

Madison Landmarks Commission

Third Lake Ridge Historic District
Criteria for the review of new construction
Parcels zoned Commercial

Address: 731 Williamson Street
Date: October 5, 2007
Form Prepared By: K. H. Rankin

Does the project meet the following guideline criteria?
(For the complete text of the criteria, please see Madison General Ordinances Sec. 33.01(11)(f), available on the web at www.cityofmadison.com)

Yes	<u> X </u>	No	<u> </u>	1.	Gross volume.
Yes	<u> X </u>	No	<u> </u>	2.	Height.
Yes	<u> X </u>	No	<u> </u>	3.	Rhythm of solids and voids in street façade(s).
Yes	<u> X </u>	No	<u> </u>	4.	Materials in street façade(s).
Yes	<u> </u>	No	<u> X </u>	5.	Roof design.
Yes	<u> X </u>	No	<u> </u>	6.	Rhythm of building masses and spaces.

Explanation:

The owners propose to demolish this house and build a new single-family house on the site. The first question before us is whether or not to issue a demolition permit. I have toured the house with Dan Stephans and Brenda Konkell. We have not talked about it, but my opinion is that the house is ready for the wrecking ball.

First its history. It is one of the oldest houses in the neighborhood. The west end of Williamson Street and Wilson Street toward the capitol was heavily populated by early German settlers. It is one of the few parts of the downtown that can truly be called an ethnic neighborhood. This house was built ca. 1857-1860 by Christopher and Wildhagen as a residence for Wildhagen and their cabinetry shop. Christopher lived on the same block and the Wildhagens probably lived in this house. Wildhagen and Christopher split up fairly quickly, but Fred and August Wildhagen continued to live here and operate a cabinetmakers shop. Also living here was Louis Wildhagen, a wagonmaker. Around the year 1871 Frederick Krehl, a tinner lived here and worked downtown. The Krehls lived in the house until the 1890s.

The house is a very simple cottage with later siding. The original bargeboard is the only interesting exterior feature and it should be kept for reuse. The interior is completely devoid of character and has been significantly remodeled. Every functional part of the house needs complete replacement and the structure is not good, particularly the roof. The house appears to have been neglected for decades. No one in their right mind would try to restore it (by the way I

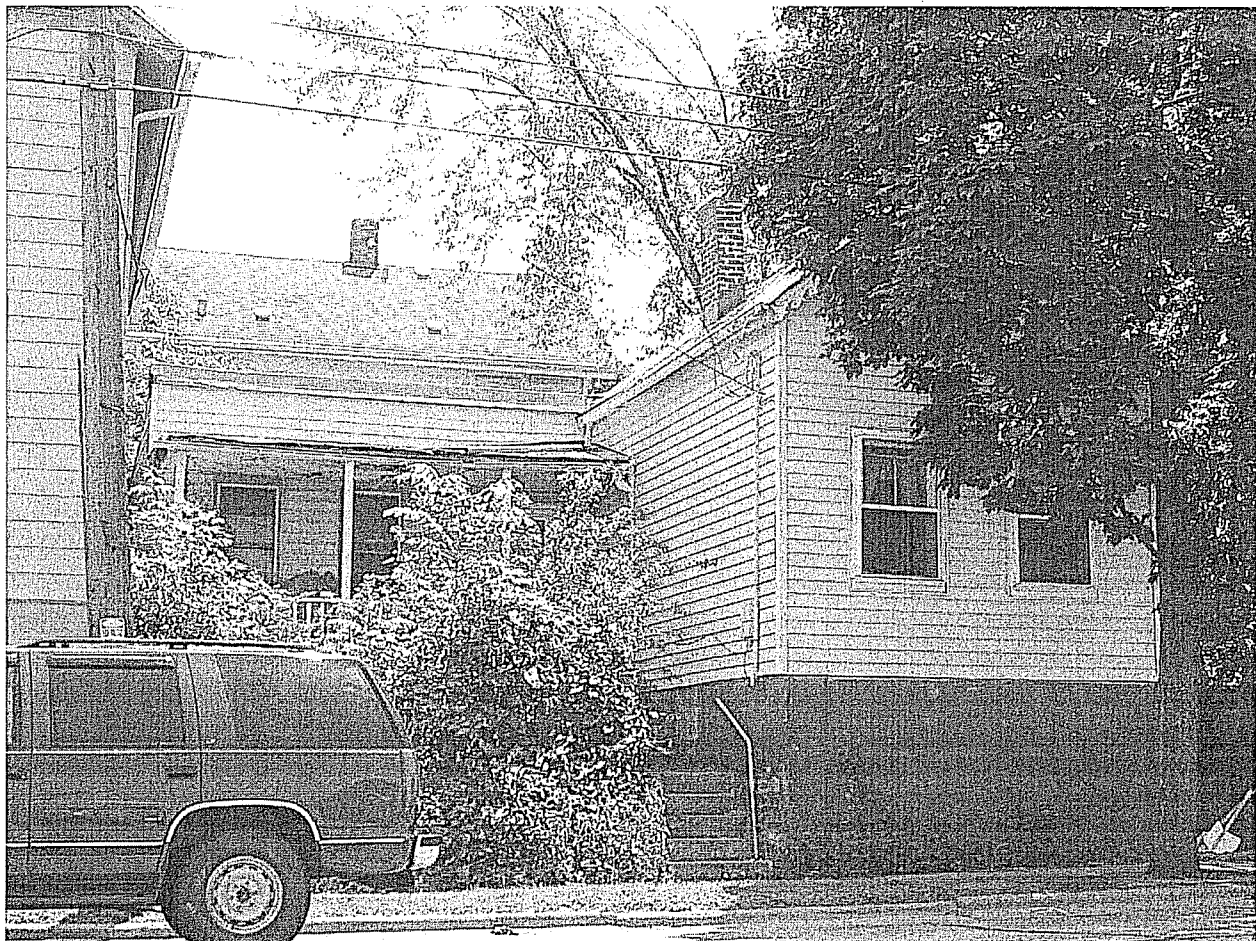
X Please see continuation sheet

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have not said that about too many houses over the years and I have seen plenty of poorly maintained houses).

The second issue is the new house proposed for the site. The owners have chosen to build a modern design house, while still blending with the historic character of the area. It is a very tiny lot and they have developed a proposal for a small house that will work for a family of four. If there were more room, I would probably recommend against the garage door facing the street, but, in this case, it is the only way to provide off-street parking for the house.

My only concern is the roof design. The butterfly roof is a very modern style first used for middle class residences in the 1950s and continuing until the 1970s, a period in which houses were being designed to reflect a sense of modernity, in direct opposition to the original hipped and gabled roofs of earlier days. This particular property is the single most visible spot in the district, directly adjoining the park at the intersection of Jenifer and Williamson Street. The foliage in the park that will screen it will not be on the trees for half of the year. The surrounding houses are a very tight collection of mostly gabled roofs. The owners and their architect are aware of this concern and may bring alternate roof designs to the meeting. The butterfly roof shape is not compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood and I recommend rejection of the project until a more compatible roof design is proposed.





A Place for All People
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Marquette Neighborhood Association
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DATE: October 1, 2007

Re: MNA Board Support for Lee-Rosen Rebuild at 731 Willy Street

Board of Directors

Attn: Landmarks Commission

Mike Engel
President

John Coleman
Vice-President

Jonathon Gramling
Treasurer

John Schlaefter
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Julie Spears

The Marquette Neighborhood Association (MNA) Board is pleased to write this letter of support for the proposal by Beth Rosen and Lindsey Lee to replace the existing structure at 731 Williamson Street with a single family residence. On September 19, at the Marquette Neighborhood monthly meeting, the board passed a resolution to send the city a letter stating that: "The board supports the replacement of the existing structure at 731 Williamson St. with a single-family residence of contemporary design that respects the rhythm and context of the neighborhood."

During discussion at the board meeting it was noted that while MNA has consistently supported retention of existing structures within the neighborhood, the existing structure is in exceptionally bad condition. That factor, and the fact that the proposal is to replace the existing structure with one of similar scale and that the project will provide family housing in the neighborhood, convinced the board that this project will be of significant benefit to the neighborhood.

The full board and the Preservation and Development Committee of MNA have met with the Lee-Rosens. The board and committee endorse the idea of constructing an contemporary single family dwelling and look forward to meeting with the Lee-Rosen's again to exchange ideas on final details of the structure's exterior.

Thank you for your attention to this project and hope that you will be able to support it.

Sincerely,

John Coleman
Vice-President
on behalf of the Board of Directors
Marquette Neighborhood Association