



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development  
**Building Inspection Division**

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**DATE:** September 10, 2010  
**TO:** Plan Commission  
**FROM:** George C. Hank, Director  
Building Inspection Division  
**SUBJECT:** 1725 Fritz Avenue

On several occasions over the past year, staff from the Building Inspection Division have inspected the former Residence of Homer Fieldhouse, located at 1725 Fritz Avenue on Madison's West side. The house and out buildings are located at the end of a dead end street and are hard to observe even when on the lot. Mr. Fieldhouse was a landscaper who did all of his own work whether he was qualified or not.

The house is in total disrepair. There are numerous windows that are damaged or have not been installed correctly. Porches are missing and/or are deteriorated. There are newer roof additions constructed over older roofs without proper support. The roof is covered with a tarp. There are leaks everywhere and a significant mold infestation has taken over the house. There are areas where there is no siding. Window headers are failing and ceilings are sagging. Flexible cords are wired directly into the service panel. These cords run out of the house, through the green house area and to the old garage. The house is uninhabitable. There is no room that does not have some kind of significant problem.

There are the remains of a two-story 32x32 foot garage. This garage was designed like a commercial structure and presumably was initially designed to support heavy trucks driving in the front of the garage on the second floor and into the first floor in the rear. The underside of the concrete deck is severely deteriorated; the concrete is spalling and the reinforcing steel is visible. A fire destroyed the upper part of the garage structure and the roof collapsed. There are trees growing out of the walls. The roof structure of the garage has been rebuilt but it is not up to Code. The walls still have gaping holes. Windows and doors are missing and/or in disrepair. The garage has been expanded at the rear without permits and is structurally deficient.

Attached to the garage, at the lowest level, is a greenhouse like structure, again constructed without permits. The greenhouse type structures extend almost all of the way to the house. The roof/wall systems are structurally undersized and structurally deficient. There are leaks and mold everywhere.

There is a porch/ramp structure between the house and the garage/greenhouse. This structure was improperly built and has been damaged by fire. This porch is accessed from the upper parking area and serves one of the principal entrances into the house.

There are other structures on the property that were built either for storage or decorative purposes. All of them were built without permits. None of them were built with any sort of Code in mind. They appear to be built with whatever materials were on hand. There are holes in walls, missing windows and doors, styrofoam exterior walls, etc and are nearly impossible to secure. We are concerned that the neighborhood children could easily get into these structures and get hurt.

All of the buildings on the lot have structural deficiencies. All have either been built without permits or have additions that were built without permits and the required inspections. They are lacking in basic equipment or facilities (windows or doors missing, roofs missing, interior and exterior walls improperly constructed, lack of heat in some rooms of the house). These buildings are an attractive nuisance. The current assessment for the improvements on this lot is \$1,000. We believe that it is in the best interest of the City that all of these buildings be demolished.