

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

September 15, 2025

PREPARED FOR THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION



Project Name & Address: 748 Jenifer Street (District 6)
Application Type(s): Certificate of Approval for demolition and alterations
Legistar File ID # [89575](#)
Prepared By: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner, Planning Division
Date Prepared: September 10, 2025

Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Craig Balbach, FGS Restoration
Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Approval for a demolition of a garage and alteration of the site

Background Information

Parcel Location/Information: The subject property is a designated landmark (Klose Cottage) and located within the Third Lake Ridge local historic district

Relevant Ordinance Sections:

41.18 STANDARDS FOR GRANTING A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL.

A certificate of approval shall be granted only if the proposed project complies with this chapter, including all of the following standards that apply.

- (1) New Construction or Exterior Alteration. The Landmarks Commission shall approve a certificate of approval for exterior alteration or construction only if:
 - (a) In the case of exterior alteration to a designated landmark, the proposed work would meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
 - (b) In the case of exterior alteration or construction of a structure on a landmark site, the proposed work would meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
 - (c) In the case of exterior alteration or construction on any property located in a historic district, the proposed exterior alteration or construction meets the adopted standards and guidelines for that district.
 - (d) In the case of any exterior alteration or construction for which a certificate of approval is required, the proposed work will not frustrate the public interest expressed in this ordinance for protecting, promoting, conserving, and using the City's historic resources.
- (2) Demolition or Removal. In determining whether to approve a Certificate of Approval for any demolition or removal of any landmark or structure within a historic district, the Landmarks Commission shall consider all of the following, and may give decisive weight to any or all of the following:
 - (a) Whether the structure is of such architectural or historic significance that its demolition or removal would be detrimental to the public interest and contrary to the general welfare of the people of the City and the State.
 - (b) Whether a landmark's designation has been rescinded.
 - (c) Whether the structure, although not itself a landmark structure, contributes to the distinctive architectural or historic character of the historic district as a whole and therefore should be preserved for the benefit of the people of the City and the State.

- (d) Whether demolition or removal of the subject property would be contrary to the policy and purpose of this ordinance and/or to the objectives of the historic preservation plan for the applicable historic district as duly adopted by the Common Council.
- (e) Whether the structure is of such old and unusual or uncommon design, method of construction, or material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty and/or expense.
- (f) Whether retention of the structure would promote the general welfare of the people of the City and the State by encouraging study of American history, architecture and design or by developing an understanding of American culture and heritage.
- (g) The condition of the property, provided that any deterioration of the property which is self-created or which is the result of a failure to maintain the property as required by this chapter cannot qualify as a basis for the issuance of a Certificate of Approval for demolition or removal.
- (h) Whether any new structure proposed to be constructed or change in use proposed to be made is compatible with the historic resources of the historic district in which the subject property is located, or if outside a historic district, compatible with the mass and scale of buildings within two hundred (200) feet of the boundary of the landmark site.

Prior to approving a Certificate of Approval for demolition, the Landmarks Commission may require the applicant to provide documentation of the structure. Documentation shall be in the form required by the Commission.

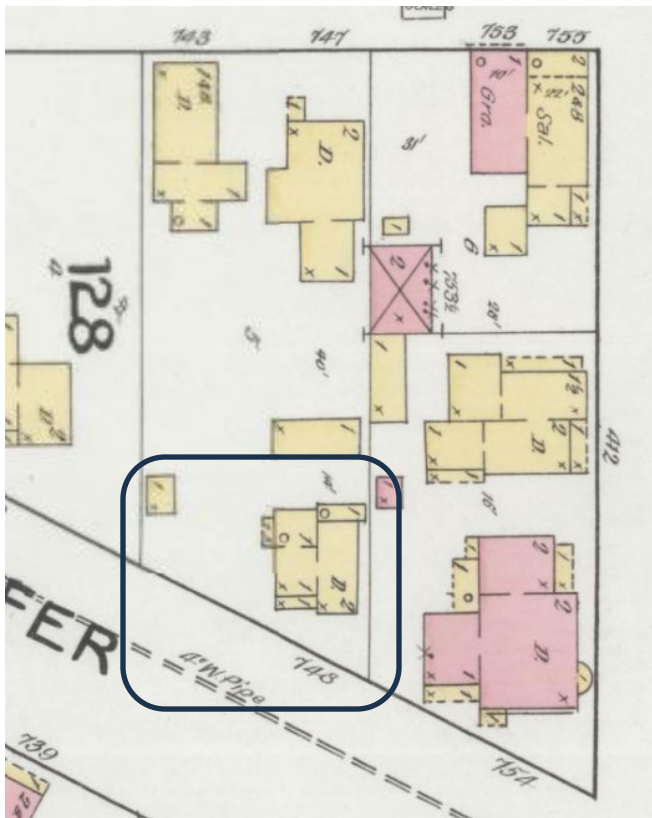
Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

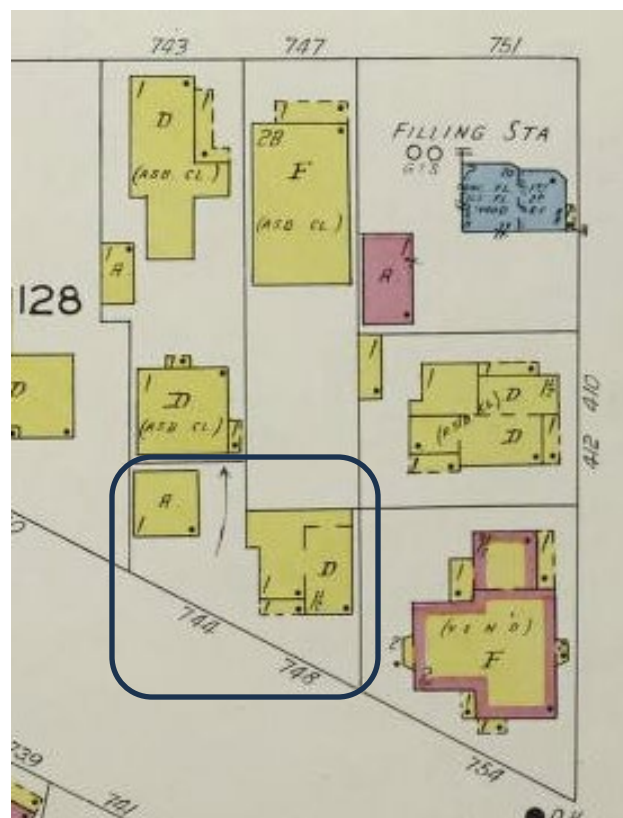
Analysis and Conclusion

The proposed project is to demolish the existing garage at 748 Jenifer St and replace it with a new concrete parking slab. The property contains a house and the garage, and the property was designated a Madison landmark in 1977 for its architectural and historic significance as a vernacular house typical of Madison's 19th century craftsman entrepreneurial class, and its association with prominent Irish and German immigrant families.

While the house was constructed in 1863, the date of construction for the garage is unknown. A single-car-sized outbuilding shows in this approximate location of the current garage in the 1892 through the 1908 Sanborn Maps, but that expands to a wider outbuilding by the 1942 Sanborn Map, which matches with a 1949 building permit to reroof the two-car garage. There are a variety of siding styles on the garage showing that it has evolved a great deal over time. The garage is currently in poor condition and is not structurally sound. There is no information in the landmark nomination about this outbuilding and the historic designation focuses on the house. It does not appear that the garage is historically or architecturally significant.



1892 Sanborn Map



1942 Sanborn Map

The proposal is to completely remove the failing garage and pour a new concrete parking pad. There are a few letters of concern from neighbors citing previous construction activities at the property not complying with lead-safe requirements. Staff has referred those neighbors to Public Health Madison & Dane County as they are the agency to enforce the lead ordinance.

A discussion of relevant standards follows:

41.18 STANDARDS FOR GRANTING A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL.

A certificate of approval shall be granted only if the proposed project complies with this chapter, including all of the following standards that apply.

- (2) Demolition or Removal. In determining whether to approve a Certificate of Approval for any demolition or removal of any landmark or structure within a historic district, the Landmarks Commission shall consider all of the following, and may give decisive weight to any or all of the following:
- (a) The structure is not of such architectural or historic significance that its demolition or removal would be detrimental to the public interest and contrary to the general welfare of the people of the City and the State.
 - (b) N/A
 - (c) The structure does not contribute to the distinctive architectural or historic character of the historic district as a whole and therefore should not be preserved for the benefit of the people of the City and the State.
 - (d) The demolition or removal of the garage would not be contrary to the policy and purpose of this ordinance and/or to the objectives of the historic preservation plan for the applicable historic district as duly adopted by the Common Council.
 - (e) The structure is not of such old and unusual or uncommon design, method of construction, or material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty and/or expense.
 - (f) Retention of the structure would not promote the general welfare of the people of the City and the State by encouraging study of American history, architecture and design or by developing an understanding of American culture and heritage.
 - (g) While the property has not been well maintained, the garage is not significant and is at the point of structural failure.
 - (h) The parking pad will be in keeping with alterations to other properties in the vicinity.
- Staff does not believe that additional documentation of the existing garage is needed beyond what is included in the application materials.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. This part of the property will still be used for parking and this alteration will not change the distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships of the property.
2. The historic character of the property will be retained.
3. This alteration will not create a false sense of history.
4. The garage has not achieved significance in its own right.
5. N/A
6. N/A
7. N/A
8. There are no previously identified archaeological sites on this property.
9. The new parking pad is compatible with the character of the site and its larger neighborhood setting.
10. The removal of the garage and introduction of a parking pad does not impact the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment.

Recommendation

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Approval are met and recommends the Landmarks Commission approve the project as proposed.