

Landmarks Commission

Meeting of November 5, 2018

Agenda Item #7, Legistar #53602, Historic Preservation Plan Goals, Objectives and Strategies

The Madison Historic Preservation Plan Overview, dated May 1, 2017 said "the Plan will update the ordinances for the existing local historic districts, prioritize completion of a historic resources survey, and develop a Plan that will recommend steps to take in the future." These three efforts "will be occurring simultaneously over a two year period."

One and one-half years later, goals and strategies are being reviewed. The document being reviewed "is meant to be a list of strategies to facilitate the [Historic Preservation Plan Advisory] Committee's discussion and is not a list of recommendations."

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/the-historic-preservation-plan/1761/>

It might be time to reassess the timeline and establish new timeframes for reaching specified milestones. (The February 26, 2018 timeline had the Landmarks Commission meeting on tools in early October and the Advisory Committee having an implementation meeting in November.)

This delay was explained by the consultants: "The staff team met with the Landmarks Ordinance Review Committee (LORC) on December 12, 2017 to describe the comments from the Round 1 meetings in each historic district. Since that meeting, the project was slowed to accommodate revisions to the State Statutes that were being considered and then adopted. The project was then further slowed to get guidance from the Wisconsin Historical Society about interpretation of the Statute language." Legistar 47745, item #18.

The guidance from the Historical Society should be part of the Legistar records.

Proposed Goals and Strategies

Strategy 1, Walking Tour Brochures

1. If one does a Google search for "site:.cityofmadison.com walking tour historic", the brochures are available. It appears to be the old Planning site.

If one goes to the "Historic and Cultural Resources" tab under Planning, the brochures are not available.

2. It would also be good to have the brochures as searchable pdfs so that, for example, a person could look for all Claude & Stark buildings.
3. The "comments" section states that graphics and layout are dated. These are historic walking tour brochures and having "dated" brochures could also be viewed

as charming. Though some updating could occur, particularly to identify buildings on the National Register.

Goal 1, new additions

1. Materials provided for National Register nomination can be more detailed than those provided for a City nomination form. The National Register materials should be provided on-line.
2. National Register sites/districts that are not City landmarks/districts should also be listed on-line along with the nomination materials.
3. The Comprehensive Plan has maps that show City and National Register sites/districts. This could be transformed into an ArcGIS map. Currently, the only place that I could find historic information was on the Zoning Districts ArcGIS map. If one blows up that map large enough, City landmarks can be located. But it would be good to have a map devoted solely to City and National Register properties/districts.

Goal 2, new addition

Perhaps an effort should be made to seek/encourage local landmark status for buildings/districts listed on the National Register but that are not on the City list. National Register status does not confer any Landmark Commission oversight.

Goal 4, new addition

A new strategy should be included: "Zoning Code: Modify Zoning Code to be consistent with the Historic Preservation Plan and revised historic preservation ordinance."

The Comprehensive Plan states:

"The zoning code should be reviewed with respect to the new HPP and the revised historic preservation ordinance and modified as needed to ensure that the provisions of the code are consistent with the HPP and the historic preservation ordinance."

Strategy #28, spring letter

1. Perhaps this letter should be reviewed to determine whether it can be made more effective. Retroactive CoA approvals should be an unusual occurrence. So far in 2018, 7 out of 27 applications for a CoA in District 6 were for retroactive approvals (approximately 25%).
2. Perhaps a letter should be sent to all new homeowners in a historic district shortly after a sale closes.

Strategy #29 and #30, maintenance

1. Ordinance maintenance requirements do not necessarily mean that those requirements are being followed. Perhaps means to encourage maintenance/enforcement should be explored.
2. Owners of historic properties should know that they have the option of following the old building code for many matters. For example, even though porch guardrails need to be 3 feet high, historic property owners can opt to use the old building code and replace, for example, the existing 2 feet high rails.

Strategy #34, easements

The easement process should not be limited to city properties. Historic easements can protect the interior of a property as well as the exterior. Easements can also result in reduced property taxes, since the value of a property is limited by what alterations can be made. There are homeowners potentially interested in historic easements. The City should provide information/resources on easements through private companies. The City could also consider setting up a local easement program. See, for example: <http://www.annapolis.org/historic/easement>

Strategy #39, moving historically significant buildings

Moving around historically significant buildings should be a last-ditch effort. Buildings are generally moved as the result of development and historical preservation should not be a secondary consideration.

Context is important. For example, when the Steensland house was moved, the Preservation Planner said, in part: "The loss of the physical presence of the architectural and historic significance of the landmark building on this specific site is not ideal; however, the appropriate architectural context on this block was destroyed before the Steensland House was designated a landmark and before the Mansion Hill Historic District was formalized. The Steensland House was negatively affected by the previous loss of appropriate architectural context in its current location."

Additionally, sustainability issues should be considered. The moving of houses for the 700 block E Johnson development required 4 trees to be removed and 7 trees to be pruned, some substantially.

Strategy #49 and #50, TIF

This could be strengthened. TIF 36 (E Washington) does not have a small-cap TIF fund nor does it have the 1/2 mile rule. Both of these are needed and should be promoted. Or, require TIF districts that have historic districts within 1/2 mile to set funds aside for a small-cap TIF program.

Strategy #52, grants to prepare National Register nominations.

These grants can be used for so much more, and should be actively sought. Permitted activities:

- Architectural, archaeological and historical survey projects to identify and evaluate historic properties. For intensive survey projects, the applicant must have survey boundaries approved by SHPO staff by Fall 2018.
- Preparation of nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. For proposed National Register Historic District nominations, the applicant must have had a public meeting by Fall 2018 to introduce the project to the neighborhood.
- Educational activities, such as workshops, slide or video programs, and the preparation of booklets, brochures or other publications that further the goals of historic preservation.
- Development of municipal preservation plans.
- Administration of municipal historic preservation programs.

<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS4324>

Strategy #66, plans that support historic preservation.

Not all listed plans support historic preservation. "Numerous neighborhood plans" should list plans that specifically address preservation.

The 2011 **Madison Sustainability Plan** is 78 pages. "Historic" is used twice: "For historic buildings, use the Historical Society Energy Manual and state historical tax credit." And: "Permit and create incentives for decentralized renewable energy utilities (e.g., wind installations and solar canopies in mall parking lots, etc.) on public and private structures, while minimizing impact on existing architecture and historic areas and recognizing that state law currently prohibits regulatory protections."

The **Economic Development Plan**, now the "CONNECT MADISON Strategy" as of December 2016, has no mention of historic preservation.

The **Downtown Plan** has a number of recommendations supporting historic preservation. See pages 85-92. This plan was adopted in July 2012 and it contained 12 specific recommendations to preserve historic buildings. It is now 6 years later and it is unclear which, if any, of these recommendations have been acted upon.

One recommendation, #192, was to "[m]ake it a priority to designate potential landmarks in the Mansion Hill district as identified in the Downtown Preservation Plan as Madison Historic Landmarks."

Recommendation #192 was specifically addressed in the 2013 and 2014 Planning and Community and Econ. Dev. capital budgets.

Madison's Downtown Preservation Plan was adopted in 1998. Many of its recommendations have been implemented, but many have not. During the

development of the Downtown Plan, several commissions stressed the need to finish the Preservation Plan, to ensure it remains an effective tool to preserve the City's heritage resources, and the Downtown Plan recommends that it be completed. Funding of \$50,000 in 2015 will be utilized to hire consultants as needed and for other expenses associated with the completion of the plan, including researching and potentially nominating properties identified as "potential landmarks."

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/finance/documents/2013OpBud/Adopted/BudgetWeb.pdf>

<http://www.cityofmadison.com/finance/documents/2014CapBud/execCap2014.pdf>

In the 2015 budget that morphed into:

During the development of the Downtown Plan, several commissions stressed the need to finish the City's Historic Preservation Plan, to ensure it remains an effective tool to preserve the City's heritage resources. Funding of \$100,000 in 2015 will be utilized to hire consultants as needed and for expenses associated with the completion of the plan, including researching and potentially nominating properties identified as "potential landmarks." Other funding is from a direct appropriation from the General Fund.

What began as a directed effort to complete the Downtown Preservation Plan has changed into a City-wide historical preservation plan. But where is the effort to identify the history to be saved? There is a document (item #11 of Legistar 50574, dated April 11, 2018) that lists places identified primarily through community feedback as "places valued." It is unclear whether further work has been accomplished. At the November 2017 meetings, residents were asked to identify places that should be saved. One man spoke eloquently how the Bayview Triangle is/was "home" to many immigrants. He spoke of how it is important to keep this connection, particularly since everything else has changed (in particular, Brittingham Park). Yet now there is a proposal to raze the triangle because existing units "are, for the most part, functionally obsolete." (Legistar 53312, item #1)

The **Cultural Plan** does support historic preservation. However, the Cultural Plan's recommendations have not all been included in this goal/strategy document. Those recommendations should be specifically reviewed for possible inclusion.

"Linking historic preservation skills to neighbors and neighborhood plans and creating positive incentives for preserving private property of historic merit can advance historic preservation in important ways. In order to take full advantage of Madison's historic cultural resources and to support the sense of place engendered by its traditional neighborhoods, city planners should find ways to support and partner with organizations who bring technical preservation and conservation assistance to Madison's traditional and historic neighborhoods. The city can explore

ways to incentivize the preservation of the historic character of private properties, augmenting the Landmarks ordinance that currently compels preservation without offering any rewards or relief. See recommendations 19, 20, 21, 22, 28, and 29.” (Page 36)

The recommendations include “a goal of conducting a City-wide comprehensive architecture and history survey and begin exploring ways to fund that work” and “promoting the adaptive reuse of historic buildings” and “continue to identify municipal funding and seek funding through the Wisconsin Historical Society’s CLG grant program to survey more areas of the city for historically significant properties and districts.”

The **Downtown Historic Preservation Plan** and the accompanying **The Historic Resources of Downtown Madison** should be listed. The only place these resources can be found on-line is at Legistar 50574 (items #12 and #13).

Neighborhood plans in historic districts, e.g., *Design Guidelines & Criteria for Preservation, Williamson Street, 600-1100 Blocks*, should be listed. Excerpts from other neighborhood plans that address historic preservation should be compiled so that all neighborhood concerns can be taken into account.

Strategy #95, designating new landmarks/districts

This strategy is in red, meaning that this is already being done. However, there has not been a new landmark designated since June, 2013. A new district has not been designated since 2002 (First Settlement). Since 2010, only 4 buildings have been designated landmarks. Compare that to 2008 when 6 buildings were designated.

This item should become a blue strategy – renew commitment to historic designations.

Strategy #96, continue to list NRHP properties

This should not be coded as an existing strategy. Not all NRHP properties are City designated historic properties (e.g., Tenney Building, Madison Brass Works, and University Hill Farms Historic District). Not all NRHP districts are City designated historic districts (e.g., the Langdon Street Historic District was listed on the National Register in 1986, but is not a City historic district.)

Strategy #103, district boundaries

Existing historic districts should not be shrunk (e.g., Third Lake Ridge) to match NRHP districts.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Lehnertz