

Rooster Valley Road  
Grove, Minnesota 55974  
12, 2011

13878

Spring

December

James Madison Park Committee  
City of Madison  
Madison, Wisconsin 53701

Dear Members of the James Madison Park Committee:

As longtime residents of the 700 block of East Gorham and members of the now extinct Old Marketplace Neighborhood Association, we are writing to share our preferences and recommendations in regard to the upcoming sale of the houses in the 600 and 700 blocks of East Gorham. We are definitely opposed to the division of the building at 704 East Gorham (Collins House) into efficiency apartments. The Old Marketplace Neighbor held its monthly meetings/potluck suppers during the 1980's and early 1990's at the Collins House, and it was always so wonderful to enter the ground floor and have use of the entire floor for our meetings. In the summer, we sat in the sun porch at the back of the house overlooking Lake Mendota and watched the lake turn all different colors as the sun sank lower, and in the winters, we held our meetings around the large dining table. We would love to see this space available to the public again.

The James Madison Park Houses are all within the Fourth Lake Ridge Historic District which was developed by merchants and laborers during the latter part of the 19th Century and the early part of the 20th Century, and, as such, includes numerous examples of various types of architecture, as well as a range of house sizes and construction costs. Many of these old houses were occupied by a single family, albeit perhaps several generations of the same family. From the 1940's on, these houses were divided up into apartments to provide living quarters for students at the University of Wisconsin and for the airmen and their families stationed at Truax Field. These needs are no longer prevalent and it would be nice to see more of the houses along Gorham Street, which were originally single family homes and which were so horrendously divided up into small apartments, revert to their former use. Therefore, we also prefer that the house at 646 East Gorham (Ziegelman House) become a single family/owner occupied home. We definitely do not support the proposal that the building remain a 4 unit apartment house.

While we now live in Minnesota, we still own and have a residence in the 700 block of East Gorham, and thus are concerned that the neighborhood maintain as many of its late 19th century/early 20th century characteristics as possible. In addition, the existence of James Madison Park is a wonderful bonus to people living in the area, and

the use of these buildings will be essential in maintaining its quality. We hope that the committee will consider its options with extreme care.

Sincerely,

James R. Gray

Julia H. Gray