on the exterior, she and/or the counter personnel typically approve about 90% of those for having no adverse affect on the property, including almost all signage. Only the large projects typically go through the entire commission, which meets twice a month. She noted that landmark designation can be of benefit to an owner because certain building codes can be waived if meeting them will cause a loss of historic integrity.

Ms. Taylor said that it is the charge of the Landmarks Commission to preserve Madison's heritage and that these buildings were obvious candidates for listing. She noted that the Downtown Historic Preservation Plan, which was adopted by the Common Council in 1998, identified these buildings as potential landmarks and the Commission had a duty to follow established City policy. Mr. Stephans thanked the Madison Trust for their volunteer efforts to bring the nominations forward and thanked the owners of the properties for keeping Madison's history alive and well.

2. [08926](#) Hobbins Block/Olson and Veerhusen Building, 7-9 North Pinckney Street - Proposed Landmark Nomination
Owners: Owen Keith Decker and Jane M. Decker
Contact: Carolyn Freiwald, Madison Trust for Historic Preservation

A motion was made by Konkel, seconded by Gehrig, to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

3. [08927](#) Maeder Building/Ellsworth Block, 21-25 North Pinckney Street - Proposed Landmark Nomination
Owner: Osorio Investments LLC
Contact: Carolyn Freiwald, Madison Trust for Historic Preservation

A motion was made by Taylor, seconded by Gehrig, to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

4. [08928](#) Winterbotham Building, 27 North Pinckney Street - Proposed Landmark Nomination
Owner: Crescent LLC
Contact: Carolyn Freiwald, Madison Trust for Historic Preservation

A motion was made by Taylor, seconded by Konkel, to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

OTHER BUSINESS

5. [07804](#) Secretary's Report

There was no report.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:15 p.m.