

## AGENDA # 2

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

**PRESENTED:** 5 June 2017

TITLE: 801 Williamson Street – Demolish current  
structure, replace with a new  
mixed-use building in the Third  
Lake Ridge Hist. Dist.; 6<sup>th</sup> Ald. Dist.

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

CONTACT: Jim Glueck, Glueck Architects

**REPORTED BACK:**

AUTHOR: Amy Scanlon, Secretary

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

DATED: 9 June 2017

**ID NUMBER:** 43805

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Members present were: Stuart Levitan, Chair, David WJ McLean, Richard Arnesen, Marsha A. Rummel, Katie Kaliszewski, and Lon Hill. Excused was Anna V. Andrzejewski, Vice Chair.

### **SUMMARY:**

Brandon Cook, registering in support and wishing to speak.  
Scott B. Thornton, registering in support and not wishing to speak.  
John Martens, registering in opposition and wishing to speak.  
Gary Tipler, registering neither in support nor opposition and wishing to speak.

Levitan opened the public hearing.

Levitan asked if Cook could discuss the demolition before getting into the new project. Per Cook, the damage at 801 is so extensive that any attempt at rehabilitation would result in a totally different building. Cook showed images of the elevation of the proposed building adjacent to the existing neighboring building.

Martens provided a handout at the meeting. Martens described his handout and discussed standard (g) within the ordinance. Martens went on to discuss his other handouts, with specific reference to the visual compatibility standards with which the new building must comply. He contends that the proposed building does not comply with these requirements.

Levitan questioned Martens' interpretation of the ordinance, highlighting that standard (g) is only one standard of many that the Landmarks Commission must review. Martens disagreed, maintaining that each standard must be considered, and went even further to say that demolition permits in historic districts should not be issued unless there are extenuating circumstances (ex. a tree falls on it).

McLean asked about the number of stories on other buildings in the district. Per Martens, there are three other three story buildings within the Visually Compatible Area (VCA).

Levitan congratulated Martens on his reception of the Lifetime Achievement Award bestowed upon him by the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation.

Gary Tipler discussed his prepared history of 801 Williamson Street and described the meetings that P&D MNA held for that site. They discussed the massing, form, function, lot coverage, setbacks, etc. In general, there were mixed reviews for the new building. P&D voted 4-3 in support with the idea that there would be some minor tweaks to the building. The Marquette Neighborhood Association's board voted 4-4, and the president voted against it, after deciding not to vote on demolition and construction separately. No one countered the demolition; it's the new construction that caused ambivalence.

Hill asked if there was a certain aspect of the new building that made people hesitant to approve of the building. Per Tipler, people doubted the legitimacy of commercial space on the corner without parking. The other aspect they did not like was the height of the building.

Cook indicated that the difference in height between the structure at 805 Williamson Street and the proposed structure at 801 Williamson Street is three feet.

Rummel asked if Cook had considered a Conditional Use for the building. Cook responded that he'd explored it and could propose up to four stories, but decided not to. He has still not considered a residential only building. Rummel asked what kind of commercial use Cook envisions, and what kind of business would work without parking. He replied that it depends on the business, and that the lack of parking is something he will take under consideration. He thinks with the right business, the proposed structure will fit in well on Williamson Street.

Hill asked if there was a parking stall behind the building. Cook responded that there is a curb cut, but that he doesn't believe it's a legal parking area.

Levitan closed the public hearing.

Rummel indicated that there was no sentiment present for saving the building, that it isn't historically significant, and is in terrible shape. The main concern is what is right for the space. She struggles with whether the scale is appropriate, and would like to look at options that are potentially smaller and more residential.

Rummel questioned how much Cook was responsible for the current state of the building, given that he's owned it for more than a year.

Hill would like to see a smaller building. He also does not think demolition by neglect applies to Cook.

Levitan asked the Commission to clarify whether anyone would argue against demolition. McLean indicated that, having toured the house and found no historical value, he has no objections to demolition. Arnesen commented that none of the items other than (g) are applicable, and that Cook is not responsible for the neglect. Arnesen indicated that he wasn't sure what reducing the mass would mean, and that there are other buildings of that size on the street. Kaliszewski commented that the building is dissimilar to other buildings on the block constructed within the period of significance, which is what concerns her. Arnesen asked which buildings should be included in their perspective. Staff responded that the Commission should consider the buildings in the VCA as stated in the ordinance, but to also keep in mind that this context fits within the rest of the historic district.

McLean asked for the floor to floor dimensions. Cook explained that he is proposing 10' at the first floor, 9' at the second and third floors.

Rummel said that the usage of the lot was not similar to the other buildings in the visually compatible area and wondered if the building could be made shorter. She realizes that this would change the whole project, but would like the Commission to think about the way the lot is filled.

McLean asked if Cook had considered making the building smaller. Cook replied that it's a 1,500 square foot building footprint, which is already fairly small. To make it smaller is not possible with the current plan/design. Arnesen asked if making the building smaller would even assuage the issues people have with it. McLean agreed that it would not.

Levitan indicated that section (g) should be discussed with the City Attorney's Office.

Staff discussed Glueck's responses to the conditions outlined on the staff report.

Kaliszewski asked if the quarter column would be metal. Staff confirmed that it would be.

Staff asked if Cook would consider a utility brick instead of siding. Cook confirmed that he would.

Hill thinks the building looks too big. Kaliszewski agrees that it seems too large, and isn't sure how she feels about the material and treatment of the bays within the district and feel it impacts the cohesive design of the building.

Arnesen questioned what comes next and commented that Cook is to be commended for proposing something for this site that works with Zoning. Arnesen feels making the building smaller is not a solution in and of itself. He thinks that some level of compromise from the Commission is necessary, and a smaller building will fail economically.

Rummel has issues with the zoning code and wants the building to be residential only.

McLean said that the bays could be eliminated, but then the building looks traditional. He went on to say that to make the building smaller in a way that makes sense, Cook would likely lose financial viability.

Rummel said that, to her, the big issue is that the building takes up the entire lot. She asked whether the proposal could take up less space on the lot. She also brought up the issue of the lack of parking again.

Arnesen asked what Cook can do next. Per Staff, he was granted a permit for demolition, and is not prevented from proposing another project. He can bring a new project back to the Commission.

Levitan indicated that it was possible to reconsider the initial denial of the request and to refer the item to a future agenda.

### **ACTION:**

**1.) A motion was made by McLean and seconded by Arnesen to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition. The motion passed on a voice vote.**

**2.) A motion was made by Arnesen and seconded by McLean to approve the request for the Certificate of Appropriateness, with the stipulation that the Applicant abide by Staff**

**recommendations. The motion failed, with McLean & Arnesen voting in favor; Kaliszewski, Rummel, Hill opposed.**

**3.) A motion was made by Rummel and seconded by Hill to reconsider the earlier motion. The motion passed on a voice vote.**

**4.) A motion was made by Rummel and seconded by Hill to refer the item to a future meeting. The motion passed on a voice vote.**