



W I S C O N S I N
H I S T O R I C A L
S O C I E T Y

January 16, 2014

Gene Devitt
28 East Gilman
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Gene,

I am writing this letter to express the historic significance and importance of the Mansion Hill Historic District.

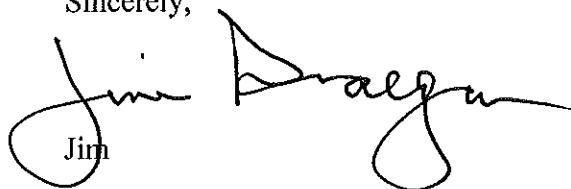
The Mansion Hill Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on June 4, 1997. At the time of designation, the district's 183 resources occupied portions of 17 blocks northwest of the Capitol Square. The National Register nomination notes that the district contains "the largest concentration of high style architect-designed nineteenth century houses in Madison." Begun as one of the city's most prestigious neighborhoods in the mid-19th century, the area is noted for its outstanding examples of residences in the Italianate, Second Empire and German Renaissance Revivals styles, with numerous examples constructed of local sandstone. Because of its proximity to the city's core, the district contains many homes dating to the mid-nineteenth century. Over one-fourth of the residences date between 1851 and 1880; it is one of the highest concentrations of homes of this early period in the city. While most styles of the period through the mid-twentieth are represented, the district also is set apart by the use of styles rarely found in the city, including buildings constructed in the Mediterranean Revival and Art Moderne styles.

Because of the neighborhood's proximity to the city's governmental and commercial core, some of the city's and state's most influential persons built residences and lived in the neighborhood before its transition to student housing, which began in the early 20th century. Notable residents included attorneys, bankers, and industrialists, whose names are carried over into present day Madison. The district's residents also included many politicians. In 1883, Governor Jeremiah Rusk purchased the 1856 White/Delaplaine House. Upon its sale to the state in 1885, the house became the state's executive's residence and served in this role until 1949. In these years, the residence housed 17 governors and their families.

With its unique combination of buildings, including residences, small apartment buildings and churches, the Mansion Hill Historic District remains one of Madison's most important neighborhoods and one with an exceptionally rich history. The Mansion Hill area holds some of Madison's best historic architecture, especially from the mid to late 19th century. It has survived because Madison has chosen to protect its heritage and for decades has carefully controlled and directed development to ensure that the legacy of Madison's early social, political, business and cultural leaders is respected. Once vanished, our heritage is lost forever, so a careful and

thoughtful approach to development is key to balancing modern day needs with the historic fabric. Thoughtful preservation retains our sense of place and keeps the distinctiveness that makes Madison a special place.

Sincerely,



Jim

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