

Ekberg, Meri Rose

From: Larry and Ginny White <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, July 8, 2022 2:18 PM
To: PLLCAplications
Subject: Land Division of Old Spring Tavern

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Commissioners: We lived on Huron Hill in Nakoma, near the Old Spring Tavern, for 41 years. We're appalled that the current owner of the Tavern, David Gordon, has requested permission to divide the lot to create a buildable parcel behind it.

Mr. Gordon (DBA 3706 Nakoma Road LLC) appears to have bought the property in April 2022 for speculative purposes, as he lists his current address as 3421 Crestwood Drive.

His proposal undermines both the historical significance and the aesthetics of an important city landmark.

We urge you to preserve the character of the Old Spring Tavern and the historic Nakoma neighborhood by denying Mr. Gordon's request. Once a landmark is defiled, there's no going back.

Sincerely,

Ginny and Larry White
[REDACTED]

Madison, WI 53717
[REDACTED]

Bailey, Heather

From: Jan Tymorek <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Saturday, July 9, 2022 10:40 PM
To: PLLCAplications
Subject: The historic property on nakoma road slated for development

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This property is on the national historic register, how can this be divided and destroyed? I want to register a complaint against this plan and the developers

Sent from my iPhone

Bailey, Heather

From: Lisa Klein Vogel <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, July 10, 2022 5:46 PM
To: PLLCAplications
Subject: MEETING - Landmarks Commission Monday, 7/11/2022, 5pm AGENDA ITEM # - 72243

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Hello,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to allowing the Old Spring Hotel property to be subdivided into two lots. I oppose this proposal for several reasons:

1. This property, including the hotel itself and the grounds that this developer would turn into a second lot and build over, is a unique and beautiful aspect of Madison and Nakoma's history. It is part of what makes this neighborhood special, and destroying that history and beauty simply to enrich a property developer is antithetical to what the Landmark Commission should stand for.
2. The potential ecological impacts of this project could have significant short-term and long-term implications for the community, and I have seen no evidence that the commission has explored the potential consequences of this action. One of the closest neighbors to the historical site is the University of Wisconsin Arboretum. Spring Street, including the old hotel grounds, is a major thoroughfare for animals crossing over from the Arboretum. We regularly have flocks of turkeys, ducks and cranes, as well as foxes, deer, and more pass through our neighborhood and the hotel grounds. A major construction project that would result in the subdivision of this land has the potential to significantly impact the local ecology, including these animals as well as the duck pond and Arboretum grounds immediately across Nakoma Road. It is imperative that the city conduct an comprehensive ecological impact study, by an independent third party, prior to initiating such a substantial project so close to one of Madison's greatest treasures. The Arboretum should be provided ample opportunity to express input prior to pursuit of this project.
3. As a city, Madison has in recent years spoken out against the historical wrongdoings have been committed against the Native American population in Wisconsin. While an archaeologist hired by the developer has conducted what appears (from the available documentation) to be a cursory check for sacred Native burial sites, I feel more a more rigorous investigation is needed prior to disturbing these lands further - and the Native American community should be invited to lead and/or participate in these efforts as they wish to do so. Full and authentic involvement by the Native American community is essential for allowing Madison to live up to it's stated ideals.
4. The immediate neighbors who purchased their homes did so with an expectation that they would reside next to a historical site, not a new development and construction site right in their backyards. This plan is very unfair to my neighbors, whose property values and enjoyment of their own property, will likely be affected by destroying the gardens on the Old Hotel grounds and replacing them with a massive construction project. It is not clear (to me) what this developer plans to do with either property long-term, but should he intend to commercialize either of both of these properties (such as by renting them out as Airbnbs), this will further disturb immediate neighbors as well as disrupt the local ecology of the Arboretum and it's wildlife by increasing traffic flow into Spring Street.

I would also like to express my dissatisfaction with the notification and participation processes that this committee has ended in. My understanding is that only neighbors within a 200 ft radius of the property were notified of this meeting. Many neighbors in the broader Nakoma community stand to be impacted by this change should it go forward and this committee should make an effort to more fully engage the community in the decision-making process, rather than the cursory notification provided thus far.

Further, this committee's meeting and participation process excludes my senior citizen neighbors who lack access to computer technology. By making it possible to participate in this meeting only using technology such as Zoom, and requiring that expressions of support/opposition occur via web form, the committee has made it difficult for neighbors who might experience barriers to using technology to participating in this process. We are a neighborhood with many wonderful senior community members, and I am aware of several who are unable to express their opinion on this matter due to technology barriers. Prior to advancing this project, the committee should offer multiple meeting and input formats in order to include my neighbors who lack access to virtual participation.

Thank you,
Lisa Klein Vogel

Bailey, Heather

From: [REDACTED] @gmail.com
Sent: Sunday, July 10, 2022 7:36 PM
To: PLLCAplications
Subject: Old Spring Tavern

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

To the Landmarks Commission Board,

I grew up in Madison and now live in New York City. I was very disappointed to hear about the proposed lot division at the Old Spring Tavern.

There is a Madison code, 41.09, on altering or demolishing landmarks which doesn't allow any changes on a lot comprising all or part of a landmark site that may impact the exterior appearance or historical nature of the landmark or the landmark site.

1. The proposed land division adversely impact the historic character of the landmark failing to meet the appropriateness standard. The designation repeatedly references the back of the building as the original front as well as the road that ran there. Given that this was a roadside inn, preserving the context of the original road and entry significantly relates to its landmark status. The proposed lot change boundary is also very close to the inn, which makes the back lot extremely small with essentially no back yard, effectively destroying its context.
2. Madison ordinance sec 33.19 guarantees the protection of sites with historical value and safeguard the city's historical and cultural heritage. Agreeing with this lot division ignores the commission's primary duty which is to protect and safeguard.
3. Part of the cultural value of the lot is the heritage black walnut tree on it which will be endangered with any building. The petitioner's whole purpose is that he wants to create a buildable lot which he can sell off and build on which runs a significant risk of damaging the historic trees' roots. If you look up historical trees in Madison, this tree existed when the inn was built and still stands behind it. It is certainly part of its historical character.

I very much hope you will oppose the lot division and keep the historic property intact.

Best,
Alaina Weller

Sent from my iPhone

Union Bridge, MD 21791
10 July 2022

Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner
Planning Division
City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Ms. Bailey:

I am submitting a letter to the Madison Landmarks Commission to express my concern about the proposal to subdivide the lot associated with the Old Spring Tavern. I know the property well and consider the land associated with this important Madison landmark to be a significant aspect of the setting of the historic inn/tavern.

The land is directly related to the property's individual designation as a city landmark and its listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Aside from uncertainties about the primary façade of the house and the location of the stagecoach road, there is little question that during its early period the Old Spring Tavern was in a rural setting and served as a stopping place along the important stagecoach route from Madison to Monroe.

The significant period for the property is considered the "19th Century" by the National Register, and the same significant period is suggested by the Madison Landmark documentation. For much of this nineteenth century period, the property was surrounded by three or four neighboring farms and the sixty acres that James Gorham bought in 1860. The National Register nomination for the Nakoma Historic District states:

The land that is now Nakoma was originally a part of the Town of Madison, and it was given over almost entirely to agricultural pursuits until the first decade of the twentieth century. . . farms extended from the hilltops overlooking Lake Wingra all the way down to the lake shore. It was from this pastoral landscape that the future suburb of Nakoma would be created (p. 8-1).

In the accompanying photo, note the field stretching behind the house and the wire fence across the front of the house. Because the stone wall and later porch detailing are absent, this photo seems to predate 1929.

Early documentation for historic listings and designations tended to omit even the most general descriptions of the setting and the surrounding landscape. With the Landmark designation in 1972 and the National Register listing in 1974, the Old Spring Tavern nominations follow that pattern. However, this should not be considered an indication that the landscape is insignificant or dispensable, particularly for a property whose significance is related to its location and historic function. The siting of this vernacular Greek Revival building is related to the need for an inn at this location and the need for

enough land to service horse and stagecoach traffic. The National Register listing considers “Transportation” an area of significance (as well as Architecture). Although the Madison Landmark nomination does not indicate Transportation significance, the functionality of a property only noted for Architectural significance should be a consideration. Confining a rural property to a small urban lot misrepresents its history.



The Spring Tavern, 3706 Nakoma Road, Madison. Wisconsin Historical Society Image 51561.
This image predates 1929 when the stone wall was built. Note the field on the left. BW

The Nakoma Historic District is also listed in the National Register, but its significant period is 1915 to 1946. Within the district, the Old Spring Tavern is noted as an anomaly, because it was built in 1854. However, it is evaluated as contributing, with its National Register listing noted. It does not fit the pattern of Architectural significance described in the district nomination, and treatments for the Old Spring Tavern building or setting should not be evaluated in the context of the Nakoma plat.

I hope the Madison Landmarks Commission will consider the full history of the Old Spring Tavern when it considers the appropriateness of reducing the lot to a small parcel. Further, I hope that consideration of the appropriate setting for this important Madison Landmark strongly influences their decision.

With best regards,

B. Wyatt

Barbara Wyatt, FASLA
*Retired, National Park Service
and Wisconsin Historical Society*

[REDACTED]



Crawford • Marlborough • Nakoma

Neighborhood Association

On behalf of the Crawford Marlborough Nakoma Neighborhood Association, which represents the neighborhood of the Old Spring Hotel, I express our opposition to granting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the Land Division of the Old Spring Hotel at 3706 Nakoma Road.

I am President of the Crawford Marlborough Nakoma Neighborhood Association and I have extensive experience in historic preservation. I was the Design Coordinator of the Wisconsin Main Street program for a decade, providing historic preservation planning services to dozens of Wisconsin communities and I have consulted with communities across the nation on a wide variety of historic preservation planning issues.

The Old Spring Hotel has a significant role in the history of Madison as indicated by the 1972 local landmark designation and its inclusion in the State and National Registers of Historic Places. The proposed land division of what has always been the front yard of the Old Spring Hotel destroys the relationship of this building to its storied site. Charles C. Morgan and James W. Gorham chose this site as it was served by a major stagecoach route to the

SW Wisconsin lead mining region and the parcel contained a spring located behind where the hotel was built, which is now known as the Arboretum Duck Pond.

For over 160 years travelers and residents have walked through the area of the proposed land division, past the very old Black Walnut tree to get to the front door of the building. A new building in front of this landmark building irretrievably severs this building from this historic site.



We urge the Landmarks Commission to reject this proposal based on the criteria in the Madison Ordinances 41.18, Standards for Granting a Certificate of Appropriateness, as this proposal for a land division of the Old Spring Hotel and the “proposed lot sizes adversely impact the historic character or significance of a landmark.”



Sincerely,

Kevin Pomeroy
President – Crawford Marlborough Nakoma Neighborhood Association

To: City of Madison Landmarks Commission members
CC: District 10 Alder
From: Juli Aulik, [REDACTED], Madison
Re: Proposed land division of 3706 Nakoma Rd" Dividing the land in order to create another buildable parcel
Date: July 11, 2022

I live in the neighborhood around 3706 Nakoma Road. My background includes serving as the Preservation Planner for the State of North Carolina, the President of the Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation, and as the Executive Director of Taliesin Preservation. I appreciate your consideration of my point-of-view regarding the proposed land division of this property in order to create another buildable parcel.

I oppose the granting of a certificate of appropriateness.

I'm starting with some background from the ordinance and the materials submitted to the Commission to explain how I've grounded my reasoning:

Applicable sections of the new Chapter 41 Historic Preservation where I've highlighted what I believe are the applicable portions:

From Subchapter 4C Landmarks, 41.09 ALTERING OR DEMOLISHING LANDMARKS. (1) When Required . No person may do any of the following without a certificate of appropriateness issued under Subchapter F: (a) Add a new structure to a landmark or landmark site. (b) Materially alter a landmark or the exterior of a landmark. (c) Demolish or relocate a landmark or any part of a landmark. (d) Install a sign on the exterior of a landmark or on a landmark site. (e) **Divide any lot comprising all or part of a landmark site, or voluntarily grant any easement on that lot if doing so may impair the preservation, maintenance, exterior appearance or historic character of the landmark or landmark site.** (2) Exception . A certificate of appropriateness is not required at Forest Hill Cemetery to: (a) Add a new gravesite, memorial or landscape feature to the cemetery; (b) Alter, demolish, remove or relocate any existing structure, object, or landscape feature that is less than fifty (50) years old at the time of alteration, demolition, removal, or relocation; or (c) Conduct routine day-to-day operations and maintenance of the cemetery.

SUBCHAPTER 41F: CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS—PROJECTS ON LANDMARKS, LANDMARK SITES AND IN HISTORIC DISTRICTS 41.18 (4) "Land Divisions and Combinations. The commission shall approve a certificate of appropriateness for land divisions, combinations, and subdivision plats of landmark sites and properties in historic districts, **unless it finds that the proposed lot sizes adversely impact the historic character or significance of a landmark**, are incompatible with adjacent lot sizes, or fail to maintain the general lot size pattern of the historic district."

From staff report: The proposed new parcel to the west would mean that a new house could be constructed within 70 feet of the existing historic structures. This property is already located within a subdivision, with the house to the south standing 45 feet away. A new structure located on an adjacent lot would not change the residential neighborhood context for the historic site.

From the archaeological survey:

The modern visible landscape consists of the two story brick house, formerly the Old Spring Tavern, a modern garage, and a large backyard occupying a modest to rather steep slope that had been terraced in the 1990s to improve drainage and deter erosion, according to the most recent former landowner, John Stowe (Figures 3, 4).

Both the Wisconsin Historical Society and the City of Madison Landmarks Commission state that the back of the current house facing west was originally the front of the house and the stage coach road ran along it to the northeast. The source of this information are not given. If this was so, the change would have probably taken place under Gorham's ownership. An 1861 map of Dane County in the Library of Congress shows a road (now Nakoma Rd) running generally north-south just east of the inn. (Ligowski 1861). Since this presumably would be the front entrance of the inn, it would have been where it is now (Figure 7). Another structure is shown across the road that could have been a stable or a barn. As further discussed below, there is no evidence of a road in the current back yard in the form of linear depressions, compressed soils, wagon ruts along with broken wagon parts, horse shoes, and other debris from activities that would have taken place on or near a road or trail. However, the former landowner, John Stowe, reported that modern landscaping in front of the Old Spring Tavern house along Nakoma road unearthed a variety of wagon parts as well as horse shoes, which he collected. With this in mind, the "Old Farm Road" noted by Brown (Figure 5) may, in fact, be the old stage coach trail that ran by the property at 3622 Nakoma Rd. and the Old Spring Tavern on the next lot to the south.

End of background information

My conclusion:

The proposal fails to meet the standard under 41.18 (4) as the proposed land division adversely impacts the historic character of the landmark and fails to meet the criteria for a certificate of appropriateness. The 1972 landmark designation repeatedly refers to the (now) rear of the building as the historic main entrance adjacent to what was once the coach road. I want to recognize the apparent confusion about this called out in the archaeology report, cited above. Despite the physical findings of the report, the original landmark nomination relies on the information that the west side of the building (now the rear) was once the front and the coach road ran in the (now) rear of the building.

Dividing the lot as proposed would incur greatly on the context of the spacious area at the (now) rear of building once containing a road and main entrance. One can still easily imagine the road and inn in its original incarnation due to the spacious nature of the (now) rear yard. Given the building's historic importance as a roadside inn, preserving the context of the original road and entry significantly relates to its status as a landmark.

It's difficult to appreciate this from the map, but a site visit demonstrated the assessor's stake for the proposed property line quite close to the inn which would make for a tiny yard for inn's historic main entrance, effectively destroying its context. (See photo and look for the assessor's stake with the pink flag.) Even if one disagrees about the location of the main entrance, the significant shrinkage of the lot would forever impair the openness of the landscape, even in a now-suburban setting, that invokes the once-rural nature of the site. This point is missed in the staff report and highly material to any decision to grant a certificate of appropriateness.

Further, not taken into account in the staff report are the requirements of Subchapter 4C Landmarks, 41.09 (e) "Divide any lot comprising all or part of a landmark site, or voluntarily grant any easement on that lot if doing so may impair the preservation, maintenance, exterior appearance or historic character of the landmark or landmark site." Nothing in the application for the certificate of appropriateness – specifically requested to create a buildable lot – addresses the potential impairment of the preservation or maintenance of the landmark.

The archaeology report calls out "the modest to steep slope" that has been repaired to address drainage and erosion. The specific intention to create a buildable lot calls into question the effect on the landmark property of building on that steep slope. The potential for water incursion danger to the landmark is quite significant. The failure to address this important requirement in the application merits disapproval.

Thank you for considering my thoughts.

July 11, 2021

[REDACTED], Madison, WI 53711

[REDACTED]

Dear Madison's Landmark Commission:

I am writing to request that the Madison's Landmarks Commission deny approval of the "Certificate of Appropriateness" to develop property at 3706 Nakoma Road, site of the Old Spring Tavern/Hotel (agenda item #72243), for the following reasons:

Impacts the historic character of the landmark and the Nakoma neighborhood.

The City's Landmarks Ordinance contains two relevant provisions for denying the certificate: 41.09(1)(3) and 41.18(4).

Provision 41.09(1)(3) states: No person may... (e) Divide any lot comprising all or part of a landmark site...that may impair the preservation, maintenance or historic character of the landmark or landmark site.

Provision 41.18(4) states: The Commission shall approve...unless it finds that the proposed lot sizes adversely impact the historic character or significance of a landmark, are incompatible with adjacent lot sizes, or fail to maintain the general lot size pattern of the historical district.

In 1854 – shortly before the beginning of the Civil War – the Old Spring Tavern/Hotel was built as a Greek revival house and stagecoach stop on the Madison-Monroe Road for travelers to and from the western part of Wisconsin. The Old Spring Hotel marker was erected on March 20, 1972 by the City of Madison Landmarks Commission. In 1976, this property was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the U.S. Department of Interior.

As a result, tours of the property are conducted and there is always huge interest in the property's history, the Nakoma neighborhood and its settlement. The landmark property provides a glimpse into pre-Civil War history and an understanding of the Nakoma community and its legacy. Changing the property lines and altering the existing lot line on which the landmark sits will inappropriately impact the historic character and aesthetic integrity of the property.

Disrupts the archaeological and culture significance to the Native creators and their ancestors.

The Ho Chunk Nation had a village on the ridge behind the tavern and six prehistoric mounds have been found on the property, each containing a skeleton and artifacts. It is important to understand that a mound may or may not be an effigy mound and any mound may or may not contain bones or other artifacts. **The value of any mound is the archaeological and cultural significance to the native creators and their ancestors.**

The staff report acknowledges the possibility of inadvertent discoveries when the property is developed. Staff's conditional approval suggests the possibility that further disruption exists. Knowing this, it is important to err on the side of denial rather than conditional approval.

Requires more time for analysis.

Residents within 200 feet of the property of the proposed changes were only given notice of a public hearing of 9 business days; whereas the developer had an extended period of time to submit plans for the proposal (in fact, property boundary markers are already in the ground).

A request to convert a quiet, residential section of the neighborhood, a neighborhood that has been called home to many residents for decades, that will forever change the look and feel of the historic Old Spring Tavern/Hotel property, should be given more time for input and careful consideration.

Further, and perhaps most importantly, the purchase by a developer of two lots in the Nakoma residential community will set a new precedent for development in Nakoma. To what end? There is no high demand for development of this historic property. Development does not address the shortage of housing in Dane County or create more affordable housing for families. The development will not add value to the neighborhood. It is just a grand and glorious proposal by a developer with a quest for development.

Creates environmental risk.

The property sits on a sloping lot and changes could adversely affect the historic home's foundation, the stone wall which was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, and permanently cause water to enter the wetlands bordering Lake Wingra that drains into Lake Monona and the Yahara River drainage system. The building of any structure on the upper parcel could exacerbate erosion and drainage and most certainly will disrupt the beautiful and exceptionally hardy trees, plants and other vegetation on the property.

In fact, one of the oldest trees in Madison, the Spring Tavern Black Walnut, can be found on the site. It stands in the yard of the Old Spring Tavern/Hotel. Has the developer addressed preservation of this valuable, historic tree on the landmark site?

In closing, there are four main areas of concern:

1. Lack of appropriate notice to the community and time to respond;
2. Staff recommendation to approve the "Certificate of Appropriateness" before and without community input;
3. Staff recommendation that does not take into account both applicable provisions of the ordinance (and, in my opinion, consideration of the ethical and moral consequences of its recommendation); and
4. The precedent that will be set for future development of the Nakoma residential community if the "Certificate of Appropriateness" is approved.

As a proud, 27 year resident of the community of Nakoma, I respectfully request that Madison's Landmarks Commission deny approval of the "Certificate of Appropriateness" to develop property at 3706 Nakoma Road, the Old Spring Tavern/Hotel. Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Kristine D. Andrews

From: [Mary Odell](#)
To: [PLLCApplications](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 2
Date: Monday, July 11, 2022 12:23:32 PM
Attachments: [Spring Tavern James Dickson.pdf](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Find attached a personal essay regarding the Spring Trail Tavern as written by James Dickson, former owner. The essay was written in the 1920's.

Part of a landmark, such as the Spring Tavern, includes its original setting. Over time the property got chinked off so what is left is now THE setting we should keep as part of the story. As a member of the Landmarks Commission, I believe your mission is to keep important places and spaces as historically true to their original purpose when built. In this case the whole lot is essential to its history.

A little understood piece of the story is that the back of the house faces Nakoma Road. The true history of the property is more complete by the front of the building and the old Indian and lead mine trails which faces up to Spring Trail. Note that James Dickson refers to the building and property as the "Old Spring Trail Tavern", in support of my point.

Please to deny the request to divide the property to allow a house on the proposed lot #2. The long story of the property and adjacent properties is too big to take away its beauty and history. Thank you.

“Spring Trail Tavern”

By

James G. Dickson

Nakoma Historical Sketches — History of Spring Trail Tavern

James G. Dickson

Situated on the old Indian summer camping ground and near springs called "Nibinnaggo", springs by trails, stands the Spring Trail Tavern, possibly the earliest building in the Nakoma plot. The site was an important Winnebago Indian summer dwelling place "Dogeera", even before the coming of the white man. The open wooded slopes descending gently to the low marsh, the large springs of fresh water, the waterfowl nesting in the marsh and feeding in the shallow water of Lake Wingra, the tamarack marsh to the south with the Indian trails over the felt-like moss leading through its quiet quarteys to the corn gardens on the slopes beyond all helped in making this spot a plentiful, peaceful summer home-site long before the early pale-face braves of Nakoma selected this area as their permanent home. Evidence for the picture painted of the primitive home landscape is found in the camp fire stones and stone implements turned up in grading the present site of the tavern, the tamarack logs found buried beneath the several feet of fine, fertile soil of the marsh land now part of the Nakoma Golf Course, the corn mounds present until a few years ago in the grove of oaks on the lower portion of the golf course, and the modern view across the marsh and arboretum as presented to the Nakoma home owner of today.

Then came the early settlers to the land, later to be called Madison. The stage coach road connecting the Madison area with the lead mine district to the south was opened though this open prairie-forest area in the early forties. The Bryants, the Tillotsons, the Kinneys, the Gorhams, the Pipers, and others attracted by the fertile prairie soil of the area with its wooded slopes and abundant springs settled adjacent to this new connecting road of commerce to produce the wheat to feed their families and those of the area. Among the early settlers was Charles E. Morgan and his family traveling from the crowded Carolinas to pioneer in this newly opened wheat country. The location by the spring with the open woods beyond perhaps appealed to him more than the fertile prairies beyond. He settled upon this location early in the fifties and started preparations for building in 1853. Trees were cut and hewed into beams and whip-sawed into joists and studding, a brick kiln was constructed on the edge of the marsh just north of the spring, stone for the sills and lintels was hauled from the sunset point quarry, and the basement was excavated into the limestone on the slope above the spring.

James G. Dickson

The building was planned and constructed on the simple massive lines of the Georgian colonial type of architecture characteristic of the region from which the Morgan's had moved. The blue clay of the marsh, hand pressed into rather small bricks, burned to a rich brown and buff color, the timbers were seasoned and construction started in 1854. The dwelling was built simply, spaciously, and soundly. All of the materials for the building were supplied from the local area with the exception of the white pine used for interior finish and floors which was hauled back from Milwaukee by the wheat wagons.

A large frame barn was constructed below the house just south of the spring. The smoke house was built from bricks burned in the kiln and was later destined to furnish the brick for building the fireplaces when the place was remodeled. The wood shed and wagon shed together with beams from the barn furnished the beams and lumber for remodeling in the later history of the tavern.

The Morgans lived in the home, operated the tavern, farmed a relatively small amount of land and later became occupied in business in the thriving town of Madison. The place did not become important locally as a tavern until the beginning of the Civil War when Mr. Morgan sold the house and sixty acres of land to James W. Gorham and moved into Madison.

The Gorhams, taking advantage of the increased traffic over the road and concentration of troops and officers at Camp Randall, remodeled the building to increase the number of rooms, built on the addition on the north end and expanded the barroom, a necessary feature of the thriving tavern of the day. The barroom and tavern were operated by a manager hired by the Gorhams. Later Mr. Gorham enlisted as a fifer in Company C of the Berdan Sharp Shooters. The Gorhams lived in part of the house during this period and after the return of Mr. Gorham. Mr. Gorham died in 1881. Mrs. Gorham and the two girls continued to live in the house after the death of Mr. Gorham.

The tavern became a popular student resort during the late 90's and early years of 1900. Mrs. Gorham discontinued the tavern during the later years of her life and expanded the living quarters into much of the space formerly occupied by the tavern. An improved bath room was fitted into one of the bedrooms.

James G. Dickson

The barroom was remodeled into living quarters and later became the comfortable living quarters of Mrs. Gorham and her daughter Mrs. Marsden. Mrs. Gorham died in 1916 having lived in the house for over 65 years. Mrs. Marsden continued to live in the basement rooms. The first floor was occupied by the Spauldings who acted as caretaker and helped Mrs. Marsden in her later years.

The place quietly and gradually declined during these later years. The fence along the highway gradually rotted away and was used for kindling. Brush and seedling trees grew up in the yard and garden. The general decline of the place is illustrated in the two photographs taken in 1925. Mrs. Marsden died in 1924, leaving the property without immediate heirs interested in the old home.

The property was purchased by the Madison realty Company soon after the estate was settled. Mr. Icke's shovel and construction crew moved in to remove the steep bank of earth along the highway filling the property along the opposite side of the street and developing the retaining walls and lagoon around the springs.

We had always been interested in the old home and as soon as the property was purchased by the Realty Company, we traded for the house and two lots. Friends and neighbors could not share our enthusiasm in the old place. During our first inspection of the house Mrs. Spaulding, wife of the caretaker, admitted us to the place and was horrified to think we were contemplating moving from a relatively new home into the place. During the conversation she advised us that she had never been upstairs or into the attic as there were too many strange noises at night for her to venture into these darkened, musty rooms. Our first inspection of these unknown parts accounted for the strange noises. Black walnut shells by the bushels were piled in the corners of every room. Each squirrel tenant seemingly occupying a separate room. The attic was occupied by scores of bats. Our first inspection of the attic was met by a flutter of wings and distressed cries of this colony undisturbed in their seclusion for nearly twenty years.

The remodeling and modernizing of the place was accomplished by much hard labor and expenditure of time. The attic was well supplied with aged white pine boards piled there for over fifty years to be used in making hand made trim where changes were necessary. The old brick from the smoke house furnished the added materials

James G. Dickson

furnished the added materials for the fireplaces. The stone wall along the road was built to harmonize with the walls built along the park across the street. Surplus trees and brush were removed and new plantings of shrubbery and evergreens added. The remodeling was started in the spring of 1925 and is still in progress.

The floor plans of the original and remodeled building illustrate how few basic changes were necessary in the building. The new porch and terraces were all that was changed in the exterior. These few additions are shown in the photographs taken after remodeling.

Spring Trail Tavern had become a part of Nakoma and was no longer an outsider at the entrance to the plat.

The John Bell Chapter of the D.A.R. placed a bronze marker on the wall in front of the place to mark the passing of the Old Spring Hotel. The public ceremony was held Friday, October 11, 1929 with a brief program followed by open house to inspect the remodeled landmark of Nakoma.

The Program follows:

Bugle Call, Boy Scouts

Salute of the Flag, led by Mrs. Carroll Davis

Invocation, Mrs. E. B. Frankenburger, Chaplain

Survey of Marking Historic Spots, Mrs. K. L. Hatch

Presentation of Tablet, Mrs. Harrison Smith, Regent

Unveiling, May Eloise Pedley

History of the Tavern, James G. Dickson

Star of Wisconsin, State D.A.R., song Randall School Girls

Taps, Boy Scouts

The remodeled tavern has been of interest locally and through out the state. The Madison and Milwaukee papers, as well as several journals devoted to the history of Wisconsin have printed articles and photographs of the place. Women's organizations, historical societies, University classes and other groups have visited

James G. Dickson

The tavern since it was remodeled. Many an old gray bearded traveler of the days of the stage coach road has stopped to gossip in reminiscence of the days when he stopped over night on his way into Madison with wheat or other produce.

The old tavern register is needed to make history complete. Many have mentioned the old register and its place inside the door in the basement barroom office. Yet no record exists as to the disposition of the book. This old tome would add much to the historical pageant associated with the Old Spring Trail Tavern.

James Geere Dickson

James G. Dickson, Emeritus Professor of Plant Pathology at The University of Wisconsin, and a member of the Committee since the founding of the Arboretum, was killed in a plane crash in the Philippine Islands on February 28, 1962. At the time of his death he was studying disease-resistance capabilities of grain varieties for a Philippine brewery. Dr. Dickson was born February 7, 1891 at Yakima, Washington, and received the B.S. degree from Washington State College in 1915. He obtained his Ph.D. degree from The University of Wisconsin in 1920 and was immediately appointed to the staff of the Department of Plant Pathology where he remained throughout the rest of his active professional career, until retirement in 1961. Professor Dickson became very well known as a specialist in the diseases of cereals and forage crops, and was the recipient of many professional honors, including the Presidency of the American Phytopathological Society in 1953, and later was named President of the American Institute of Biological Sciences. Despite a very busy schedule, Professor Dickson was faithful in attendance at Arboretum Committee meetings during his 25 years of service since 1934, and was notable for his courtesy, tact and general helpfulness, particularly in land matters. For a number of years he resided just to the southeast of the Arboretum and made it a point to keep in active touch with the day-to-day affairs of the Arboretum. He personally knew township and county officials with whom we had to deal from time to time, and quietly smoothed out various misunderstandings and difficulties which cropped up. Although he ceased to be a Committee member in 1959, he left an impress on the Arboretum, and the things he did for it remain in the memories of those who were privileged to serve with him.

From: [Richard Chandler](#)
To: [PLCAplications](#)
Subject: Old Spring Tavern, 3706 Nakoma Road (Legistar File 72243)
Date: Monday, July 11, 2022 12:40:37 PM

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To the Landmarks Commission:

My name is Rick Chandler and I oppose the proposed land division for the Old Spring Tavern property. I'm a member of the Board of Trustees of the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation. I'm writing in my individual capacity because the Madison Trust has not had enough time to take a formal vote on this matter.

I am a tour guide for Madison Trust historic architecture walking tours, including tours of Nakoma which feature a stop at the Old Spring Tavern. A lot of people from all over Madison and other places take our tours. My experience with these tours helps explain why the division of the existing lot would have a major adverse impact on the historic character of the property.

Our Nakoma tours first stop and view the Spring Tavern from Nakoma Road, and then go around the corner and view it from the driveway entrance on Spring Trail. The tours usually would be invited to come into the yard and walk around the property by John and Linda Stowe, the former owners.

The city's preservation file, and in particular the local landmark nomination form from 1972, has details about how the bricks for the tavern were made from clay on the back slope of the property, on the land that would be removed and used for new construction under the proposed land division. It also describes the road on which stagecoaches would arrive at the property that originally ran to the west of the tavern, using the west yard.

The landmark nomination form dated February 7, 1972 says: "The brick for the Old Spring Tavern was made by its builder, Charles Morgan, from clay on the back slope of the property." It also explains: "In terms of siting, the old roadway originally passed along the northwest side of the house, now the rear yard area, and the present road to the southeast was built later."

The Stowes would explain this history as they walked tour groups around the yard. If the Stowes weren't home, I would talk about how the yard to the west was used as the tour group stood at the driveway entrance.

A visit to the Spring Tavern is among the most memorable stops on the tours conducted by the Madison Trust, in part because of the unique landscape of the property and the fascinating history of the stagecoach era. If the west part of the property was removed and another house was placed on it, it would be much harder to visualize and understand the way in which the property was historically used.

There would be a significant loss of setting and feeling, two measures important to a property's historic character. The appearance of a solitary building set on a road in an open, undeveloped landscape has been maintained, an impressive feat by several property owners over many years, and should not be lost due to a land division and the placement of a building west of the tavern.

Therefore, the proposed lot division should not be approved under Section 41.18(4) because it would adversely impact the historic character of this landmark property, which involves both the tavern and all of the surrounding grounds.

In addition, the land division should not be approved under Section 41.09, which says a certificate of appropriateness is needed to divide any lot that is part of a landmark site if it might impair the preservation or historic character of the landmark or landmark site.

A historically-compatible smaller garage was added to the property north of the tavern in 2000. John Stowe told me that the Landmarks Commission approval process for the garage was lengthy to make sure that the design and placement were acceptable. There was some consideration given to locating the garage on the land to the west, but that location was not chosen.

There is a letter in the preservation file to the Landmarks Commission from former city preservation planner Kitty Rankin about the proposed garage dated September 20, 2000, saying in part: "Due to the sloping nature of the lot, it is in the most appropriate location." Among the concerns with the west lot location were concerns about how it would affect drainage and how this would impact the tavern. If the west yard was not a practical or appropriate location for a garage, due to possible drainage problems as well as the impact on the historic character of the property, it would also be unsuitable for a larger structure.

For all these reasons, the proposed lot division should be denied under Sections 41.18(4) and 41.09 due to its adverse impact on the historic character of a major landmark and the potential adverse impact on the preservation of the landmark from placing a building on the historic sloping yard to the west of the tavern.

Thank you.

Rick Chandler

[REDACTED]
Madison, Wisconsin 53711

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July 11, 2022

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Landmarks Commission
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Commissioners:

Please be advised that I represent Jim and Mary Alice Van Gemert, who are opposed to the division of the parcels at 3706 Nakoma Road. Currently, two lots make up this one address: Lot 1 and Lot 14. Lot 1 — which is significantly larger than Lot 14 — contains the historic Old Spring Tavern. Lot 1 and Lot 14 are owned by 3706 Nakoma Road LLC (hereinafter the “Developer”). The Developer is proposing to divide Lot 1 to augment Lot 14, so he can create a “buildable parcel”¹ on Lot 14. We respectfully ask that the Commission deny this request for two reasons: 1) this division violates MGO 41.18(4) as it will adversely impact the historic character and significance of the Old Spring Tavern and the site on which it is located and 2) this division violates MGO 41.09(1)(e) as construction on this site may compromise all or part of this landmark.

Dividing the Parcels Violates MGO 41.18(4)

Under 41.18(4), the Commission shall “approve a certificate of appropriateness for land divisions, combinations, and subdivision plats of landmark sites and properties in historic districts, *unless it finds that the proposed lot sizes adversely impact the historic character or significance of a landmark...*” (emphasis added).

¹ See the Developer’s Landmarks Commission Application.

The Developer is proposing to divide Lot 1 to enlarge Lot 14. As stated in the Developer's application, the purpose for enlarging Lot 14 is to make it a buildable parcel. Although the historic Old Spring Tavern is located within Lot 1, the history of these two parcels reveals that they are irrevocably intertwined.

In the mid-1800s, stagecoach drivers once welcomed the sight of the Old Spring Tavern. It was built by Charles Morgan in 1854 beside a large spring, of which it is named after. Here, weary travelers would rest and water their horses and oxen on their way to Wisconsin's southwestern lead-mining districts. The tavern is positioned at the bottom of a steep slope located on what is now designated as Lot 14. Morgan mined this slope for clay to create the reddish-pink bricks of the tavern. According to a letter authored by Morgan's son, the brick was the "first to be made in Madison or its near vicinity, [with] all of the brick in town having to be hauled by rail over the old Milwaukee & Prairie du Chien road from Milwaukee."² Thus, the building on Lot 1 is literally and aesthetically part and parcel of Lot 14.

Around 1860, James W. Gorham turned the building into the Gorham's Hotel, which became a watering hole for Civil War soldiers based at Camp Randall. During this period, the hotel became a social center, famous for its dances and cookies. In 1895, Gorham turned the building into a private residence.

While it may seem like the front of the house faces east towards Nakoma Road, it appears that this was historically the back of the house. Originally, the front of the house faced west, and the stagecoach road ran along it. In the 1920s, Professor James G. Dickson purchased the house and reoriented it to the newly-built Nakoma Road by replacing an old porch with the present three-story veranda.

Even before Morgan built the tavern, this property had a rich history. Under black walnut trees, (one of which may still be standing on Lot 14), Native Americans constructed burial mounds here where archaeologists have found human remains, along with pots that contained food, grinding stones, battle axes, and copper knives.

As you can see from this brief history, the importance of this landmark comes not from just the structure itself, but from the entire site (i.e., Lot 1 and Lot 14) on which it sits. From the Native Americans who used this land as a sacred burial ground to Morgan mining the slope for clay — these two lots in question both contain a deep, rich history that deserves to be preserved. Furthermore, the Developer is proposing to build on what is historically the front of the Old Spring Tavern which effectively will result in a building being constructed on the original site of

² City of Madison Landmarks Commission; "Landmarks and Landmark Sites Nomination Form" for Old Spring Tavern.

the stagecoach road. For these reasons, we ask the Landmarks Commission to deny the Developer's application to divide Lot 1, as doing so adversely impacts the historic character and significance of the Old Spring Tavern and the land on which it sits.

Dividing the Parcels Violates MGO 41.09(1)(e)

Under MGO 41.09(1)(e), no person may "[d]ivide any lot comprising all or part of a landmark site, . . . if doing so *may impair the preservation, maintenance, exterior appearance or historic character of the landmark . . .*" without a certificate of appropriateness (emphasis added). As we mentioned above, the Old Spring Tavern sits at the bottom of a steep slope. This slope results in stormwater runoff from Lot 14 onto Lot 1 which threatens the integrity of the Old Spring Tavern. In fact, the previous owners of Lots 1 and 14, the Stowes, had a retaining wall constructed on Lot 14 to address the stormwater issue and mitigate the deleterious effects on the Old Spring Tavern.

The acknowledged purpose of the Developer's request to divide Lot 1 is to enable Lot 14 to be buildable. Building on Lot 14 will necessarily increase the impervious surface area, which could exacerbate the runoff problem and compromise the integrity of the Old Spring Tavern. This issue could potentially be very serious; however, it is not addressed in the Developer's application nor in the Planning Division's Staff Report. Dividing Lot 1 may impair the ability to preserve or maintain the Old Spring Tavern; accordingly, the Commission should deny the certificate of appropriateness pursuant to MGO 41.09(1)(e).

For the foregoing reasons, we believe the Landmarks Commission should deny the Developer's petition to divide the lots at 3706 Nakoma Road.

Very truly yours,

STROUD, WILLINK & HOWARD, LLC



By:

Joseph P. Bartol

JPB/neb

Works Cited

Toman, William J. "Old Spring Tavern Historical Marker." Historical Marker Database, 16 June 2016, <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=45472>.

Marsha Weisiger et al., "Old Spring Tavern (Gorham's Hotel)", [Madison, Wisconsin], SAH Archipedia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley, Charlottesville: UVaP, 2012—, <http://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/WI-01-DA36>.

Allison, R. Bruce. "The Spring Tavern/Hotel Walnut." *Every Root an Anchor: Wisconsin's Famous and Historic Trees*, Wisconsin Historical Society Press, Madison, WI, 2005.

From: [Robert Baudhuin](#)
To: [PLLCApplications](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 72243, 3706 Nakoma Rd
Date: Monday, July 11, 2022 12:56:08 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

My wife and I have been Nakoma residents for the past 35 years. Throughout that period we have admired and revered the historic property at 3706 Nakoma Road, the Old Spring Tavern. Built in 1854, this building and its grounds are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and its preservation ought to be a concern for everyone, but it has special meaning for those of us who live nearby and think of the property as a part of our lives. Here are my concerns.

1. The current owner wants to have permission to change the existing parcel lines so that the land behind the existing historic structures will include a “buildable” lot. Obviously, the current owner would not ask for this change unless he wanted to build something on the new lot or sell the lot as “buildable”. The end result will be another residence, in this case built upon a historic site.
2. Since this property is the site of an important former thoroughfare between Madison and Monroe and, long before that, a Native American settlement, one would think a thorough and independent archaeological assessment should happen before even a foot of this land is disturbed in a manner as invasive as building a new residence upon it. Furthermore, officials representing the Ho-Chunk Nation should be made aware of the assessment and any proposals to “develop” the property.
3. Since we must assume that the current owner intends to build on this property, a logical assumption since there is no other reason to seek changes in the configuration of the plot lines, and in light this owner’s and other developers’ recent history of “maximizing” land use in recent development projects in Madison, the public should be able to see elevations of any future structure that might be built on the land behind this historic house. One would also assume that a certificate of appropriateness could only be based upon seeing exactly what the landowner intends to build, its size and situation.
4. One also wonders if appropriate consideration has been given to the environmental impact of building such a structure on the steep hillside above this very old, historic building. There is a spring beneath the house after all, and this invasive building project could easily compromise its probable limestone foundation and the house itself, and send pollutants into the pond across the street.
5. Last but certainly not least, how will new home owners access the new residence, and how will sewer and water be provided to the house? How will the builders achieve the required grades for waste disposal? Will the city be required to finish Spring Trail so that it actually connects to Council Crest, for example? At whose expense?

These are just a few of our concerns regarding this proposal. Additional concerns that we have have already been articulated by others. In closing, we must say that we have fond memories of a time in Madison when city officials seemed to have more reverence for historic places, requiring land owners and developers to adhere to strict standards of historic preservation. Sadly, that doesn’t seem to be the case anymore.

Sincerely,

Rob Baudhuin

Sent from my iPad