



May 8, 2023

Re: Old Spring Tavern and the proposed structure at 3701 Council Crest;
Legistar File ID #: 77464

Dear Commissioners and Preservation Planner Bailey,

The Old Spring Hotel was the 16th of 184 local landmarks and was designated in 1972. It is a highly significant structure in Madison, with relevance to early construction methods, stagecoach transportation and accommodations, Civil War era taverns, and Native American culture.

The Madison Trust opposed the re-division of the two Old Spring Tavern lots when that issue was before the Commission in 2022. It is important that any new structure built on the recently created lot works in harmony with the historic character of the entire landmarked property, which consists of both Lot 1 and Lot 2 of the Certified Survey Map.

The Madison Trust is concerned that the size of the proposed structure at 3701 Council Crest fails to protect or complement this important historic environment. While the front elevation of the proposed building is two stories high, the steep slope of the new lot creates an imposingly tall structure directly facing the front door of the Old Spring Tavern. Furthermore, the large mass of the proposed building overwhelms the two-story façade of the Tavern and doesn't even match the average size of houses in the Nakoma neighborhood.

The renderings of the proposed structure do not show how it would appear to someone inside the Tavern or from the key public viewing point where the Tavern driveway intersects Spring Trail. For example, the three-story rear elevation of the proposed 4,500 square-foot structure would be only 26 yards from the two-story front of the 2,400 square-foot Tavern, looming over and dwarfing the historic structure and occupying most of the historic west lot.

The Madison Trust requests that the Landmarks Commission require such drawings of the applicant in order to permit a proper evaluation using the Secretary of the Interior's Standard 9 for Rehabilitation: ". . . *The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*" Absent such drawings, we believe it is necessary that the Commissioners make the effort to visit the site with the existing application materials in hand to get a feel for the disproportionate size of the proposed structure. Even with the necessary drawings, a visit is strongly encouraged.

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Finally, the Madison Trust does not feel that the currently proposed structure for 3701 Council Crest is sympathetic to the Old Spring Tavern or to the Nakoma neighborhood. The developer should come back with a proposal for a smaller building that can be less imposing on the historic Old Spring Tavern and more harmonious with the Nakoma neighborhood. The Nakoma National Historic District includes just one 19th century structure (the Tavern) and otherwise consists of all 20th century buildings.

We ask the Landmarks Commission to deny the certificate of appropriateness as submitted.

Sincerely,

Lynn Bjorkman

Lynn Bjorkman
President