

From: [Vaughn Brandt](#)
To: [Heiser-Ertel, Lauren](#)
Cc: [Fruhling, William](#); [Bailey, Heather](#); [Scanlon, Amy](#); [Gary Tipler](#)
Subject: Re: 7/17 Historic Preservation Plan Advisory Committee Meeting
Date: Thursday, July 18, 2019 4:39:34 PM

Hello all,

Thank you for the work on this draft document, and for the opportunity to provide feedback. I have a great appreciation for old homes, and I think developing this work may help to save more of them.

As a homeowner with an 1894 Jenifer Street Victorian, I appreciate the vision and intention behind this document. Providing educational materials, guidance, and resources to protect and preserve historic homes in Madison is a great service that meets a genuine need for residents and home owners.

The home I purchased in 1997 was literally 'about to fall into the earth' when I found it, and I took it on as a labor of love. Many decades of previous neglect by landlords who performed only minimal maintenance and did not attend to water leak and penetration issues from both within and outside of the home created many issues. The basement floor was literally covered in wet sand and mud, the sandstone foundation was heavily deteriorated, and some of the floor joists were terribly rotted. Most windows were rotted, the plaster walls were cracking out as the house moved, and the electrical plumbing systems was cobbled together. As one masonry mentor commented, when it rained and you were downstairs it was like you were surrounded by a firing squad of water fountains.

I gradually worked to resolve those issues, though a combination of repairs and alterations. The level of support and educational materials available to me then was almost non-existent, and knowledgeable contractors were scarce or unreasonably expensive. As I proceeded with many repairs and improvements, it was not clear to me what required permits and what was a repair. At the time I began the only guidance offered was 'any project under \$500' was below the threshold of requiring a permit. As a DIY homeowner raised on an old dairy farm (where we just fixed stuff), much of the work was simply labor intensive work that I could perform on my own or with assistance from family over time.

In any case, now that I have fallen under the scrutiny of code enforcement, I have undone and redone some past work (with many inspections). While the experience of working through code enforcement and the tone and deadlines associated with that is unpleasant, my home does now provide a fully transparent case study in historic preservation. I would also like to clearly comment that it does not need to be an adversarial process. However, as I have opened up previously covered surfaces I have discovered and addressed some significant issues, and I'm glad to see this document lays out a plan for improving the collaboration between city staff and homeowners.

Over the years I have learned a great deal, and with newer construction technology and materials available I have further improved the structural integrity of my home so that it will last the ages. During that process I have taken photographs, could offer stories, and even physical 'exhibits' that I am willing to share if they would help provide examples for future guidance documents or resources. These include the rotted post ends that were supporting the main beam and concealed in the concrete floor, and dry rotted joist tails. The techniques we

have include sandstone foundation repair techniques with a combination of type-S mortar and commercial grade epoxy, and main beam reinforcement techniques with LVL lumber, adhesives, and 40d-60d ring shank nails. Some of the deteriorated cut off pieces that were concealed would provide an excellent 'show and tell' resource on the weak spots to look for in historic homes, and I could offer specific examples of how to repair those issues to help save other historic homes that are in compromised condition.

I find the increasing frequency of demolition permits in the city to be a disturbing trend, likely driven mostly by large scale development interests. I showed Gary Tipler some of the techniques my carpentry mentor and I used to make the home stronger than when it was initially built, and he commented that indeed these types of work-intensive approaches are quite feasible to reduce the frequency of demolitions that occur in city. I think the commercial epoxy joist tail reinforcement technique to protect, reinforce, and join the stone foundation to the reinforced joists tails and main beam is probably the most innovative and useful technique for saving old houses. Deteriorated stone foundation and joist rot issues are most commonly cited in demolition permits - but they can be repaired! Field inspector Jim Sjolander has inspected and approved of the structural repairs to the rear of my home as I have rebuilt major sections below and inside the bathroom corner.

There are also many exterior techniques that can repair areas prone to rot (open porches) such as solid PVC trim boards that hold paint well and identically mirror original materials, while greatly reducing future maintenance needs. I have some of those on my list for later this summer, and would be glad to supply before and after pictures for educational purposes.

If any of this would be helpful, I'm glad to contribute, as I wish these types of resources were available 20 years ago when I began. Please feel free to let me know if you'd some contributions to the future work proposed in these documents. I think they will be an excellent resource.

Thank you,
-Vaughn Brandt
1314 Jenifer Street

On Thu, Jul 11, 2019 at 2:24 PM Heiser-Ertel, Lauren <LHeiser-Ertel@cityofmadison.com> wrote:

On July 17, the Historic Preservation Plan Advisory Committee will be reviewing drafts of Chapters 4 and 5 of the plan. These chapters deal with the goals, objectives, and strategies that the Committee has previously approved. New material includes adding some brief text in Chapter 4 to add background/context/rationale/explanation. The intent is to provide the necessary information but to keep it succinct. The implementation matrix in Chapter 5 is also new and adds a proposed timeline, cost estimate, responsible party, and potential community partners for each strategy with an eye towards having the recommendations of the plan carried out.

As discussed in the meeting on July 10, please forward any comments on the Underrepresented Communities Historic Resource Survey Report or the Strategy for Future Survey Work to staff as soon as possible, but no later than July 24. A limited number of hard copies of these documents are available upon request.

7/17 Agenda:

<https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=A&ID=704746&GUID=52D0E6F9-8629-4E9D-91CC-039A9F35927F>

7/10 Minutes:

<https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=M&ID=704745&GUID=84339564-57EA-44E3-86EA-4ED508F573AC>

Heather Bailey, Bill Fruhling, Amy Scanlon



Bill Fruhling

Principal Planner

Planning Division

Email:
bfruhling@cityofmadison.com

Phone: 608.267.8736

Heather Bailey

Preservation Planner

Planning Division

Email:
hbailey@cityofmadison.com

Phone: 608.266.6552