

From: [Rummel, Marsha](#)
To: [Scanlon, Amy](#); [Fruhling, William](#); [Clear, Mark](#)
Cc: christina.slattery@meadhunt.com; [Robin Taylor](#); michaeljrosenblum@yahoo.com; gehriqs4@gmail.com; stuartlevitan@sbcglobal.net
Subject: 5117 University Ave landmark nomination
Date: Friday, August 05, 2011 6:09:40 PM

Dear fellow Commissioners-

I am sorry I am unable to attend the Landmarks Commission meeting of August 8 and the discussion of this application. I believe 5117 University Ave easily satisfies the first two of the four standards for Landmarks nomination. I believe Ms. Kinast makes a convincing case for landmarking the Erdman and Associates Office and Shop and we should move forward with the public hearing.

33.19(4) Landmarks and Landmark Sites Designation Criteria.

(a) For purposes of this ordinance, a landmark or landmark site designation may be placed on any site, natural or improved, including any building, improvement or structure located thereon, or any area of particular historic, architectural or cultural significance to the City of Madison, such as historic structures or sites which:

1. Exemplify or reflect the broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the nation, state or community; or
2. Are identified with historic personages or with important events in national, state or local history; or
3. Embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period, style, method of construction, or of indigenous materials or craftsmanship or
4. Are representative of the notable work of a master builder, designer or architect whose individual genius influences his age.

Whatever members think of Ms. Kinast's timing and motivation for the nomination, there is no disputing the fact that Wisconsin Historical Society Division of Historic Preservation determined the office and shop eligible for the National Register under Criterion B, in architecture, for its association with Marshall Erdman. "Wisconsin Historical Society Determination of Eligibility Form, Agency # WisDOT 5992-08-18, WHS # 10-1465/DA, Erdman & Associates Office and Shop (Building No. 1), 5117 University Avenue, City of Madison, Dane County, 53705." Certified Dec. 2010. Prepared by Elizabeth Miller.

I agree that the city does not want to change the process of an entitlement/land use approval midstream but I respectfully disagree with the staff conclusion that Landmarks Commission review of the demolition report in July and August 2010 constituted an adequate review of the historical significance of the property. From my discussion with Landmarks staff, the Commission was unaware of the provenance and history of the building. The previous developer, Erdman Real Estate Holdings, was uniquely aware of the significance of the property and did not disclose this information to any reviewing bodies. I believe due diligence by the current developer, Paul Lenhart of Krupp Construction, should have made them aware of the potential historic interest in this property and that info shared with the alder and affected neighbors. I did not serve on Landmarks in 2010 but saw the previous iteration in my role as UDC member. I guarantee that if I had known about the historic significance and cultural history of 5117 University I would have flagged it at UDC and asked for a review by Landmarks.

The property was part of the June 27 demolition report. Ms. Kinast spoke to the Commission and shared her research. During the discussion, Ms. Slattery informed us that during the University Ave reconstruction process, all affected properties were reviewed by the State's Division of Historic Preservation and 5117 was deemed eligible for National Register nomination. The Landmarks Commission issued a statement that the property was potentially eligible for local Landmarks and National Historic status. This report to Plan Commission was at the front end of the current development review process. Exactly where it should be. The lack of knowledge during the first proposal should not disallow new information for this iteration.

Overall I believe the parcels between Whitney Way and University Ave is appropriate for redevelopment. My interest in supporting a public hearing for landmarking 5117 University is not intended as a strategy to stop the development. My hope would be to discuss the benefit of relocating the building and incorporating it onsite (rail station?) or elsewhere.

Jason Tish of the Madison Trust makes the analogy to Aldo Leopold and states: "The property at 5117 University Ave. is the location where the innovations and the progress of the Erdman company took place. It is not a pretty cluster of buildings, but, like Aldo Leopold's chicken coop where he wrote *A Sand County Almanac*, the office and shop complex illustrate the practical, nuts-and-bolts operation of the company rather than the product of the company and its innovation. It is where the innovation and adaptation of the Erdman company took place. In that sense it is uniquely qualified to convey the production and adaptation of the company." Staff comment D. suggests that there are better illustrations of the relationship of Erdman, Wright and Kaiser than 5117 University when seen in the light of Doctors Park, the pre-fab workforce housing, or the First Unitarian Church, but I believe that the Erdman office does embody a worthy historic place, the studio - the place of planning and artistic production -that and it's proximity to Indian Hills is part of it's historic value.

The staff report mentions Luther Memorial landmarking as an example of an appropriate concurrent process with a land use application but I respectfully argue that this application is generally similar, the only difference is that we have more information during this iteration than the one from 2009-2010.

I urge you to support a public hearing.

Thank you and I appreciate the thoughtful conversation you will engage in and know you will weigh the standards to make a good decision. I don't believe that the ordinance requires that all four standards be met. I think this situation shows why we need an adequate inventory of our historic assets. I want to start figuring out a strategy to accomplish that goal, not just downtown but throughout the city.

PLEASE don't hit reply all!

Marsha