

CITY OF BELOIT

REPORT TO THE BELOIT LANDMARKS COMMISSION

Meeting Date: November 16, 2010

Agenda Item: 5

File Number: COA-2010-35

Applicant: Fay Locke

Owner: First Congregational Church

Location: 627 Church Street (801 Bushnell Street)

Existing Zoning: PLI, Public Lands & Institutions District

Existing Land Use: Single-Family Dwelling (Vacant)

Parcel Size: 1.49 Acres

Request Overview/Background Information:

Fay Locke, on behalf of First Congregational Church, has submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to demolish the single-family dwelling addressed as 627 Church Street, which is located on the property located at 801 Bushnell Street. The Intensive Survey Form describes the house located at 627 Church Street as a "contributing" structure within the College Park Historic District. At some point, the property located at 627 Church Street was combined with the property located at 801 Bushnell Street, which is an individual historic landmark property. Section 32.07 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance grants the Landmarks Commission the authority to issue a COA prior to demolition of a historic building.

Consistency with the Historic Preservation Ordinance and Strategic Plan:

Consideration of this request is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Consideration of this request supports City of Beloit Strategic Goal #4.

Key Issues:

- As described in the attached letter, the applicant no longer uses the house as a resale shop. According to the applicant, the building has become a financial burden due to excessive heating expenses during the winter months.
- Several months ago, the applicant contacted Planning staff to inquire about the respective procedures for selling, leasing, or demolishing the house. The applicant has decided to pursue the demolition option.
- At the request of the Chair, the Landmarks Commission conducted a site visit on November 10, 2010.
- As shown in the attached photographs and described in the Intensive Survey Form, the house was designed as a Late Picturesque Queen Anne.
- **Findings of Fact:** Section 32.07(2) of the Historic Preservation Ordinance includes standards to be used in determining whether to issue a COA for any demolition. The Ordinance states that the Commission shall consider and may give decisive weight to any or all of the following:

- (a) *Whether the historic building is of such architectural or historic significance that this demolition would be detrimental to the public interest and contrary to the general welfare of the people of the City and the State.*

The Intensive Survey Form includes an architectural statement, but does not note any architectural or historical significance.

- (b) *Whether an historic building which has not been designated as an historic landmark, contributes to the distinctive architectural or historic character of the historic district as a whole and, therefore, should be preserved for the benefit of the people of the City and the State.*

This house is a contributing structure within the historic district, and the preservation of this unique structure would benefit the public. Demolition of this house would result in a substantial gap along this block of the historic district, as shown in the attached images.

- (c) *Whether demolition of the historic building would be contrary to the purpose and intent of this chapter as set forth in section 32.01 and to the objective of the historic preservation plan for the applicable district as adopted by the City Council.*

The issuance of a COA to demolish a historic building for financial reasons would be contrary to the purpose and intent of the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

- (d) *Whether the historic building is of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture and/or material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty and/or expense.*

The structure could be reproduced, but only with great expense.

- (e) *Whether retention of the historic building would promote the general welfare of the people of the City and the State by encouraging study of American history, architecture and design or by developing an understanding of American culture and heritage.*

By preserving the integrity of this block of the historic district, the retention of this house would promote the general welfare by encouraging study of American history and architecture.

- (f) *Whether any hardship or difficulty claimed by the owner is self-created or the result of the owner's failure to maintain the property in good repair.*

The deferral of certain maintenance and repairs has led to a long list of necessary repairs, as described in the attached letter.

- (g) *Whether any new structure proposed to be constructed or any change in use proposed to be made is compatible with nearby historic buildings or the historic district in which the subject property is located.*

Not applicable.

- Section 32.07 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance outlines the 10-month moratorium that becomes effective if the Landmarks Commission denies an application for a COA to demolish a historic building. If this COA is denied, the Commission and the applicant must undertake "serious and continuing discussions for the purpose of saving the building." After 10 months following the filing of the application, a demolition permit will be issued if:
 - The Commission and the owner are unable to agree upon a mutually acceptable method of saving the historic building; and
 - No one has proposed a method of saving the historic building which has a reasonable prospect of success; and
 - There are no funds available from any governmental unit or nonprofit organization for preservation of the historic building.
- **Alternative to Demolition** – Planning staff has identified the following alternative to demolition of this historic building:
 - The applicant could commission a 1-Lot Certified Survey Map (CSM), which would separate the house from the church property. Following this land division, the property could be rezoned to R-1B, Single-Family Residential, which would allow the structure to be used as a single-family dwelling. The property could be sold or given to an individual or organization to be rehabilitated.
 - As shown on the attached Location & Zoning Map, it is possible to create a 1-Lot CSM that keeps the detached garage on the church's property for their continued use while meeting the minimum lot standards contained in the Zoning Ordinance.
 - The expenses associated with these steps are a small fraction of the cost to demolish such a large structure, which is likely around \$10,000.
 - This alternative will save the applicant money and will save this historic structure.

Sustainability: (Briefly comment on the sustainable long term impact of this policy or program related to how it will impact both the built and natural environment utilizing the four following eco-municipality guidelines)

- Reduce dependence upon fossil fuels – N/A
- Reduce dependence on chemicals and other manufacturing substances that accumulate in nature – N/A
- Reduce dependence on activities that harm life sustaining eco-systems – N/A
- Meet the hierarchy of present and future human needs fairly and efficiently – N/A

Staff Recommendation:

The Neighborhood Planning Division recommends that the Landmarks Commission lay over the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the single-family dwelling addressed as 627 Church Street, which is located on the property located at 801 Bushnell Street, for at least two (2) months. This will allow the Landmarks Commission and applicant to consider alternatives to demolition, including the alternative described above. This recommendation is only advisory, and the Landmarks Commission may decide to approve, approve with conditions, or deny the application.

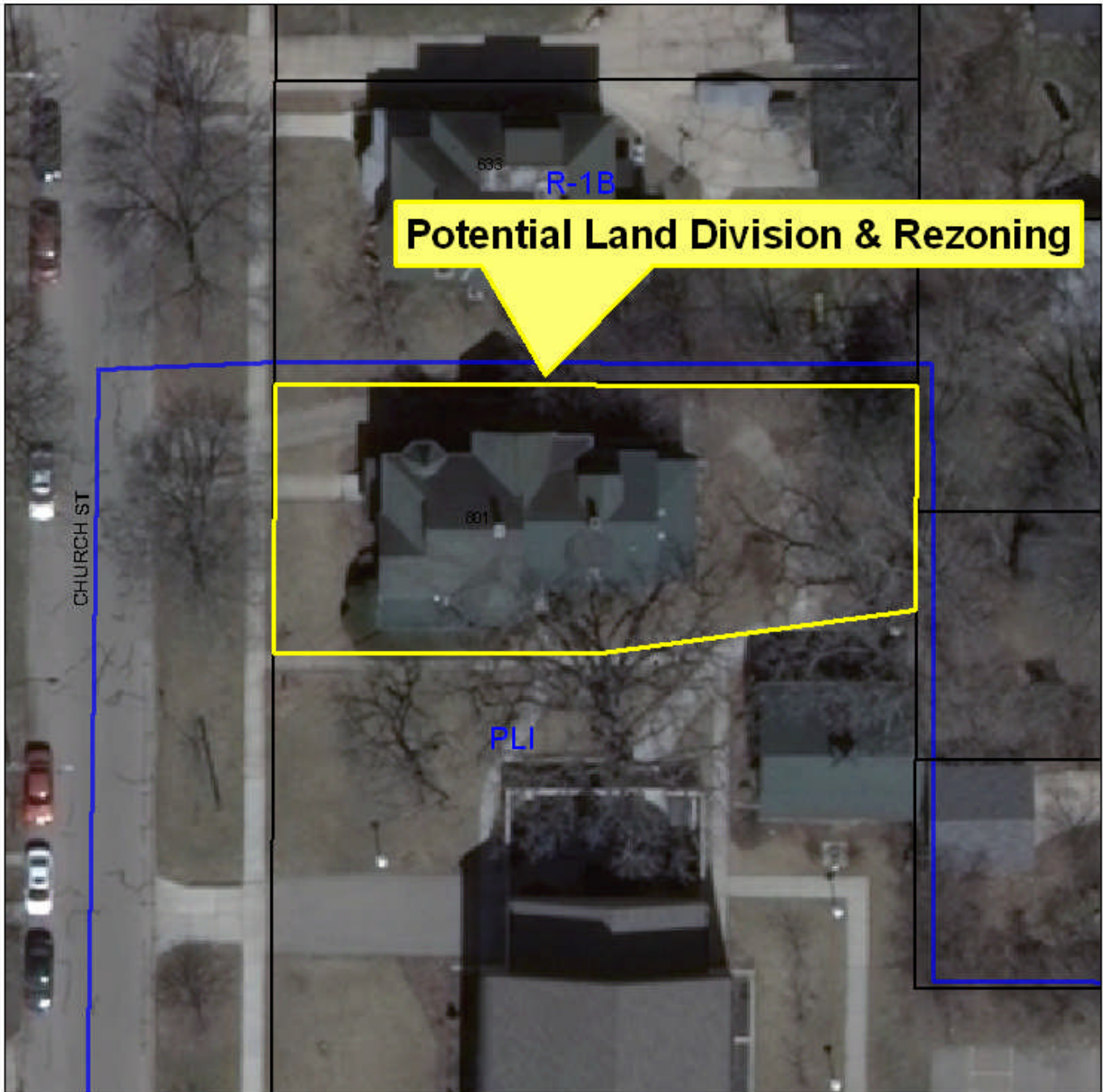
Fiscal Note/Budget Impact: N/A

Attachments: Location & Zoning Map, Site Photos, Aerial Photos, Letter from Applicant, and Intensive Survey Form.

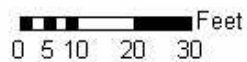
Location & Zoning Map

627 Church Street


COA-2010-35




1 inch = 31 feet



Legend

 COB Parcels

 Zoning District

Map prepared by: Drew Pennington

Date: November 2010

For: City of Beloit, Neighborhood Planning

Date of Aerial Photography: April 2008

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING DIVISION







First Congregational Church

"A Pilgrim Church for a Pilgrim People"

801 Bushnell St.
Beloit, WI 53511
608.362.4821
info@firstcon.org
www.firstcon.org

October 15, 2010

City of Beloit
Neighborhood Planning Commission

Attn: Beloit Landmarks Commission

The First Congregational Church of Beloit is asking for a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow us to demolish the building located at 627 Church St., Beloit, Wis.


After we acquired the property in 1961 it was used for office space and Sunday School classrooms. When we built our present church approximately 10 yrs. ago we had no further use of "Ingersoll House" for offices or classrooms. We did move our resale shop into Ingersoll. Due to financial reasons we closed the shop this past July. We are now faced with disposing of a building we do not need. We considered renting or leasing the property but in its present condition it would take thousands of dollars to make it habitable, which we do not have. We did consider selling but since this is all one parcel of land we would need a new survey and rezoning which would bring the lot line up to the north end of the church. This would result in either a very jagged lot line or require several easements.

The building is in bad need of repairs. The roof leaks and needs to be replaced; it needs all new plumbing and wiring; there are 3 furnaces, all original and one is not working; the ceiling is falling down in several locations due to leaks; there is asbestos covering the pipes; there is no kitchen or full bath.

The only solution that we see is to demolish the building and retain the land. Our congregation has given their consent to do this and we sincerely hope that you will agree.

Fay Locke
Chairman of Trustees

INTENSIVE SURVEY FORM Historic Preservation Division State Historical Society of Wisconsin

1 City, Village or Town: BELOIT		County: ROCK	Surveyor: Richard P. Hartung	Date: July, 1981	Street Church		
Street Address: 627 Church Street		Legal Description:	Acreage:	Number 627			
Current Name & Use: Residence		Current Owner:			Town 		
Film Roll No. RO-88 *RO-101			Current Owner's Address:			Range 	
Negative No. 3 * 11			Special Features Not Visible In Photographs:				
Facade Orient. W	Interior visited? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No			Section 			
2 Original Name & Use:	Source	Previous Owners	Dates		Uses	Map Name Near East Side Historic District	
Dates of Construction / Alteration c. 1890 ?	Source A						
Architect and/or Builder:	Source						
3 Architectural Significance <input type="radio"/> Represents work of a master <input type="radio"/> Possesses high artistic values <input type="radio"/> Represents a type, period, or method of construction <input type="radio"/> Is a visual landmark in the area <input checked="" type="radio"/> Other: None		4 Historical Significance <input type="radio"/> Assoc. with lives of significant persons <input type="radio"/> Assoc. with significant historical events <input type="radio"/> Assoc. with development of a locality <input type="radio"/> Other: <input checked="" type="radio"/> None			Map Code NES 88/3		
Architectural Statement: Two story plus attic Late picturesque Queen Anne style residence with gable and interrupting multi-sided tower roofs over extending bays. Aluminum siding over clapboard resulting in removal of detail and covering of eave bracketing and window trim.		Historical Statement:					
5 Sources of Information (Reference to Above) A Visual estimate of surveyor	6 Representation in Previous Surveys <input type="radio"/> HABS <input type="radio"/> NAER <input checked="" type="radio"/> WIHP <input type="radio"/> NRHP <input type="radio"/> landmark <input type="radio"/> other:			Map Code NES 88/3			
B	7 Condition <input type="radio"/> excellent <input checked="" type="radio"/> good <input type="radio"/> fair <input type="radio"/> poor <input type="radio"/> ruins						
C	8 District: Near East Side Historic Dist. <input type="radio"/> pivotal <input checked="" type="radio"/> contributing <input type="radio"/> non-contributing						
D	initials: R date: 8/1/81						
E	9 Opinion of National Register Eligibility <input checked="" type="radio"/> eligible <input type="radio"/> not eligible <input type="radio"/> unknown						
F	<input type="radio"/> national <input type="radio"/> state <input type="radio"/> local initials: R						