



P.O. Box 296
Madison, WI 53701-0296
(608) 441-8864
info@madisonpreservation.org
www.madisonpreservation.org

May 4, 2022

Re: Plan Commission May 9, 2022, meeting agenda item: Proposed demolition of
114 North Blount Street

To the Members of the Madison Plan Commission:

The Madison Trust for Historic Preservation includes more than 350 members who have a strong interest in maintaining and explaining the city's rich cultural heritage.

This matter before the Commission relates to an important physical representation of the first Black community established in the city. That community was created under adverse conditions and included the establishment of organizations that were central to cohesion and support of community members.

The East Dayton Street National Register Historic District was established in 1988 in recognition of the importance of a few buildings that remained extant and could still tell the story of the struggles and successes of early Black residents of Madison. The current condition of the majority of those structures is perilous. One is the subject of this application for demolition.

The very nature of the Ida Charmichael home at 114 North Blount Street is illustrative of the hardships that have faced Madison's Black residents and of the quality of the housing that was made available to them. It is located in what was, at the time of Madison's founding, a cattail marsh. It was relocated from elsewhere in the city, undoubtedly because it failed to approach the standards of other buildings near that location.

The building's significant historic value has been recognized by the Landmarks Commission. **The Trust respectfully opposes the application for demolition.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lynn Bjorkman".

Lynn Bjorkman
President, Board of Trustees
Madison Trust for Historic Preservation, Inc.

Dedicated to Preserving Madison's Historic Places

A local partner of the National Trust for Historic Preservation

From: jsaeha30@aol.com
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Destruction of African American History
Date: Friday, April 15, 2022 2:59:47 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

City of Madison Planning Commission
Madison, Wisconsin. 53703

Attention: Heather Stouder

1910 is the year our grandfather, John W. Hill, migrated to Madison from Atlanta, Georgia. He came seeking a better life for his wife and three children. Our grandfather worked various jobs in order to provide for his family. In time, he acquired three properties: 114 North Blount Street, 118 North Blount Street and 120 North Blount Street.

Recently, my sisters and I sold the property located at 114 North Blount Street. We were told by Greg Werth the house would not be destroyed. Instead, he expressed his desire to preserve the history of this property and repair it. He even said, "Once the restoration is complete, you will not know it as you once knew it". We were very happy to know our former house would not be destroyed but renovated. It was our goal to sell to someone who respected the history connected to the house as well as our views and hopes about the house located at 114 North Blount Street.

My sisters and I are now concerned about our former property. The history of 114 North Blount Street represents African American history in Madison. The history of this house dates back to it being owned by Ida Carmichael and her son, William Carmichael, a veteran of WWI. Later, after their passing, the house was owned by Amanda Carmichael Hill, wife of John W. Hill, owner of Hill's Grocery. The house was rented and also used as a layover for porters who worked for Chicago Northwestern Railroad, since at this time, African American were denied lodging in the hotels/motels in Madison.

Yes, my sisters and I are concerned about the possible destruction of

our former house. A house that has been in the present location for over one hundred years. A house that was a part of the African American community of houses located on Blount Street, Dayton Street and Blair Street. I fondly remember the Miller family, Mitchell family, Gothard family, Caire family, Weaver family plus others. All African American families living in this part of Madison. Men and women working to provide for their families, children playing and growing up together, and enjoying life to its fullest. And now, the only houses standing from this former, thriving group of African American homes are the Miller house, our grandfathers's store, plus the residence connected to the store, and our former property located at 114 North Blount Street.

My sisters and I are saddened by the possibility of our former property being considered for destruction. If this should occur, as I have stated previously, you would be destroying valuable African American history in Madison.

Evelyn Hill Ashkenaz
Louisville, Kentucky

From: [Tommy Hunter](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Demolition of 114 N. Blount St
Date: Thursday, April 14, 2022 5:23:43 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

My sister informed me that my former family home at 114 N. Blount St is being considered for demolition by Greg Werth. When he purchased our home, he promised to save and restore this historic home. If he knows what problems exist in the home, he should be able to repair them. We hope and pray he will keep his word. Please save our home, one of the last of **three** buildings remaining in the city's earliest African American neighborhood.

Sincerely,
Reverend Doctor Colenthia Hill Hunter
Graduate of Central High School Class of 1956



TENNEY - LAPHAM

Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 703, Madison, WI 53701
www.tenneylapham.org

4 April 2022

Plan Commission

The Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Association is against the demolition of the Carmichael House at 114 N Blount St. The TLNA board voted to support this position and share it with you for your consideration after we discussed the property at our organization's March 10, 2022 meeting.

We understand that the condition of the building reflects some of the many issues that the African American community faced in the early 20th century in Madison.

The building comprising the front façade that was purchased and moved to the current location was built in the late 19th century using lower cost construction techniques for that time. The condition of the building at the time may have reflected its purchase price and thus what was available to a lower-income family in Madison. Even though the Carmichael House has had several additions and modifications, it is a good example of the houses available to the Black community in Madison in the early 20th century.

The condition of the Carmichael House today shows how the preservation of important historic sites for some communities is not as valued as the sites of Madison's dominant culture. This house is one of only 3 remaining buildings from this community in the East Dayton Historic District in our neighborhood. Most of the houses of other Black residents were razed decades ago.

Because this building tells us how a significant Wisconsin African American family lived in Madison and provides a window into what was available to that family over time, the Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Association is against its demolition and encourages its preservation.

Sincerely,

Tyler Lark

2022 President, Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Association