

MINUTES

MADISON LANDMARKS COMMISSION

4:30 p.m., Monday, May 1, 2006
Room LL-130, Madison Municipal Building

1. ROLL CALL

Members present: Ald. Olson, Mr. Page, Mr. Rosenblum, Ms. Squitieri (chairperson), Mr. Stephans, Ms. Taylor

Guests: Scott Herrick, Michael Christopher, Eric Fleming, Patrick McGowan, James Roper, Jim Skretny, Joe Lusson, Michelle Martin, Susan M. Pope, Patrick McDonnell, James Westring, Trent Nichols, Michael Bridgeman, Jane Scharer, Fay Stephensen, Eric Fox Gehrig, Christina Bishop, Gigi Holland, Robert M. Holloway, Jan Neudeck, Sonja Moskalik

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the April 17, 2006 meeting were ordered approved as written.

3. PUBLIC HEARING AND CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATION TO COMMON COUNCIL FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION

A. University of Wisconsin Dairy Barn, 1915 Linden Drive - public hearing and consideration of recommendation to Common Council for Landmark designation

Mr. Gary Brown, representing the University, said that they support the Landmark designation for the Dairy Barn. Mr. Joe Lusson, President of the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation, said that his organization heartily supports the nomination. Mr. John Henley, representing the Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation introduced himself as the person who submitted the nomination. He said that in essence the barn is the barn for the entire state of Wisconsin. The Commission thanked him for his efforts.

Mr. Stephans then moved that the Landmarks Commission recommend designation to the Common Council, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum and passed unanimously.

B. Castle and Doyle Building, 125 State Street - public hearing and consideration of recommendation to Common Council for Landmark designation

Mr. Tish noted that the Castle and Doyle building is most important for its beautiful terra cotta facade, but noted that the building is interesting for its earlier history as a fire station and for the fact that its facade was designed by noted local architects, Claude and Starck.

Ald. Olson then moved that the Landmarks Commission recommend designation to the Common Council, seconded by Ms. Taylor and passed unanimously.

C. Davies House, 428 N. Livingston Street - public hearing and consideration of recommendation to Common Council for Landmark designation

Mr. Michael Christopher, attorney for the owner, Mr. Fleming, noted that he had sent a letter to each of the Commission members requesting that the landmark designation be deferred until after the project has been through the other boards and Commissions. He said that his client neither supports or objects to the designation. He noted that when the new addition is put in place, the Commission will be dealing with a different building. He said that even if the Plan Commission or Zoning Board of Appeals decision had a condition that the building be designated, they would not object. He said that he didn't think it was appropriate for the Commission to act defensively by urging the Council to focus on the significance, which would make it more difficult for the owner to remodel his property.

He then said that his client had developed new plans that call for retention of the old building and the construction of an addition. Mr. McGowan, the architect for the project, then briefly described the latest rendition of the plans that would continue the neo-classical look of the house, using many of the features of the house in the new sections. He noted that the existing lake porches would be replaced by enclosed space but with porches at each end to keep a sense of openness.

James Roper, the person who nominated the building as a landmark, spoke next. He noted that the building is probably of sufficient historic value to warrant landmark designation just for its connection with Joseph E. Davies, but its architectural significance was also strong. He said that the requests by the owner to defer consideration appeared to be nothing more than an attempt to avoid Landmarks Commission oversight. He noted that the current plans call for an addition that would double the size of the house and said that he thought the addition was so large as to detract from the historic integrity of the house. He noted that the project would basically leave only a shell of the old house and he expressed concern about the constant changing of the proposal. He urged the Landmarks Commission to support designation at this point and not wait until it's too late. He added that if we permit houses to be torn down in historic districts, it would be only be a matter of time before there was nothing left of the general neighborhood character.

Mr. Jim Skretny spoke next. He says that he knows from his own experience that owning an old house in an historic district does take extra planning and care, but he added that having to appear before the Landmarks Commission for changes is not the huge hurdle that some people think. By landmarking the building it will be clear that citizen review of building projects will occur.

Mr. Joe Lusson spoke on behalf of the Madison Trust. He noted that the commission had agreed to work with the owner of the Kupfer House and defer consideration of a nomination only to have it end badly when the owners became upset with their neighbors and decided to take out a building permit for a project that did not respect the character of their house. He stated that delaying the nomination would not be relevant to the issue of whether or not it should be landmarked. He noted the

importance of Davies and the importance of the building architecturally. In addition, the owner was aware of the historical importance of the house and the desires of the neighborhood that it be preserved before he purchased the property. He said that the Landmarks Commission is the appropriate body to oversee the work that occurs on the house and they should not give up their oversight, noting that the proposed renovation appears to only retain two facades of the historic building.

Ms. Gigi Holland spoke on behalf of the Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Association. She noted that the neighborhood had entertained several proposals for demolition and renovation with additions and said that the neighborhood association has always been firm in its opinion that the house should be preserved. She noted that there have been many plans presented and that the neighbors had not yet seen the most recent plans. There being no one else wishing to speak, Ms. Squitieri thanked the registrants and closed the public hearing.

To a question from Mr. Stephans Mr. Christopher said that they had had a small meeting with Livingston Street neighbors and that the neighbors were pleased with the historical aspects of the proposed project, although they expressed concerns about the lake views and other issues. He noted that the neighborhood association would be meeting on a couple of days and that the request for a zoning variance would be going to the ZBA on May 11. Mr. Roper took exception to Mr. Christopher's account of the meeting, stating that there was no one at that meeting who supported the project. To questions raised by the speakers Mr. Christopher noted that the plans have not been changed recently except in very minor ways and Mr. McGowan and Ms. Rankin, who has seen the latest plans, affirmed his statement.

Ms. Taylor noted that everyone in the room acknowledged that the building was historically significant, so she saw no reason to delay the nomination. Mr. Christopher said that, after the renovation, it will be a different building that they would be considering for designation. Mr. Page said that that statement made it clear that landmarking the house should be considered now rather than after the project was completed. Ald. Olson replied that her reasons for wanting the building retained is to preserve it in its context as part of a historic district..

Mr. Stephans then moved that the Landmarks Commission recommend to the Common Council that the building be designated a Landmark, seconded by Ald. Olson and passed unanimously.

4. CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR ALTERATION

- A. 312 N. Breese Terrace, University Heights historic district – consideration of issuance of Certificate of Appropriateness for front deck

Mr. Page noted that the posts on the porch should probably be wrapped so that they appear more substantial. Ms. Rankin noted that the staircases were obviously not shown correctly in the drawing prepared by the contractor and Commission members

said that they really need a drawing that is to scale so that they can see exactly what the new porch will look like. Ms. Rankin will also take some pictures of the front of the building to show the current appearance without the bushes that used to screen the front of the building. Mr. Stephans moved that the issue be deferred for better drawings and a photo, seconded by Ald. Olson, and passed unanimously.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine H. Rankin
Secretary