

AGENDA # 4

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: August 26, 2013

TITLE: 632 Howard Place – Langdon Street
National Historic District – Demolish
two buildings and construct a 33-unit
apartment building. 2nd Ald. District.
Contact: Mark Smith (31212)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Amy Scanlon, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: August 26, 2013

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Stu Levitan, Chair; Jason Fowler, Christina Slattery, Marsha Rummel, and Michael Rosenblum. Erica Fox Gehrig and David McLean excused.

SUMMARY:

Staff explained that this is an **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** on the proposal for the property, but at this time the Landmarks Commission should comment on the historic value of this property and what comments the Commission would like to send to the Plan Commission. Staff explained that it is possible that a Plan Commission member could send the proposal back to the Landmarks Commission for a formal review.

Rebecca Anderson, registering in support and available to answer questions. Ms Anderson explained that she owns many properties in proximity to the properties involved in the proposed development. Anderson explained that the properties are deteriorating, the wiring is poor, and the structural reports show the buildings are sinking. She said the new building is a nice looking building and will replace the buildings at 622 and 632 Howard Place. She explained the property at 635 is going to get new windows will be brought back its original appearance. Anderson has a grand vision for the inclusion of shops along Howard Place. Lazy Jane's has decided that they would like to use one of Anderson's spaces for another café location.

Mark M. Smith, representing Lake Towne Apartments, LLC, registering in support wishing to speak and available to answer questions. Mr. Smith explained that the buildings at 622 and 632 have outlived their useful life. The owners have a commitment to rehabilitate 615 and 635 Howard Place and a strong commitment to construct a new structure that is compatible with the Langdon Street neighborhood as it relates to scale, material and a level of detail and size and detail of openings.

Smith explained the structural report. The main structure of 632 has differential settlement. Foundations were not sufficient with 3 or 4 moving parts to that structure that is now evident with cracking. He explained this was a non-invasive report and that many conditions were not visible. A column or load bearing wall in the center of the building was removed and now the building is sagging. Both structures are in decline. They are scheduled to appear before Plan Commission on October 14, 2013 and are talking with neighborhood next week. They would like feedback on both demolition and individual design elements.

Staff explained that Planning staff toured the buildings proposed for demolition and suggested that a structural engineer provide a structural condition report.

Levitan explained that the Landmarks Commission has great concern about demolition in historic districts especially about demolition of contributing structures. Levitan explained that the loss of 3 contributing structures related to the Waterfront development and potentially 2 contributing structures for this proposal will mark a significant change in the Langdon area.

Levitan explained that it is important to restore and enhance the holdings in the Langdon area or eventually you will lose the historic district if contributing structures continue to be demolished.

Levitan suggests a higher level of investigation of the structural systems to give a better assessment of the condition. Anderson explained that health, safety and welfare are concerns and that the building exits lead right into the road.

Franny Ingebritson, registering in opposition and wishing to speak. Ms. Ingebritson expressed her opposition to the demolition. 622 Howard Place is the last bungalow in the area. The Stanley Hanks bungalows were built to house mainly University faculty and have all been demolished. 632 started out as a single-family home designed by Claude & Starck. She believes that everything can be restored and that demolition/neglect should not be rewarded in this way. Ingebritson found the following on the City of Madison's website 2010: "The City of Madison's Comprehensive Plan was adopted in January 2006 since that time several new neighborhood, neighborhood development and special area plans have been adopted or amended as supplements through the Comprehensive Plan but there have been no formal amendments to the plan itself except to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan remains an accurate expression of community goals." She explained that the Downtown Plan and the recommendations for the Langdon Street National Register Historic District will be used by policymakers to review this proposal. She explained that Director Cover came to the Landmarks Commission and he stated that the Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Plan had equal weight and that the Neighborhood Plans and the Downtown Plan covers specific areas because they are more detailed versions of the Comprehensive Plan. The Waterfront/Iota Court project is an unfortunate example of what will continue to happen in the Langdon Street National Register Historic District. The renderings of the proposed building show that Langdon will be totally different. You could be anywhere.

ACTION:

No action was taken. This was an **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION.**