

AGENDA # 4

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: August 8, 2011

TITLE: 5117 University Avenue – Marshall
Erdman & Associates Office and Shop
Landmark Nomination. 19th Ald.
District. (23432)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Amy Scanlon, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: August 8, 2011

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Stu Levitan, Chair; Erica Gehrig, Vice Chair; Robin Taylor, Christina Slattery, David McLean, and Michael Rosenblum. Marsha Rummel was Excused.

SUMMARY:

Amy Kinast, 5018 Tomahawk Trail, was in support of the nomination. Ms. Kinast provided a brief historical overview of the building and the context. Robert Procter, 2 E. Mifflin #200, opposed the nomination. He is an attorney for Erdman Holdings, Inc. He said the family wants the Landmarks Commission to stop the nomination as per staff report. He stated that they do not feel it is landmarks nomination material. Nothing in this building reflects either Marshall Erdman or Frank Lloyd Wright. It was built for a workplace only. The Unitarian Meeting house is national landmark and is Marshall Erdman. Middleton Hills is a premier example of his work. There are numerous sites that better show his work. This building was brought to the Landmarks Commission's attention for demolition in 2010. It has come before this Commission twice as a demolition project. Gehrig stated that the nomination had not been seen by Landmarks in the past year. Jason Tish, 2714 LaFollette Avenue, supported the nomination. He provided written comments and would like the Commission to forward this to public hearing based on criteria 1 and 2. Frank Miller, 930 Cornell Court, opposed the nomination. He is a Professor of Architecture and was hired by Marshall Erdman 15 years ago. He agreed that Erdman should be acknowledged but this building was originally a concrete block building. Erdman added onto it ½ dozen times including the trusses that came from the airport and the sections behind the building. Associating this building to Frank Lloyd Wright is not appropriate. Ledell Zellers, 510 N. Carroll St, supported the recommendation to move ahead to public hearing. Ms. Zellers agrees with points made by Ald. Rummel in her August 5 memo to the Landmarks Commission. She explained that as a city, we have not been diligent in protecting our historic resources through landmarking and citizen nominations should be encouraged. Developers have a responsibility to the City and neighborhood. Jon Snowden, 6720 Frank Lloyd Wright, Vice President of Erdman Associates, opposed the nomination. Mr. Snowden gave thanks to all the positive comments about the Erdman legacy. He explained that Joyce Erdman designed the homes out of their home in the beginning. The development proposal will be an urban infill development with mixed-use and higher livable densities. Marshall Erdman hated waste and the building and site being empty is wasteful. The building is not worth moving, or remodeling and it can't be designed around. Mr. Snowden said that he called Mr. Tish and offered him the use of their archives to find a better way to acknowledge the history and contributions of Marshall Erdman. Fred Mohs, 512 Wisconsin Avenue, opposed the nomination. Mr. Mohs explained that he has known Marshall Erdman since 1950. This building was just a place to work. He finds it telling that the family

does not want to keep the building. Gary L. Peterson, 210 Marinette Trail, opposed the nomination but left before being called to speak. Paul Lenhart, 16 S. Allen Street, President of Krupp Construction, opposed the nomination. They are the applicant of the redevelopment project. They feel that their 14 acre development with a \$100M worth of value to the assessment goals and 7 – 800 employees is a significant addition to the Madison area. This application has been in process for a year. He feels that the building is cobbled together and obsolete. In the proposed development, they hope to name a street after Marshall. There hasn't been any consideration to keeping any of the buildings on site because they are functionally obsolete and have not been inhabited for more than a year. There are mold and water issues. This building would be a nightmare to restore. Levitan asked what material harm does considering the nomination have for the project or the developer. Mr. Lenhart explained that he will risk time and effort. The developer must go on a continuous path for the GDP and there are two paths going at the same time. He will be hiring consultants, engineers, architects at the same time to make development feasible and he is trying to work with other users of the site who might be buying a building site there. The developer must have some certainty. Time kills all developments if the schedule does not stay on track. All the money is wasted if landmarks status is granted. Daniel Erdman, 1721 Hickory, opposed the nomination and did not need to speak but was available to answer questions. Ald. Mark Clear, 19th District, opposed the nomination. He toured the building several weeks ago. And found it to be cobbled together and in terrible shape. The First Unitarian Society building is better choice to commemorate Erdman than 5117 University Avenue. Gehrig asked about the timing of the proposed development when the Women's Building was being nominated. The Commissioners discussed that the developer was at an informational presentation at Urban Design Commission and the Rennebohm building was similar. The Rennebohm building had a public hearing. The Commission moved not to approve due to development. Mr. Kinast provided closing remarks that related to the staff report. The Commissioners discussed that the developer has a PUD-GDP application that shows 7 buildings and 3 parking structures with a concurrent SIP application for the first building. Levitan stated that the commission has two criteria to weigh at this meeting according to the Ordinance. He explained that there are political realities, staff reports, and the application to review, but that the discussion at this time does not have to look at the criteria. There was discussion about which criteria should be represented in the nomination. The Commission agreed that it is criteria #2 and not #4. Walt Disney house, Cress Records in Chicago, and the Aldo Leopold Chicken coop are examples of Landmarks that are eligible based on association with a historic person that may not be architecturally significant. There was further discussion that the legacy could be the book, the plaque, and the buildings he built. Slattery stated that the National Register of Historic Places criteria are similar to Landmarks criteria and this building was identified with an historic person and the State Historic Preservation Office has concurred with this recommendation that this building meets with Criterion B and our #2 Historic Person. Slattery explained that the State Historic Preservation Office signed off in December 2010 and that the research was a part of a WisDOT transportation project and they were complying with Section 106. As part of that process, they may have had a public hearing on the property along the corridor. Mr. Snowden explained that in December 2010 the report/finding came out but at the time they were withdrawing their application but were talking to the UW Hospital to continue locating there. The proposal started through the process and appeared at the Urban Design Commission, and the neighborhood was notified. It was very clear in November 2010 at the first neighborhood meeting that the buildings would be demolished. He took the State through and he was told they had to go through because of the University Avenue reconstruction project and the State worker was told that they planned on redeveloping the site. Email from her that it could be noted that it could qualify but "no way would this affect your ability to demolish the building." Slattery stated that the City was notified in summer of 2010 by Ms. Miller with a list of properties. Mr. Krupp explained, as an investor, that good faith effort will be made to commemorate Erdman in the new development.

ACTION:

A motion was made by Rosenblum seconded by Taylor, to not consider the nomination based on the following:

1. The Landmarks Commission finds that 5117 University Avenue could be evaluated against 2 criteria, but in light of the status of a current development proposal, finds it not appropriate to consider at this time.
2. The Landmarks Commission finds that the developers of the site should commemorate the historic significance in the new development.

The motion did not pass on a vote of (1-4). Ayes: M Rosenblum. No: Gehrig, McLean, Taylor, Slattery.

Motion by Taylor, seconded by McLean, to consider the nomination and set a date for public hearing. The motion was passed on a vote of (4-1). Ayes: Gehrig, McLean, Taylor, Slattery. No: Rosenblum.