

AGENDA # 8

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: 4/19/21

TITLE: Buildings Proposed for Demolition - 2021

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: 4/21/21

ID NUMBER: 63346

Members present were: Richard Arnesen, Katie Kaliszewski, Arvina Martin, and David McLean. Excused were: Anna Andrzejewski, Betty Banks, and Maurice Taylor.

Also present: Alder Lindsay Lemmer, District 3

SUMMARY:

Bailey said that staff recommends a finding of no known historic value for the buildings at 2621 Moland Street, 1890 E Washington Avenue, 1858 E Washington Avenue, 6201 Mineral Point Road, 232 E Olin Avenue, 4145 Country Club Road as there are no preservation files or Wisconsin Historical Society site files for the properties.

Kaliszewski asked when Nakoma was developed as a golf course. Bailey said the property had been deemed not eligible to the National Register previously, and this property was purposefully left out of the boundary for the Nakoma National Register Historic District. She said that the buildings have undergone significant changes over time, including additions and reconfigurations of the exteriors. She said that the pool and pool house were constructed in 1973. Kaliszewski checked the Nakoma Country Club website and found that it opened in 1925. She said she had been curious whether the golf course was developed closer to the 1973 date of the pool and pool house.

Bailey said that the building at 222 E Olin Avenue is a historic roadhouse from the Prohibition Era and was constructed in 1930. Originally Eddie's Wonder Bar, it was opened by Eddie Touhy, brother of Roger "The Terrible" Touhy, who were both part of an Irish gang based out of Chicago. Bailey explained there was a network of roadhouses like this across the Midwest, which were venues for various gangs, particularly gangs from Chicago, to distribute illegal alcohol and partake in illegal gambling. The Touhys were rivals of Al Capone's gang, and there are many stories related to Roger Touhy's tangles with Capone. Bailey said there was a draft landmark nomination submitted by the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation in 2008, but at the request of the property owner, the nomination was withdrawn. She said that the nomination is on file as a draft, and it made the case that this property was eligible as a landmark due to being an intact example of a roadhouse structure and its connection to Prohibition-Era history in the Madison area.

Alder Lemmer said that she has heard concerns from her district regarding the demolition of this building. She urged the commission to have a thoughtful discussion of the history of the site, pointing out that there are not a lot of Prohibition-Era buildings left in Madison.

McLean said that given the amount of history, he was surprised the building wasn't being incorporated into the new development somehow. He said that it was unfortunate to lose a piece of history, especially one that

traveled through the state and made the state part of that same history. He said that the building has significant historic value and pointed out that it was potentially a landmark. Arnesen agreed. Kaliszewski suggested they attach the 2008 draft landmark nomination to their report to the Plan Commission. McLean added that the building was significant due to its architecturally significant style as a Prohibition-Era roadhouse and due to its history as a Prohibition-Era roadhouse. He said that this building plays a strong part in Madison's Prohibition-Era history, and there are very few, if any, other buildings related to that era that remain. He said that often the commission will reference the significance of related historic figures that do good, so he wasn't sure if they would qualify in this case, but the property is associated with famous figures in history, not just in the Madison area, but nationally.

ACTION:

A motion was made by McLean, seconded by Arnesen, to recommend to the Plan Commission that the buildings at 2621 Moland Street, 1890 E Washington Avenue, 1858 E Washington Avenue, 6201 Mineral Point Road, 232 E Olin Avenue, 4145 Country Club Road have no known historic value. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

A motion was made by McLean, seconded by Martin, to recommend to the Plan Commission that the building at 222 E Olin Avenue has historic value based on historic significance due to its Prohibition-Era history and as an intact or rare example of a certain architectural style or method of construction as a Prohibition-Era roadhouse. The motion passed by voice vote/other.