

CITY OF BELOIT

REPORT TO THE BELOIT LANDMARKS COMMISSION

Meeting Date: June 19, 2012

Agenda Item: 4

File Number: COA-2012-19

Applicant: Shawcraft Sign Company

Owner: Fairbanks Flats Rowhomes
LLC

Location: 205 Birch Avenue

Existing Zoning: R-3, Low-Density
Multifamily

Existing Land Use: Low Rise
Apartments

Parcel Size: 0.49 Acre

Request Overview/Background Information:

Shawcraft Sign Company has submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to install a pole sign on the property located at 205 Birch Avenue, also known as, The Fairbank Flats. The subject property was listed as an Individual Landmark Site during the 1981 Beloit Intensive Survey. Section 32.13 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance grants the Landmarks Commission the authority to issue a COA prior to the construction and/or placement of permanent signs within a historic site.

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:

- The subject property is located at the intersection of Shore Drive & Birch Avenue.
- The applicant has proposed to erect a pole sign on the subject property that will advertise the name of the apartments, the property owner's name and number, and indicate its status as a nationally registered historic place.
- The proposed sign is designed to reflect the architectural features and colors of the buildings (See attached Sign Rendering).
- The sign will be located on the southeast side of the subject property, close to the intersection of Shore Drive and Birch Avenue (See attached Site Plan).
- Section 32.13 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance requires official approval from the Landmarks Commission before the construction and/or placement of permanent signs within any historic district, landmark or landmark site. This provision also specifies that all signs are subject to the Outdoor Sign Ordinance (Chapter 30) and the requirements of the property's zoning district.
- Section 32.06(5) of the Historic Preservation Ordinance includes general review criteria to be used when evaluating COA applications.
 - The attached COA Checklist evaluates this application against the general review criteria included in the Ordinance.
- Section 32.06(5) of the Historic Preservation Ordinance establishes *Specific Review Criteria* to be used in evaluating COA applications. The following criteria are relevant to this application:

- (1) *Height.* The height of any proposed alteration or construction should be compatible with the style and character of the landmark and with surrounding structures in the historic district.

The proposed pole sign is will be established on the site in accordance with the height requirements provided in the City's Outdoor Sign Ordinance. The proposed height of the pole sign is compatible with the style and character of the landmark.

- (2) *Landscaping: Compatibility.* Landscaping should first be compatible with the architectural character and appearance of the landmark itself and then, if necessary, with other surrounding structures and landscapes in the historic district.

The proposed pole sign is compatible with the landmark site.

- (3) *Architectural Details:* Architectural details, including materials, colors and textures, should be treated so as to make a landmark compatible with the original architectural style or character of the landmark in the historic district.

- The proposed material and colors of the pole sign are compatible with the style and character of the landmark.
- Section 32.06(6) of the Historic Preservation Ordinance states that the Landmarks Commission may grant a COA if it determines:
 - In the case of a landmark or landmark site, the proposed work would not detrimentally change, destroy, or adversely affect any exterior architectural feature of the improvement upon which the work is to be done.
 - In the case of the construction of a new improvement upon a landmark site, the exterior of such improvement would not adversely affect or would harmonize with the external appearance of other improvements on such site.
 - In the case of any property located in an historic district, the proposed construction, reconstruction, or exterior alteration conforms to the objectives and design criteria of the historic preservation plan for the City and district.
- Staff believes that the proposed actions satisfy the standards of Section 32.06(6)(b).

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 Planning and Building Services Division recommends approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a pole sign on the property located at 205 Birch Avenue, based on the standards and criteria contained in the Historic Preservation Ordinance and subject to the following conditions:

1. The proposed pole sign shall meet all requirements of the Outdoor Sign Ordinance (Chapter 30) and the Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 19).
2. The applicant shall obtain a Sign Permit prior to installing the pole sign on the subject property.
3. All work shall be completed by August 31, 2012
4. Any changes or additions to this Certificate of Appropriateness must be reviewed and approved by staff prior to the start of any work. Work done without prior approval will be subject to the issuance of correction orders or citations.

Fiscal Note/Budget Impact: N/A

Attachments: Location & Zoning Map, Site Photograph, Applicant Submittals (Sign Rendering, Site Plan, and Project Description), Application, Intensive Survey Form, and COA Checklist.

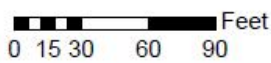
Location & Zoning Map

205 BIRCH AVENUE

COA-2012-19



1 inch = 77 feet



Legend

- Zoning District
- Parcels

Map prepared by: Michael D. Lofton II

Date: May 23, 2012

For: City of Beloit, Planning & Building Services

Date of Aerial Photography: April 2011

PLANNING & BUILDING SERVICES DIVISION

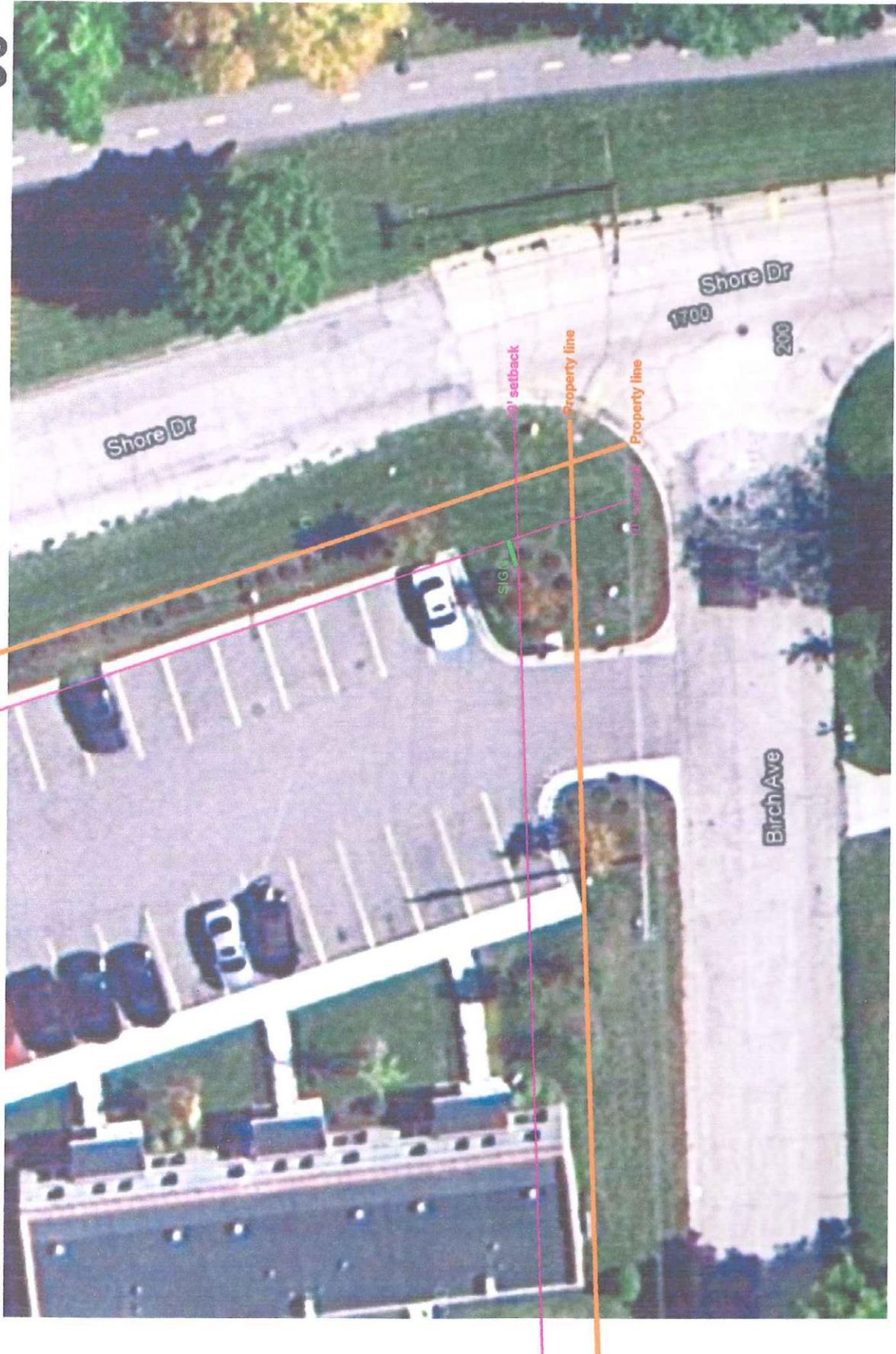




**SIGN DESIGN CONCEPT FOR
FAIRBANKS FLATS ROWHOMES**

SHAWCRAFT SIGN CO.
7727 BURDEN RD. • MACHESNEY PARK, ILLINOIS 61115
TEL. (815) 282-4106 • FAX (815) 282-4147
www.shawcraft.com

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SITE PLAN



May 26, 2012

City of Beloit, WI
Landmark Commission
Community Development Dept.
Division of Housing Services

Re: Fairbanks Flats monument signage - sign permit and historic review submittals

Attached are the required documents showing the visual construct of the new sign proposed for Fairbanks Flats Rowhomes. The first page is a site plan illustrating the property lines, the 10 foot setback lines and the location of the sign. The following page shows what the 39" x 60" sign looks like - and how it would fit in with its surroundings (sign to scale with elements in the photo).

We would use treated wood 4" x 4" posts painted with water-based acrylic paints and primers. The posts would be installed 42" below grade in concrete. The sign (double-faced) is common to the City of Beloit - it is routed HDPE (high density polyethylene - the same color material as the park sign across the street from the property). We enhanced the design by borrowing from the shape of the building for the shape of the sign (but limited color options with that material) and borrowed from the site colors to the same colors as were used on the actual building (the red on the porch structures and the yellow band on the building). The ridge cap along the top of the sign are added 3-D elements made from high-density urethane and primed and painted the same red color as the porch structures. The yellowish bands are added 3-D elements as well - but are made from an aluminum-composite sheet.

The 16" x 55" temporary signs below the main sign panels are just informational leasing signs that are removable. They are constructed from an aluminum-composite sheet with a digitally printed decal for the sign faces.

Please contact us by phone or email with any issues or omissions . . .

Respectfully,
Jay Allen
President
ShawCraft Sign Co.

7727 BURDEN RD. • MACHESNEY PARK, ILLINOIS • 61115
TEL.(815)282-4105 • FAX(815)282-4147
www.shawcraft.com email:shawcraft@shawcraft.com

CITY of BELOIT

PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES DIVISION

100 State Street, Beloit, WI 53511

Phone: (608) 364-6700

Fax: (608) 364-6609

CERTIFICATE of APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION

(Please Type or Print)

File Number: COA-2012-19

1. Address of property: 205 BIRCH AVE.
2. Parcel #: 12610025 - TAX ID# 206 12610025
3. Owner of record: SORMAN & CO. Phone: 608-756-0221
200 N. MAIN OREGON, WI 53575
(Address) (City) (State) (Zip)
4. Applicant's Name: SHAWCRAFT SIGN CO.
7727 BURDEN RD. MACHESNEY PARK, IL 61115
(Address) (City) (State) (Zip)
815-282-4105 (Office Phone #) (Cell Phone #) shawcraft@shawcraft.com (E-mail Address)
5. Present use of property: MULTI-TENANT HOUSING
6. The following action is requested:

- Approval of COA by Landmarks Commission (projects not listed below)
- Approval of COA by staff: (Check all that apply)
- Roof repair/replacement
- Gutter repair/replacement with historically appropriate materials and in historically appropriate styles
- Private sidewalk and driveway repair/replacement with historically appropriate materials in the same dimensions, placement and orientation
- Installation of historic plaques (residential properties only)
- Chimney repair and tuckpointing according to the Secretary of the Interior standards and in historically appropriate color and design
- Installation of fences
- Storm window/storm door repair or replacement
- Installation of glass blocks in basement window openings
- INSTALLATION OF SITE MONUMENT SIGN

Please continue to #7 (Over)

CERTIFICATE of APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION (continued)

7. Description of Project: Describe each item of the project separately.

Project item: Include existing condition(s) when describing item. Also describe the proposed work, material(s) to be used, and the impact the item would have on existing historic or architectural features of the property. (Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

DESIGN, FABRICATION & INSTALLATION OF HDPE (high density polyethylene - as used in city signage & park across street from property) MONUMENT SIGN AS PER ATTACHED DESIGN - SHAPE OF SIGN MATCHES BLDE. PROFILE - COLORS EFF. ADD-ONS TO MATCH COLOR OF BUILDING. ELIMINATES VANDALISM BY USING HDPE - BUT TIES TO ARCHITECTURE W/ SHAPE & COLORS.

8. Attachments:

- Site Plan of the lot (Please indicate direction of north, dimensions, structures, etc.)
- Sketches, drawings, building and streetscape elevations, and/or annotated photos
- Exterior photos
- Specifications (materials) for the project
- Phased development plan for the project (if proposed in phases)
- Inspection report (required for demolition requests only)
- Cost estimates for all the proposed work
- Other (please explain): _____

9. Source of Funds: Please indicate if funds for the project are being secured from any of the following sources:

- NHS City of Beloit SHSW Federal

NOTE:

The Beloit Landmarks Commission meets at 7:00 PM on the third Tuesday of the month. Meetings are held in The Forum of Beloit City Hall, 100 State Street. Applications must be filed with the Neighborhood Planning Division by the filing deadline date prior to the next Landmarks Commission meeting.

If you have questions or need assistance in completing this form, contact the City of Beloit Neighborhood Planning Division (364-6700).

[Signature] JAY ALLEN 5.28.12
 (Signature of applicant) (Print name) (Date)

| |
|--|
| Review fee: \$50.00* / \$25.00* if staff approved Amount paid: \$ <u>50.00</u> * Review fees are doubled to \$100.00 and \$50.00, respectively, when work begins prior to issuance of a COA. Scheduled meeting date: _____ Application accepted by: <u>Michael D. Loftis</u> Date: <u>5/31/12</u> |
|--|

INTENSIVE SURVEY FORM Historic Preservation Division State Historical Society of Wisconsin

| <p>1 City, Village or Town: BELOIT</p> <p>Street Address: 205, 215 Birch 206, 216 Carpenter</p> <p>Current Name & Use: Edgewater Apartments</p> <p>Film Roll No. R0-90 *R0-118</p> <p>Negative No. 18 *29, 30, 31</p> <p>Facade Orient. E</p> | <p>County: ROCK</p> | <p>Surveyor: Richard P. Hartung</p> <p>Legal Description: Lots 58, 59, 60, 61, Shorecrest Subdivision</p> <p>Current Owner: William Voss</p> <p>Current Owner's Address: 407 Central Avenue, Beloit, Wisconsin</p> <p>Special Features Not Visible In Photographs: UTM: Zone 16 Easting: 332420 Northing: 4709600 USGS Beloit Quadrangle/Scale: 1:24,000 Interior visited? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No</p> | <p>Date: July, 1981</p> <p>Acreage: 1.475</p> | <p>Street Birch and Carpenter</p> <p>Number 205, 215 206, 216</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|------|--------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--------------------------|
| <p>2 Original Name & Use: Fairbanks Flats - apartments</p> <p>Dates of Construction /Alteration 1917</p> <p>Architect and/or Builder:</p> | <p>Source E</p> <p>Source D</p> <p>Source</p> | <table border="1" style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="width:25%;">Previous Owners</th> <th style="width:25%;">Dates</th> <th style="width:25%;">Uses</th> <th style="width:25%;">Source</th> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </table> | Previous Owners | Dates | Uses | Source | | | | | | | | | | | | | <p>Town</p> <p>Range</p> |
| Previous Owners | Dates | Uses | Source | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| <p>3 Architectural Significance</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Represents work of a master</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Possesses high artistic values</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Represents a type, period, or method of construction</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Is a visual landmark in the area</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other: _____ <input checked="" type="radio"/> None</p> <p>Architectural Statement: Severely utilitarian in appearance, these apartment buildings are located on the west side of the Rock River, overlooking the river and its east bank. Identical in plan and detail, each building is constructed of concrete block, with shed roof and parapeted side walls. Each building is divided into six two story units, with bracketed canopies overhanging the paired entries, one-over-one sash windows (paired on the first story) and an absolute exclusion of ornament.</p> | <p>4 Historical Significance</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Assoc. with lives of significant persons</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Assoc. with significant historical events</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Assoc. with development of a locality</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Other: Assoc. w/development of Beloit black community</p> <p><input type="radio"/> None</p> <p>Historical Statement: A rare example of company housing built during World War I, Fairbanks Flats is historically significant in the development of 20th century Beloit, reflecting both the social consequences of the city's rapid industrialization and the sudden growth of its black community in an era of nationwide racial tension. Although Beloit had a strong manufacturing base throughout the late 19th century, the economic expansion (over)</p> | <p>Section</p> <p>Map Name City Engineer's</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>5 Sources of Information (Reference to Above)</p> <p>A Book of Beloit, p. 209</p> <p>B Beloit City Council Proceedings, July 26, 1917, pp. 72-74</p> <p>C Beloit City Council Proceedings, August 20, 1917, p. 87</p> <p>D Beloit Tax Rolls, RCHS Archives</p> <p>E Beloit City Directories, 1919-1954</p> <p>F "Black Historical Background," n. a., unpublished manuscript, RCHS, p. 4</p> | <p>6 Representation in Previous Surveys</p> <p><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:</p> <p>7 Condition</p> <p><input type="radio"/> excellent <input checked="" type="radio"/> good <input type="radio"/> fair <input type="radio"/> poor <input type="radio"/> ruins</p> <p>8 District:</p> <p><input type="radio"/> pivotal <input type="radio"/> contributing <input type="radio"/> non-contributing</p> <p>initials: _____ date: _____</p> <p>9 Opinion of National Register Eligibility</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> eligible <input type="radio"/> not eligible <input type="radio"/> unknown</p> <p><input type="radio"/> national <input type="radio"/> state <input checked="" type="radio"/> local initials: Rm</p> | <p>Map Code CE 90/18</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Historical Statement (Cont'd)

fostered by the advent of World War I greatly increased the size of both Beloit's industrial plant and its industrial work force. In large part, that growth resulted from the expansion of Fairbanks-Morse, the city's largest employer. An engine manufacturing firm, the company began production of a marine diesel engine in 1914 and experienced a boom in production during the ensuing war years. In response to that boom, "undreamed" numbers of workers arrived in the community. (A) But demand soon outstripped supply, and in the spring of 1917 the company "brought hundreds of colored people to be employed at the factory." (B)

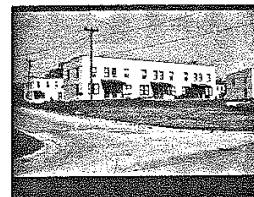
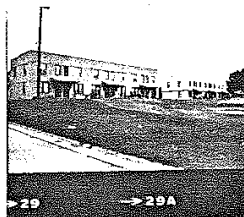
The question of housing those workers posed an immediate problem for both the company and the community, but Fairbanks-Morse was quick in responding. In an age when private industry still assumed (or failed to assume) many of the responsibilities later delegated to governmental agencies, Fairbanks-Morse proposed to house the newly arrived workers in bunker-like "flats" to be built on the northern edge of town. But if the proposal was forthright, it was not simple. Not only did the plan raise the specter of racial segregation, it also dramatized the conflict between the need for more housing and the need for park space.

Under a specially organized subsidiary--the Eclipse Home Makers, Incorporated--Fairbanks-Morse purchased vacant land in the McGavock Tract of the Edgewater Addition, located on the west side of the Rock River (directly opposite the east side factory) and north of an existing working class community. In accordance with the mores of the time, the company hoped to contain "the large number of negroes in one place" on the outskirts of town. (B)

Although the idea of segregation proved popular with the Beloit community, the site of the "settlement" did not, for reasons unrelated to the race issue. Opponents of the Fairbanks project--including an alarmed mayor--saw the decision as a direct threat to the city's plans for a park system. Throughout the early 20th century, Beloit had attempted to create an extensive park system, complete with boulevards, on the west side of the river. But the pressure of development had consumed much of that land for residential and industrial purposes. The city's best hope was centered on the so-called "Poe Park," an informal open space located at the north end of Fourth Street, in the McGavock Tract. (B)

But Fairbanks-Morse was interested in the same property and in the spring of 1917, just weeks before the city planned its own purchase, the company bought the McGavock Tract, including Poe Park. Angered at Fairbanks-Morse's unilateral decision--the deal was transacted without consulting any city officials--Mayor H. W. Adams called an emergency session of the city council and predicted that if a "settlement for colored people is carried out the entire park system for the west side will have to be abandoned." Moreover, the mayor warned, the housing could ignite "class bitterness that will be enduring and most undesirable for years to come." (B)

Despite official concern--and private pleas--Fairbanks-Morse continued in its plans. Even the city's threatened condemnation proceedings, generally conceded to be without strong legal precedent, were ignored. (C) By the end of 1917, the construction of Fairbanks Flats--four concrete block apartment buildings containing a total of 24 two story units--had begun, owned by Eclipse Home Makers and rented to the black employees of Fairbanks Morse. (D)



BELOIT HISTORIC SURVEY

Individually Eligible Sites--

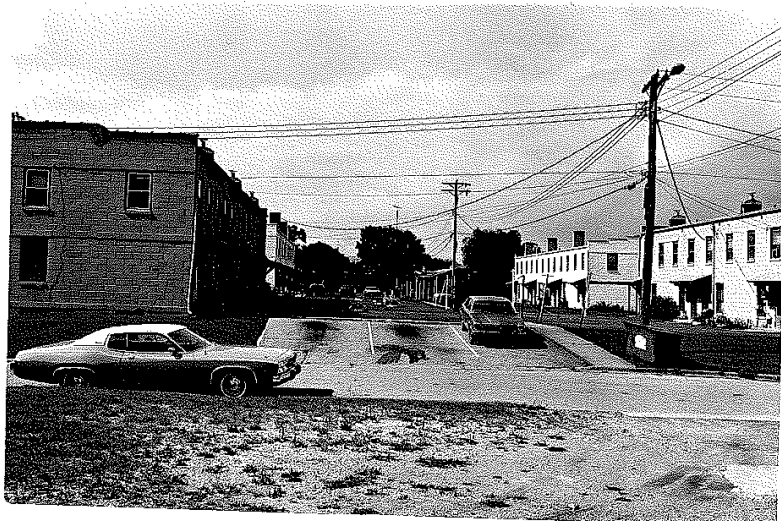
205, 215 Birch

206, 216 Carpenter

Historical Statement (Cont'd)

But the Flats was more than just an issue of housing: the concentration of black workers in the Flats created the nucleus of a black community that would shape Beloit housing patterns in the decades ahead. The residents of the complex were newly arrived workers, many of whom were unskilled laborers, who formerly lived in inadequate housing in the South. But, the Flats also housed blacksmiths, molders, oilers, and at least one foreman. (E) So central did the Flats become to the black community that shortly after the construction of the apartments, Fairbanks-Morse brought J. D. Stevenson from Tuskegee Institute to found a black YMCA near the Flats. (F) As late as 1929, the apartments--by then known as Edgewater Flats (later Edgewater Apartments)--were administered by company officials working out of the black YMCA. (D)

After World War II, ownership of the Flats changed hands and many of the residents, while still industrial workers, were no longer exclusively the employees of Fairbanks-Morse. (E) Today, the rental units, managed by the Voss Agency realty firm, are rented without regard to place of employment, but the Fairbanks Flats remains a predominantly black housing complex in the heart of one of Beloit's black communities.



CITY of BELOIT
Neighborhood Planning Division

100 State Street, Beloit, WI 53511 Phone: (608) 364-6700 Fax: (608) 364-6609

| |
|---|
| CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS CHECKLIST |
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For property located at: 205 Birch Avenue

| GENERAL REVIEW CRITERIA | YES | NO | N/A |
|---|------------|-----------|------------|
| Has every reasonable effort been made to provide a compatible use for a property that requires alteration for use other than for its originally intended purpose? | | | X |
| Will the applicant retain distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure or site? The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible. | | | X |
| Is the applicant proposing alterations that have a historical basis, rather than trying to create an earlier or later appearance? | | | X |
| Has the applicant recognized and respected changes in the development of a building over time that may have acquired significance in their own right? | | | X |
| Has the applicant treated with sensitivity distinctive stylistic features, or examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterize a building, structure or site? | X | | |
| Has the applicant repaired, rather than replaced, deteriorated architectural features, wherever possible? If replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design color, texture and other visual qualities. | | | X |
| Has the applicant avoided sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the surface of the historic building? | | | X |
| Has the applicant made every possible effort to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by or adjacent to any project? | | | X |
| If a contemporary design for alterations and additions is proposed, does this design retain significant historical, architectural or cultural material and is the design compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property and neighborhood? | X | | |
| Are new additions or alterations to buildings done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the building would be unimpaired? | | | X |