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Via email at hbailey@cityofmadison.com

RE: Landmarks Commission demolition review
1617 Sherman Avenue, Madison, Wisconsin

Dear Heather and Members of the Landmarks Commission:

The above referenced property has submitted for review the proposed demolition. As current owners of the property and in support of the developer, Vermillion, we would like to submit the following written response into the public record for consideration and look forward for the opportunity to discuss the matter.

- The firm that designed 1617 Sherman Avenue does not believe there is an architectural significance to the building. Potter Lawson's predecessor firm (Law, Law, Potter and Nystrom) was the architect for the existing building at 1617 Sherman Avenue. Potter Lawson does not believe there is historical significance in the stripped-classical style of architecture, which is essentially classical, without any of the classical elements that make the building interesting.
- The building's age is not significant for Landmark status. The City of Madison website identifies 182 buildings and sites that have received Landmark status. All 182 are older than the building at 1627 Sherman Avenue. The age of the existing building is not historically significant.
- We do not believe this location has significance to the founding of the credit union movement. The movement's founding is traced back to a meeting in Este Park, CO in 1934 where 52 credit union leaders from 21 states and the District of Columbia met to establish the Credit Union National Association (CUNA). Madison a designated their temporary headquarters. The first headquarter building in Madison was located at 142 East Gilman Avenue which was later demolished in 1940 after CUNA move to their second headquarter location at 1342 East Washington Avenue. 1617 Sherman Avenue was the third CUNA headquarter building for approximately 10 years from 1950-1960 before the company outgrew the building. In 1960 CUNA relocated to its fourth headquarters at 5910 Mineral Point Road where it exists today.
- Numerous U.S. Presidents have visited Madison. Truman's visit in 1950 was not his first visit to Madison, nor was 1617 Sherman Avenue it's purpose. Truman's 1950 visit focused

on delivering a "peace address" at the UW-Madison Field House prior to commencement of the Korean War. Truman's visit to 1617 Sherman Avenue was another stop on that trip.

There are various other Presidential visits to Madison:

- Ulysses S. Grant
 - Rutherford B. Hayes, September 10, 1878
 - James Garfield
 - Chester Arthur
 - Grover Cleveland
 - William McKinley
 - Woodrow Wilson, October 26, 1911
 - William H. Taft, May 5-7, 1915
 - Theodore Roosevelt, May 28, 1918
 - Warren G. Harding
 - Herbert Hoover, November 5, 1932
 - Harry Truman, October 14, 1948
 - Dwight D. Eisenhower, October 28, 1949
 - Harry Truman, May 14, 1950
 - John F. Kennedy, October 23, 1960
 - Bill Clinton, October 1, 1992
 - Jimmy Carter, March 1, 1994
 - Barack Obama, February 12, 2008
 - Bill Clinton, February 14, 2008
- When Tenney Place Development, LLC purchased the 1617 Sherman Avenue property, we had several conversations with the City of Madison regarding residential development. During that time, there was never mention that the property could have historical value and that there would be limitations for future usage.

Renovations that were completed since we took ownership include the following items, and again there was no mention nor impediments based on historical value.

- A metal structure that was attached to the building was removed.
- A new front entrance was constructed, dramatically changing the appearance.
- At least two major interior remodels were completed.

We do not believe the neighborhood and the City of Madison consider this building to be significant. City of Madison's Emerson East – Eken Park – Yahara Neighborhood Plan was developed in 2016 as a supplement to the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan with input from neighborhood groups and city staff. The plan recommends that the building at 1617 Sherman Avenue "be adapted for use as a residential structure, or for it to be razed and new residential structures built in its place." The feasibility of converting this building to residential has been reviewed and deemed functionally obsolete for this purpose.

We respect that the City of Madison may consider the cornerstone itself to be historically interesting. The proposed developer, Vermillion is willing to donate the cornerstone to the Madison Historical Society or is willing to incorporate it into an historic marker onsite. We fully support Vermillion's development and are willing to work alongside them and with the Landmarks Commission on forming a path forward.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,



Mikel J. Schaefer
Member, Tenney Place Development, LLC