

Landmark's Commission Meeting
November 5, 2018 by Fred Mohs

I am here to encourage the Landmark's Commission to recognize that there is a new push under way. The purpose is to destroy historic preservation in Madison. What do I mean when I say destroy? I mean to reduce the reliability of historic districts and to allow developers with their lobbyists and lawyers who will try and take the public's eye off the ball and obtain exception after exception for development in historic districts. This ultimately ends up making fools out of those people who had put financial resources and a great deal of heart and soul into preserving historic properties and designated historic districts.

Most of us are familiar with the famous and successful historic districts like the one in Charleston, South Carolina or New Orleans, Georgetown, and Washington D.C., and the Old Town Historic District in Chicago. These historic districts are famous and are the pride of their communities. Their fame and success is based on their sophistication and that they have not let slick advocates get by them.

As you are no doubt aware, there is big money in this for lawyers and lobbyists who can take a group of protected buildings in a historic district

and convert them into a site whose fame will be that of an area that was once a valuable historic district but was destroyed by vigorous lobbyists.

We want to warn you that there is industry out there whose business it is to get buildings or projects built in landmarked areas. When they are finished, they will have received a good paycheck and their community will have lost part of the built environment that tells its story. Remember, there is no such thing as a successful historic district that does not have committed owners who are backed up by equally committed governments.