

AGENDA # 8

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION	PRESENTED: November 11, 2013
TITLE: 121, 123, 127 West Gilman Street – Mansion Hill Historic District – Construct new apartment buildings. 2nd Ald. District. Contact: Dan Seeley (32027)	REFERRED: REREFERRED: REPORTED BACK:
AUTHOR: Amy Scanlon, Secretary	ADOPTED: POF:
DATED: November 11, 2013	ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Stu Levitan, Chair; Erica Fox Gehrig, Vice Chair; Jason Fowler, Christina Slattery, Marsha Rummel, David McLean and Michael Rosenblum.

SUMMARY:

Margaret Watson, registering in support and wishing to speak. Ms. Watson briefly introduced the project team.

Dan Seeley, registering in support and wishing to speak. Mr. Seeley briefly explained the rationale of the project. Seeley explained that Steve Brown Apartments owns approximately 12% of the properties in Mansion Hill and have been stewards in the district since 1980. When Steve Brown acquired 127 West Gilman in 1994, the building had already experienced a fire in the attic and deterioration of the foundation.

Seeley explained that the Highlander was built in 1968 as an off campus student housing option that has lost popularity in the rental market.

The building at 123 West Gilman was built in 1886 and acquired by Steve Brown Apartments in 1986. The current proposal suggests that this building be moved to a vacant site at 113 West Gorham.

Seeley explained that the combination of these three sites presents an opportunity to improve the quality of the area.

Shane Fry, registering in support and wishing to speak. Fry described the proposed new development and that the design is based on characteristics of successful existing building in the district.

They found that these buildings had a very strong A-B-A rhythm to the street facades with window bays flanking a central entrance bay. Materials and detailing of these buildings were also surveyed and used as inspiration.

Fry explained the team was very interested in meeting the zoning code requirements.

Levitan asked the project team how this proposal meets the standards in the ordinance relative to the buildings in the visually related area.

Staff explained that the VRA maps will be prepared shortly.

Rummel noted that the garage door treatment and location needs further consideration.

Gehrig requested that the Commission have a structural report related to the building at 127 W. Gilman.

Seeley noted that 127 W. Gilman was last rented in 1996 due to condition issues.

Shannon Sloat, registering in support but not wishing to speak.

Andrea Schmoldt, registering in support but not wishing to speak.

Alyssa Hellenbrand-Best, registering in support but not wishing to speak.

Meggan Alien, registering in support but not wishing to speak.

Rick Cruz, registering in support but not wishing to speak.

Franny Ingebritson, registering in opposition but not wishing to speak.

Fred Mohs, registering in opposition and wishing to speak. Mr. Mohs explained that the Mansion Hill Design Guidelines have not been adopted and the guidelines would assist the neighborhood in situations like this. Mohs explained that buildings can be repaired and maintained instead of demolished and that property owners in historic districts need consistent interpretation and protection.

Gene Devitt, representing Mansion Hill Neighborhood, Capitol Neighborhood Association, registering in opposition and wishing to speak. Mr. Devitt explained that there are many properties in Mansion Hill that have been rehabilitated over the years and have made the district a stronger place. There are other properties that have been threatened with demolition that have not moved forward. The historic districts are in place for a reason and should be maintained.

Bill White, representing Steve Brown Apartments, registering in support and wishing to speak. Mr. White explained that the structural report will provide more information about 127 W. Gilman. White explained that the Highlander was constructed as a dormitory with sleeping rooms and it would be very difficult to rectify its issues even though Steve Brown Apartments has renovated it. White also explained that the project team reviewed the Mansion Hill design guidelines when preparing the submission.

Devitt explained that relocation requests have not been supported in the past. Mohs explained that it is rare in historic districts to find relocation an acceptable practice.

Slattery asked the project team if the feedback has been for a more contemporary style on the proposed new buildings.

Fry and Watson explained that they have gotten numerous viewpoints on the design style.

ACTION:

No action was taken.