

AGENDA # 6

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: 7/23/18

TITLE: 3502 Gregory St - Exterior Alteration to a Designated Madison Landmark Site (Glenwood Children's Park); 13th Ald. Dist.

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Amy Scanlon, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: 7/27/18

ID NUMBER: 52424

Members present were: Stuart Levitan, Marsha Rummel, Lon Hill, and Katie Kaliszewski. Excused were: Anna Andrzejewski, Richard Arnesen, and David McLean.

SUMMARY:

Peter Nause, registering in support and wishing to speak.

Staff stated that this request is tough because the property lines of the landmark site are different than you perceive the space when you are in the park. There is a railroad arch façade that that does not exist on the landmark site; you can see it and play on it, but you leave the landmark site to get to it. She noted that as water is coming out of the arch, it is damaging the park, so we need to find a solution to address that damage on the property of the park. She expressed her concern that the Landmarks Commission is not terribly equipped to deal with issues of landscape and storm water management. She noted that the park landmarks continue to change, grow, and move, which differs from the buildings they typically review. She stated that we have to deal with the water issues because it is damaging the landmark, but she is not equipped enough to run through all of the options for a solution. She noted that she relies heavily on other staff to choose the best option, and this proposal is the best option.

Nause stated that he is a landscape architect and has been volunteering at the park for the last 12 years. He noted that Ben Yahr and Friends of Lake Wingra have become allies in helping with the park because of the storm water issues, which is the core of this problem. He has also received advice from Brenda Williams, a landscape architect who specializes in historic preservation. He noted that he is here to support finding a solution, but has grave reservations because of the fast track that this project is on. He mentioned that he wrote a letter to City Engineering ten years ago to discuss this very problem, which has now exploded and they are in crisis mode. He noted that he is most concerned about losing a really great opportunity to solve this problem in a thoughtful way, considering how Jens Jensen would have dealt with the stonework and natural features, rather than moving so quickly. He stated that the situation is bad, and they need to do something, but is afraid of missing opportunities because there are a lot of good minds that could provide input on this project. He mentioned that he has recently spoken to Janet Schmidt in City Engineering about trying to have a conversation about this before it goes to the Board of Public Works. He then spoke about the issue of the property line and saying that we aren't going to deal with the arch because another governmental unit owns it, when it is the source of the large storm surges that are blasting and ruining the park. He noted that there is a problem with not giving the public the ability to advise and have feedback in the planning process. He ended by saying that we are in the situation of having a kneejerk reaction rather than doing something prescriptive in advance.

Janet Schmidt stated that Nause is correct, we are in a kneejerk reaction; the flooding in June has caused massive damage to the park. She noted that this project had previously been planned for next year, but they were able to find money to do it this year so it has been fast-tracked. She stated that they are trying to solve these problems in a way that will provide options to preserve the arch, but also create the opportunity for a bigger planning process in 2019 or 2020 when funding is available. At that point, the solution can be modified or removed, so they are considering this an interim solution because of the damage to the park.

Levitan asked if this is going to the Board of Public Works after Landmarks reviews it. Schmidt responded that it is, and they need to do a public bid for the project, so there are deadlines they need to meet in order to advertise and bid this year. Levitan asked if Landmarks were to approve this as submitted, it doesn't preclude the Board of Public Works from changing it. Schmidt confirmed that they could, and that she would be happy to further refine the project and work with the neighborhood.

Hill asked whether the long-term plans that Schmidt mentioned are for the park itself or just for the wall. Schmidt responded that it could be for both, stating that their long-term plan is to look at the park including the arch and come up with a whole design for that to work toward in the future.

Levitan disclosed that several years ago, he gave a presentation for the landmark plaque dedication in this park, which he does not believe affects his ability to act in this case.

ACTION:

A motion was made by Rummel, seconded by Hill, to approve the request for the Certificate of Appropriateness with the stipulation that staff has authority to review any administrative changes after the Board of Public Works review and with staff's discretion, bring the project back for review by the Landmarks Commission if necessary. The motion passed by voice vote.