

AGENDA # 9

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: 3/7/22

TITLE: Buildings Proposed for Demolition - 2022

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: 3/8/22

ID NUMBER: 68860

Members present were: Anna Andrzejewski, Richard Arnesen, Katie Kaliszewski, and Maurice Taylor.
Excused were: Ald. Arvina Martin and David McLean.

SUMMARY:

Henry Doane, registering in opposition and wishing to speak
Bob Klebba, registering in opposition and wishing to speak
Alex Saloutos, registering neither in support nor in opposition and wishing to speak
Will Ochowicz, registering in support and wishing to speak
Graham Linn, registering in opposition and wishing to speak
Becky Steinhoff, registering in support and available to answer questions
James Stoppel, registering in support and available to answer questions
Gregory Werth, registering in support and available to answer questions
Michael Metzger, registering in support and available to answer questions
Amy Thiboldeaux, registering in opposition and not wishing to speak
Tracy Dietzel, registering in opposition and not wishing to speak
Rymii Kaio, registering in opposition and not wishing to speak
Ed Kuharski, registering in opposition and not wishing to speak
Juli Wagner, registering in opposition and not wishing to speak
Lisa Pfaff, registering in opposition and not wishing to speak

Meri Rose Ekberg, City Planning staff, provided information on the buildings proposed for demolition. Andrzejewski said that it was difficult to tell if there was any significance to the building at 7204 E Buckeye Road. Ekberg said that it is an old farmhouse, and it was her understanding that it was determined to be structurally unsound; the Madison Fire Department inspected it as a potential practice facility but decided the structure was not stable enough to use for that purpose. Andrzejewski said that we are losing so many buildings of this resource type.

Becky Steinhoff, property owner, said that the structure is not brick but instead EIFS or flat stone siding. They said the building is caving in and is unsafe to enter. When they first purchased the property, they hoped to save the building, but it is in horrific condition. They did not know the date of construction.

Kaliszewski said that upon further inspection, it did not appear to be real stone, as Steinhoff had pointed out.

Alex Saloutos said that it is unfortunate that we don't know the rich history of the building and suggested the commission delay their vote until they have more information. They said there were few buildings of this style left in Madison, and it was sad to see this come to a vote with inadequate information. They said that the

structural soundness of the building is irrelevant to its historic significance. They suggested a historic structure report be prepared.

Kaliszewski pointed out that true historic structure reports take a lot of time and money to complete and asked Saloutos if they meant a cursory review of the history of the property instead. Saloutos said the City had initiated most of the landmark nominations in the past, but their role in that has dropped off. They suggested getting a preliminary determination on a potential state or federal landmark status and then moving to a deeper level after that. Kaliszewski said that it sounded like Saloutos was suggesting a preliminary review for eligibility rather than a historic structure report.

Andrzejewski and Kaliszewski noted the Landmarks Commission's jurisdiction to provide a recommendation to the Plan Commission on a building's historic value.

After brief discussion, the commission agreed that the building fit demolition criterion b.

A motion was made by Arnesen, seconded by Taylor, to recommend to the Plan Commission that the building at 7204 E Buckeye Road has no known historic value, but vernacular farmhouses are a fast disappearing resource that are important to Madison's history. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

Ed Kuharski said that the latest addition to 1313 Fish Hatchery Road was in 1988, not 1998, and there were three prior additions to the original building.

Regarding the buildings at 519 and 521 W Washington Avenue, Kaliszewski pointed out that we are losing a lot of buildings along W Washington Avenue, and while the buildings themselves don't hold historic value, they do give a sense of feeling to the place, and we are slowly losing that on this side of town. Taylor agreed, pointing out that these older homes are disappearing, and it is concerning that the City and Wisconsin Historical Society don't have more information about them.

Andrzejewski said that the building at 1313 Fish Hatchery Road is an Erdman doctors park that was added on to over time.

Andrzejewski said that the building at 5109 Barton Road is one of the early and few remaining All-City Swim League properties, an organization that goes back over 50 years.

A motion was made by Kaliszewski, seconded by Taylor, to recommend to the Plan Commission that the buildings at 5109 Barton Road, 519 W Washington Avenue, 521 W Washington Avenue, 6323 Odana Road, 6325 Odana Road, 6333 Odana Road, 6401 Odana Road, 6409 Odana Road, 6417 Odana Road, 6425 Odana Road, 105 E Lakeview Avenue, 3206 E Washington Avenue, and 1313 Fish Hatchery Road have no known historic value. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

Ekberg provided information on the history of the buildings at 616 E Mifflin Street and 609-617 E Dayton Street as they relate to the Reynolds family and business.

Bob Klebba, Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Association Development Chair, said that the neighborhood steering committee for this development has only met once so far, but the majority of their comments were against the demolition of the warehouse at 609-617 E Dayton Street and encouraged reuse of the façade of the existing building.

Graham Linn showed additional photos of the building at 609-617 E Dayton Street to highlight its features, including marble elements and other details on the façade. They said that it is not just a brick warehouse; it was designed with large windows to let in daylight perhaps because it was constructed at a time with fewer electric lights. They noted that the building is almost 100 years old. They pointed out other brick structures nearby that have been restored, such as a carriage house down the street and the Kronenberg condos. There

is a trend of keeping these types of structures in the neighborhood, and they encouraged the developers to consider at least keeping the façade of this building.

Alex Saloutos said that the structure at 609-617 E Dayton Street has historic significance, and noted that Reynolds Transfer and Storage is one of the most significant woman-owned businesses of its time. They discussed the role of the business in the community and dominance in its industry, as well as the role of the building in the community's history. They said that the information in the staff report is all we have, and it would carry more weight for the Plan Commission if part one of a historic structure report were prepared.

Will Ochowicz said that they liked elements of the façade at 609-617 E Dayton Street, especially the masonry details, but didn't think the building would meet the criteria for becoming a landmark. They said that the Reynolds company still operates in the neighborhood and haven't provided comment, so if we are telling the story of the Reynolds family business, keeping this building doesn't add to that story beyond what could be covered by a plaque or website.

Kaliszewski said that the building at 609-617 E Dayton Street fit between demolition criteria b and c because it has architectural significance and a high degree of integrity. She said that it is an excellent example of a warehouse building of this era, and the building reflects the history of a company that is still in operation.

Henry Doane said that the Reynolds warehouse is one of the few remaining small industrial-style buildings in Madison. The building has great proportions and symmetry, and it uses brick that one will never find again, as well as granite. They said it is a beautiful interior space that is unusually large and light, with skylights and 20' ceilings. The loss of this building will contribute to the loss of the historic character of our city, and they wished the developer would reconsider using this building in the new property. They said it would add more value to the project and make it a more desirable destination, especially for a hotel. They said that it is more than just the long history of Reynolds Transfer in Madison, which is substantial, but the building also enhances the neighborhood and adds a weight of historic authenticity to the street. Too much in Madison is thrown away and replaced by sterile environs that don't stand the test of time; the building slated to replace this one doesn't hold a candle to it. More weight should be put on this building and others like it in terms of how we look at the city in the future, and we should consider them as potential future landmarks.

A motion was made by Kaliszewski, seconded by Arnesen, to recommend to the Plan Commission that the building at 609-617 E Dayton Street has historic value based on architectural significance, its high degree of integrity, and its relation to the history of a local company that is still in operation. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

A motion was made by Arnesen, seconded by Kaliszewski, to recommend to the Plan Commission that the shed located at 616 E Mifflin Street has no known historic value. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

Ekberg said that the building at 114 N Blount Street is contributing to the East Dayton Street National Register historic district. Known as the Ida Carmichael Residence, the building was moved to this location in 1923. Ida Carmichael was the mother-in-law of John Hill, who owned the grocery store nearby. This was the first African-American neighborhood in Madison, and although this structure is not identified as a National Historic Landmark, two other structures in the East Dayton National Register historic district are.

Bob Klebba pointed out that this is one of the three or four contributing properties in the National Register historic district, so losing it would have a monumentally deleterious impact on the district. They noted this as one of the few remaining houses in the late 19th c. African-American neighborhood in Madison. They said that the historic district nomination form indicated that this house was in very good condition at the time, and they haven't seen any independent engineering reports stating the building can't be saved. They said that the people occupying this house were significant in the Black Madison and Black Wisconsin communities.

Alex Saloutos said that we can do a lot more to recognize the role of the African-American community in the development of Madison, and this is a significant property in that history. They said it would break their heart to see this gone. They said that the building was in the Carmichael and Hill families continuously until last year when it changed hands to a new owner who wants to build a new house there. They said it would be a tragedy to see this building demolished.

Ed Kuharski referenced written comment they submitted today. They were in favor of recommending this building has historic value. They said that it would be a shame to ignore its historic value given our shortcomings in recognizing our African-American community in history. They said it would also be horrible to set a precedent that an owner has the option to demolish and replace a building in a National Register historic district, which should never happen.

Andrzejewski referenced the numerous written public comments received today, which the commission takes seriously. She said that regardless of the outcome of this vote, the building deserves to be documented through measured drawings using standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey, given its history, before the condition deteriorates further. She said that it is vital to the history, and while they have no mechanism to make that happen, she strongly hoped that it would.

Gregory Werth, property owner, explained that they have done many home renovations throughout Madison, and they acquired this home with every intention of doing a full restoration, which they have done successfully to similar homes of this vintage. They started by taking the time to remove interior walls and plaster to assess what needed to be done. They said that they would go to any length they could to save a home, especially one such as this, and they had looked forward to spending 1-2 years restoring this home. The unfortunate reality is that the home is structurally unsound from the foundation to the roof. They explained that the house is falling in on itself due to poorly designed and poorly implemented interior changes over the last 100 years. They said the house was constructed in the 1860s on the other side of town, then moved to its current location and placed on a foundation that it didn't fit on correctly. They said the home is far from intact, and had it been 30-50 years ago, they may have been able to save it, but that time has passed. They said they had no intention of demolishing the house and would prefer not to, but they now intend to construct a nearly identical house in this location.

A motion was made by Kaliszewski, seconded by Taylor, to recommend to the Plan Commission that the building at 114 N Blount Street has historic value based on its status as a contributing structure in a National Register Historic District and its significant role in the African-American settlement of Madison and Wisconsin. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

ACTION:

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