

Consulting Party and Public Comments

Summary of Consulting Party and Public Comments

Comments from Consulting Parties

- Delaware County Historical Society, letter from Mike Mavis, 11/29/2010
- Muncie Historic Preservation and Rehabilitation Commission, letter from Wade Jennings, 1/14/2011

Comments from the Public

- Dr. Bruce Frankel, email 10/25/2010, opinion column in *Muncie Star Press* 1/3/2011
- Mr. Gregg Neff, email 10/25/2010
- Ms. Cynthia Brubaker, email 12/5/2010
- Dr. Eric Kelly, opinion column in *Muncie Star Press* 12/16/2010
- Mr. Brad King, email 12/19/2010
- Ms. Kathleen Scott, letter 1-11-2011

Consulting Party list and summary of responses:

Ms. Karie Brudis
Indiana Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology
See attached letter dated November 18, 2010.

Mr. Wayne Goodman
Indiana Landmarks
Attended & commented at meeting on August 9, 2010; no further comments.

Ms. Annie Poole
East Central Neighborhood Association
Attended & commented at meeting on August 9, 2010; no further comments.

Ms. Deb Malitz
Emily Kimbrough Neighborhood Development Committee
Discussed at meetings, but no comments forwarded to city.

Mr. and Mrs. Norman Gayda
Returned reply card requesting consulting party status; no further comments

Mr. Jim Lee
Delaware County Historical Society
See attached letter dated November 29, 2010, by Mike Mavis.

Mr. Wade Jennings
Muncie Historic Preservation Commission
See attached letter dated January 14, 2011.

Entities invited but not accepting Consulting Party status:

Mr. Stephan Howick
Old West End Neighborhood Association
No response.

Mr. Anthony Costello
Professor emeritus, College of Architecture and Planning, Ball State University
No response.

Mr. and Mrs William Britton
Old West End Neighborhood Reinvestment Corp.
No response.

Mr. Bruce Gonzales, President
Delaware Nation
No response.

Mr. Charles Todd, Principal Chief
Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma
No response.

Mr. Floyd E. Leonard, Chairperson
Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
No response.

Mr. Ron Sparkman, Chairperson
Shawnee Tribe
No response.

Mr. Leaford Bearskin, Chief
Wyandotte Tribe of Oklahoma
No response.

Comments from the public:

Dr. Bruce Frankel
Professor of Urban Planning at Ball State University and Emily Kimbrough H.D. homeowner
Email to SHPO et al, October 25, 2010 and opinion piece in *Muncie Star Press*, January 3, 2011

Mr. Greg Neff
Indianapolis deconstruction contractor
Email dated October 25, 2010

Ms. Cynthia Brubaker
Instructor in Historic Preservation, Ball State University
Email dated December 5, 2010

Dr. Eric Kelly
Professor of Urban Planning at Ball State University
Opinion piece in *Muncie Star Press*, December 16, 2010

Mr. Brad King
Old West End homeowner, archaeologist
Email dated December 19, 2010

Ms. Kathleen Scott
Old West End homeowner and Senior Editor for the *Muncie Star Press*
Letter dated January 11, 2011

Delaware County Historical Society, Inc.

120 East Washington Street
Muncie, IN 47305-1734
www.the-dchs.org



765-282-1550

November 29, 2010

Bill Morgan
Community Development
300 N. High St.
Muncie, In 47305

RE: Section 106 Review

Bill,

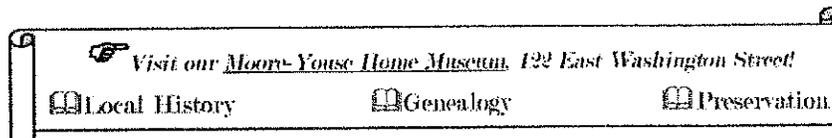
After review of the 106 Findings of an "Adverse Effect on the Historic Properties / 2010 Demolition of 31 Historic Buildings Muncie, Indiana" and ongoing discussions among the residents the Emily Kimbrough Historic District, I wish to make the following comments. While I agree that the vast majority of these structures need to be demolished, I must oppose the demolition of 7 of these structures at this time. Having been involved in Historic Preservation and building rehab for the last 35 years, I find the demolition of the following properties premature.

#322 E Washington
#603 E Jackson
#703 E Jackson
#901 E Adams
#521 W Adams
#609 W Main
#117 N Jefferson

I will comment individually on them below. I feel that the problem with these properties, more than condition, is ownership. If they were no longer in the hands of present owners and had the liens removed, rehab might be possible. Most of the structures are far more important historically than architecturally, which has not been taken into account.

#322 E Washington was constructed for J C Johnson who was in the lumber business with his brother. They built the first major office building in downtown Muncie. Later the family would be a major player in the Borg Warner Corp. and the development of the airport in Muncie (Johnson Field). The architects for this house were Grindle and Weatherhogg of Ft. Wayne.

#603 E Jackson is an 1870's Italianate and second home of the John Ryan family. John Ryan was a prominent local Attorney he first purchased the house next door at 611 E Jackson. In the 1880's he remodeled 603 into a Stick/Shingle style with a Moorish interior decorated with hand painting on floors and walls by his wife Lida and daughters Mildred and Susan. Who would become charter members of the Art Student's League



and the Muncie Art Association. These organizations promoted the arts locally. Then in 1890 he hired George Barber of Knoxville to design a new house that was constructed on the back of the lot at 202 S Monroe. All three of these houses were used by members of the Ryan family and remained in the family until John's death in the 1920's. It might be noted that his daughter Susan and husband John Rollin Marsh hired Hubert Foltz of Indianapolis to design their home, just across the alley, at 616 E Adams in 1904. John also a photographer documented all of these homes. The house just east of the Marsh house was also designed by George Barber. The demolition of this house would destroy the integrity of this entire site.

#703 E Jackson is one of the few pre civil war structures left in Muncie, built about 1854 by the Thomas and Mary Housekeeper family. The back of this structure needs to be demolished. However the original brick structure could be saved. The demolition of this structure for a parking lot is, to say, hardly worth the effort for so few parking spaces. It might be noted that there is almost an entire block of paved parking within on block of the Jackson Vine Apartments, which could be acquired.

#901 E Adams built the 1870's for the John S Reid family who after coming to Muncie in 1850 started the first steam saw mill in the next block, just south of this site. He later turned it into a Hub factory and created a wide demand for his product. It is the only total Board and Batten House that I know of in Muncie. The Rehab of this structure was not completed because of lack of support from local government offices. I might also add that this house was given to a private owner to rehab, who then sold it.

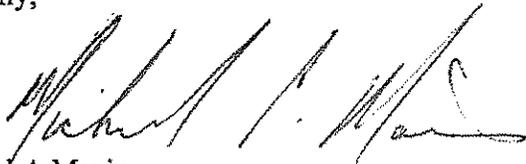
#521 W Adams is an early house that was remodeled into a Grand Queen Anne structure for the Kitselman Family. The Kitselman Bros. were manufactures of wire fence products that were shipped around the world. Their barred wire "fenced the west" It is the only house from Delaware County included in Peat's book on Indiana architecture. The Kitselman family later built three large estates in Muncie. A later owner was the Rector Family who built a large apartment across Adams St, to the north.

#609 W Main is a house that is just to, intact to throw away. It was built in 1906 by Lillie Cox, a widow, who owned The Coxie Co., a wholesale confectioner. If this house is demolished 6 houses on the same side of Main, in the 500 and 600 block will be missing.

#117 N Jefferson looks as if this might be saved.

To me a more important part of the memorandum of agreement would be that the C D office (through a Land Bank or Non profit) get control of these properties, moth ball them and get them into the hands of someone who will Rehab them.

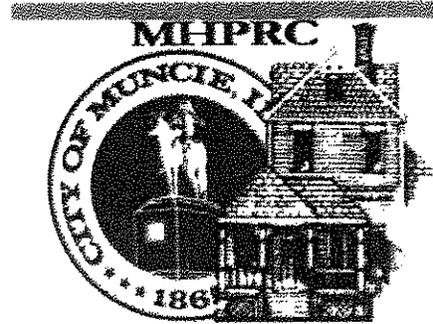
Cordially,



Michael A Mavis
Vice President Delaware County Historic Society

January 14, 2011

Mr. William P. Morgan
Community Development Office, City of Muncie
300 N. High Street
Muncie, Indiana 47305



Dear Bill:

The Muncie Historic Preservation and Rehabilitation Commission wishes to be a consulting party to the Section 106 process for the city's "2010 Demolition of 31 Historic District Buildings in Muncie, Indiana." While we have been discussing these properties for some months, we met with you last evening to carefully consider each property, and wish to provide the following comments.

In general, we concur with the city's determination that the majority of the 31 properties have deteriorated beyond any reasonable chance of rehabilitation. We further agree that these properties present a risk to the neighboring properties and the public through fire, erosion of property values, and other factors as stated in the city's finding. This is amply evidenced through the fires that have occurred at 212 N. Pershing, 210 E. North, and 418 S. Proud in the last few months.

We understand that the city has already demolished the fire-damaged home at 439 S. Proud with non-federal funds, that the owner of 507 W. Main has demolished that home, and that the remains of 212 N. Pershing have been removed. Accordingly we removed these three properties from our deliberations. We would recommend that demolition of the following 18 properties is appropriate in accordance with the draft MOA as soon as the agreement is signed:

206 E. North St.	418 S. Proud St.
210 E. North St.	503 W. Main St.
303 E. North St.	511 S. Council St.
306 E. Gilbert St.	514 W. Howard St.
415 N. Madison St.	521 S. Council St.
222 N. Pershing St.	611 W. Main St.
821 E. Jackson St.	615 W. Main St.
823 E. Jackson St.	921 W. Charles St.
907 E. Jackson St.	1009 W. Charles St.

That leaves ten properties that deserve special consideration, as follows:

It is our understanding that the Community Development Office intends to issue a Request for Proposals for rehabilitation of 20th Century Flats at 117 N. Jefferson using HOME Investment Partnership funds. Demolition should be delayed until that process is complete, and the building should be rehabilitated if a viable proposal is presented.

It is our understanding that the Community Development Office intends to use West Main Street as a target area for its NSP 3 program. Accordingly, demolition of 609 W. Main St. should be postponed pending development of this project. While it is not a particularly compelling property,

it appears to be in more salvageable condition than the rest. Furthermore, 115 S. Council St. and 702 W. Main should be considered for inclusion in this program. These two properties remain under rehabilitation orders by the Unsafe Building Hearing Authority. Demolition should be delayed so long as the owners continue to make some progress toward rehab.

The remaining six houses are in desperate condition, but are of such significance that they should be given one last chance for salvation. With no government programs in place and the probability that the cost of rehab will far exceed the final value, the last hope for these would come from the limited ranks of intrepid urban pioneers and do-it-yourself preservationists. Despite extensive coverage in the local press, you have received only one inquiry about acquiring any of the condemned homes. We would therefore recommend postponing demolition for 90 days, and making a final appeal to those in the preservation community. We would suggest a marketing effort through Indiana Landmarks and their *Indiana Preservationist* publication, the National Trust, and similar targeted efforts, and offer to assist in this endeavor. The importance of these 6 properties is as follows:

521 West Adams – the Vandercook/Kitselman/Rector house is significant for its unique architecture and its association to the prominent Kitselman family and the development of industry in the city. Moreover, its loss would create a void on a prominent corner lot.

603 E. Jackson – this house is significant for its unique architectural features as well as its association with two prominent Muncie families, as more fully described in Mike Mavis' letter. Moreover, demolition of this home will further expose the Ryan house on Monroe to the noise and traffic of State Road 32, impacting the viability of this restored gem.

322 E. Washington Street – the J. C. Johnson House is the only house slated for demolition which is individually listed on the National Register and is significant both architecturally and for its association with Johnson and the development of industry in the city, as more fully detailed in the National Register nomination.

703 E. Jackson – significant as one of the few surviving antebellum houses in the community. As noted in Mike Mavis' letter, the later rear additions should probably be removed, but the original brick structure retained.

622 W. Howard – this home can be looked at as stripped out, or as a gut rehabilitation with much of the selective demolition work completed.

901 E. Adams – this house is significant for its Gothic architecture unique to the city and for its association with the first steam sawmill in Muncie. Despite its exterior appearance, it is in relatively sound condition compared to the other properties.

It is our understanding that the demolition funds may be expended before all of the properties can be demolished. With that in mind, the Commission has ranked the ten properties in the following order, based on significance and the prospects for rehabilitation. If, in the end, they must be demolished, we would recommend that the city begin at the bottom of this list.

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. 521 W. Adams | 6. 702 West Main |
| 2. 117 N. Jefferson | 7. 609 W. Main |
| 3. 603 E. Jackson | 8. 901 E. Adams |
| 4. 322 E. Washington | 9. 622 W. Howard |
| 5. 115 S. Council | 10. 703 E. Jackson |

Once the measures outlined above have been taken, we would recommend that any of the ten properties left without a viable plan for rehabilitation be demolished, again in accordance with the draft MOA. These properties must not remain vacant and decaying indefinitely. As they stand, they endanger the adjacent properties and reduce the viability of their neighborhoods in all of the ways noted in the city's finding. Moreover, they might well be interpreted as evidence that historic preservation is not feasible in our city.

To the extent that salvage measures are not already in place, every effort should be made to save materials from all of the demolished houses such that they do not end up in a landfill and might support other rehab efforts.

It is with great sadness that we find such demolitions appropriate. Clearly, the city and the Commission must seek effective means to pro-actively halt the decline of our urban neighborhoods and to better preserve our architectural heritage.

Sincerely,


Dr. Wade Jennings
Chair, MHPRC

From: Frankel, Bruce W. [<mailto:bfrankel@bsu.edu>]

Sent: Monday, October 25, 2010 12:46 PM

To: Glass, James

Cc: <mailto:rnelson@achp.gov>; ECNA; 'LynnThornburg'@iotpmap02pl.isd.state.in.us; 'MikeSullivan'@iotpmap02pl.isd.state.in.us; 'DiannaStankiewicz'@iotpmap02pl.isd.state.in.us; 'MikeShaw'@iotpmap02pl.isd.state.in.us; 'KathyScott'@iotpmap02pl.isd.state.in.us; 'TomRotz'@iotpmap02pl.isd.state.in.us; 'SteveRobert'@iotpmap02pl.isd.state.in.us; 'NoraPowell'@iotpmap02pl.isd.state.in.us; 'AnniePoole'@iotpmap02pl.isd.state.in.us; 'ChrisPoland'@iotpmap02pl.isd.state.in.us; 'ChrisPiche'@iotpmap02pl.isd.state.in.us; 'RobinOdle'@iotpmap02pl.isd.state.in.us; 'GlendaNoblitt'@iotpmap02pl.isd.state.in.us; 'TyMiller'@iotpmap02pl.isd.state.in.us; 'MikeMavis'@iotpmap02pl.isd.state.in.us; Deborah Malitz; Frank Meeker; Mike Mavis; Rick Russell; Tracy Rabel

Subject: Section 106 Review - Muncie City Demolition of Properties in Historic Districts and Landmark Properties Outside those Districts

Jim:

Hello! I am an old colleague of yours from BSU, and in need of your supportive action on a grave matter facing Muncie City and subject to SHPO review. I have copied Reid Nelson as Director of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

My writing is of a resident of one historic district and a concerned citizen, certified in historic preservation, with both a history of community involvement and scholarly activities in this field. It is reserved for and subject to the formal endorsement of such organizations directly engaged in neighborhood reinvestment and historic preservation as the Muncie Neighborhood Redevelopment Corporation [MNRC], the Emily Kimbrough Neighborhood Development Committee [EKNDK], and the East Central Neighborhood Association [ECNA]. These organizations, all directly involved in the subject neighborhoods of the proposed action, will meet to discuss this matter within a month.

Within the NHPA's Section 106 review process, I am writing in opposition to the proposed Muncie City demolition activities as captioned above and based on significant adverse impact on the subject properties, and both the historic districts and neighborhoods situated. I call for a finding of significant impact [if you will a no FONSI] and either the curtailment of the proposed Federally-supported activity or, failing that, the issuance of a Notice of Intent [NOI] and then deployment of an Environmental Impact Statement, as called for under Section 102(2)(C) of NEPA.

The demolitions' impact on the affected neighborhoods includes the destruction of both significant history and architecture as well as the "urban fabric," and the release of vermin harbored by these vacant properties; just these impacts have yet to be identified officially, let alone investigated. Further, demolition will not reverse disinvestment, a chief contributing agent to blight and the current "demolition by neglect."

Muncie City is a consulting party to the Section 106 process. As these proposed demolitions involve the use of NSP funds with the requisite of timely disbursement, the issuance of an NOI would have the likely effect of causing the City to reprogram its NSP activities, at least in regard to these historic districts [30 of the proposed 136 planned demolitions].

At issue currently and locally [not a matter yet for SHPO] is the \$1,148,363 in un-programmed NSP3 funds and, of course, the \$1,923,504 in programmed demolition of 136 single family homes and apartment buildings. The City has identified thirty [30] properties for demolition, and a majority identified as "contributing" to their respective historic districts. Of this majority are notable, significant, or outstanding buildings, all on the list for demolition. For example, I call your attention to the Vandercook [later Kitselman, Rector] House constructed 1887 at 521 West Adams, the multifamily structure at 117 North Jefferson Street, and especially the Johnson House at 322 East Washington Street and constructed in 1897. These 30 properties are among 136 properties to be demolished with Federal funds, with the residual of 106 properties outside designated historic districts and of unknown historic/ architectural significance [not currently on the Register, but may be deserving and presently absent any formal local or State review]. I object to demolition, an irreversible action, to any of the 136 properties absent a survey of the significance of each, and regardless of its location within or outside a designated historic district.

Second, the City has an appalling record of no support for property rehabilitation, and especially, but not exclusively, with regard to single family dwellings. For the current year, the City has received \$8,000,677 in Federal awards relating to the HUD programs of HOME, CDBG and NSP. Of that \$1,923,504 is programmed for demolition without replacement, another \$1,900,000 for demolition with limited replacement and substantial displacement of low and moderate income tenants, and less than 1% for "emergency repairs" [\$60,000], the City's sole rehabilitation activity for these types of single family dwellings. The City has proven active in the rehabilitation of multifamily buildings in targeted neighborhoods/ historic districts [note: Jackson-Vine and Graystone Apartments in the Emily Kimbrough Historic District], but among the list of buildings for demolition is 117 North Jefferson Street, a similar and contributing apartment building of historic and architectural significance. The City appears unwilling to apply its efforts at Jackson-Vine and Graystone to 117 North Jefferson.

I have a proposal [37-page community development and business plan] pending before Mayor McShurley to redeploy part of this \$8 million to neighborhood redevelopment. The City has the resources to institute the responsible actions of preservation and reinvestment, and yet takes the official position that it awaits a redeveloper of the properties on its demolition list. The MNRC is one such redeveloper and I have been contacted by several "cottage industry" rehabbers willing to take one a property at a time, if only for a leveraging, funding inducement by the City.

Significantly, this irreversible action is avoidable, and cannot be portrayed by the City as either necessary or without significant adverse impact. For the lesson of Muncie's history I refer to the same arguments by City officials made for our historic court house, city hall and union station. The quality of place includes its heritage, as I am sure you will agree.

Please add me to your mailings, and I look forward to our discussion as we move through this review process.

Cordially,

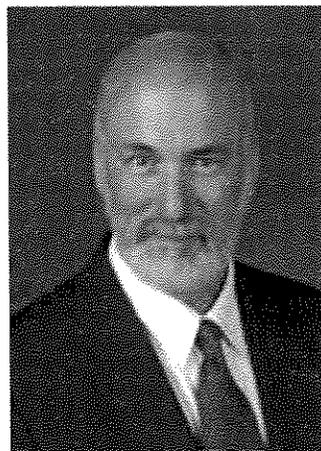


*Bruce Frankel, PhD, AICP
Professor of Urban Planning
Ball State University
AB 307
Muncie, IN 47306
PH: 765-285-5869
FAX: 765-285-2648
bfrankel@bsu.edu*

Folly of Muncie's war on blight

BY BRUCE FRANKEL • JANUARY 3, 2011

We have been watching blight for several years, and now the city administration has the federal funds to respond. Those resources this year alone accumulate to \$8 million. Its choice of demolition, 136 properties, including 31 in historic districts, is monumental misfeasance, built on four fallacies.



One. "With its decline, Muncie is an over-built city; demolition allows us sustainably to get smaller." Let's translate that to mean no one wants to live in a neighborhood of deteriorating properties and declining market values. Supply is a key determinant of demand. Every developer understands: If you build it, they may come, but if you don't, demand will never find its expression.

Try improving that housing stock, adding key urban amenities, and demand will return. If the city can invest annually in Far Eastern trips searching for catalytic growth in our local economy and city, try the local Zip codes.

A 2010 Federal Home Loan Bank study concluded that every dollar spent in affordable housing investment leverages \$14.30 directly in the economy, and in turn and indirectly, another 72 percent from the multiplier effect. Accordingly, \$24.64 results from a public investment of a dollar. If accurate, an \$8 million public investment would infuse as much as \$197 million in the local economy.

At a national average of a construction worker's salary of \$38,000 plus fringe benefits of \$8,000, the jobs generated would total 4,282. Although biased toward less labor intensive new construction, 17 percent of those jobs are in the manufacturing of construction materials, and presuming that all of them are attendant to other economies, we are generating a net 3,554 jobs in Muncie's economy (two-thirds of those currently seeking jobs).

If less than accurate, we are still left with a substantial economic engine for Muncie. Instead of building for the rest of the world, we would rebuild for ourselves. Sadly, the present course reflects the high cost of a wasted opportunity.

Two. "Demolition is a realistic strategy." The city does search for investor saviors for these properties on the UBC list, but without avail. What is the market telling us? Any investment in an individual property is a far greater risk than a concerted investment in a neighborhood; neighborhood-based, in lieu of a property, investment has a demonstrated history in other communities of dramatically improving the investment market.

I will take you to Lockerbie Square and Fall Creek Place in Indianapolis, and numerous small city downtowns, all restored today and previously worse than Muncie's neighborhoods currently impacted. Is it the reality of what we live with? Or, is it the reality of what other, very smart places have accomplished?

Three. The city's condition for demolition is "if the cost of acquisition/rehabilitation exceeds the average of neighborhood market values." If the city were a bank, that would be "red-lining," and a prescriptive denial of any hope of neighborhood recovery. Further, there is an incongruity in market conditions as temporal and demolition as a permanent condition. That dysfunctional and bogus test accelerates, not reverses, our decline.

Four. "Blight pursues blight, and demolition will arrest it." What blight pursues is disinvestment. Any policy that avoids reinvestment promotes blight. Remember, reinvestment leverages private capital and generates ratables, where demolition is done entirely through city resources. For the same or incrementally larger public investment, these properties could be rehabilitated, a valued lesson from BSU's historic preservation students.

Of the \$8 million in federal funds this past year, less than 1 percent was allocated to the rehabilitation of homesteads, and none to abandoned homes. This is a historic pattern of city policy and which HUD has recognized, now nationally restricting demolition and insisting on a reinvestment strategy.

Take a stand against the city's folly. Demand smarter government.

Greg Neff email

-----Original Message-----

From: Greg Neff [mailto:greendemo@sbcglobal.net]

Sent: Monday, October 25, 2010 8:25 AM

To: gcheesman@cityofmuncie.com

Subject: BLIGHT WATCH: Muncie seeks OK from state to demolish historic homes

You have been sent an online news article from Greg Neff as a courtesy of thestarpress.com.

Article Title:

BLIGHT WATCH: Muncie seeks OK from state to demolish historic homes

To view the contents on www.thestarpress.com, go to:

<http://www.thestarpress.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/201010250317/NEWS01/10250315>

Message:

Gretchen. ALL Historic Houses scheduled for Demolition should be Deconstructed and offered as house packages in states and cities that appreciate Historic homes....write some darn specs when these are pout out for demo. I am writing a letter to the State as well, something needs to be done to prevent the State from losing these homes.

Thanks!

Greg

Bill Morgan

From: Cynthia Brubaker [cynthia.brubaker@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, December 05, 2010 6:06 PM
To: jglass@dnr.in.gov
Cc: kbrudis@dnr.in.gov; Duncan Campbell; Bill Morgan
Subject: Muncie Section 106 Reviews

Jim-

I have had the good fortune of working with students at Ball State this semester. In the Documentation & Registration class, they are working on four properties in downtown Muncie:

225 East Washington
115 South Council
521 West Adams
622 West Howard

Each has NSP funds allocated by the City of Muncie for demolition and were awaiting Section 106 review.

I learned this action was cleared by your office as not having an adverse effect on these properties, all contributing buildings in National Register listed districts.

We have been evaluating these properties, crawling all around them, inside and out. Our conclusion, with all certainty, is that, not only are they significant architecturally, but they are in fair to good condition and have not, as was reported in the Muncie paper recently:

" . . . lost a sufficient amount of historic fabric to no longer contribute to the significance of the districts."

<http://www.thestarpress.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/201011280317/NEWS01/11280334>

In good condition, demolition funds would easily fund the cost of securing them against intruders, be they human or animal, and the elements.

There may be many properties in Muncie that have lost integrity, are fire-damaged, full of vermin, and present other insurmountable physical obstacles; these four properties do not fall in to that category. Three are prominent corner structures, the loss of which would significantly effect the rhythm and character of their districts. Two employ steel structures, making them more durable than the average property; one is most likely individually eligible for the National Register.

We would like to invite you and your staff to attend the final presentations on the properties that will take place on Monday afternoon, December 13th at the Muncie city hall. The students will present documentation on the properties that may be used as additional information for the consideration in the Section 106 review.

More specifics will follow, but please let me know if we can get you any additional information at this point.
Thank you for your attention to this matter,
-Cindy

--

Cynthia Brubaker
Instructor in Architecture
Graduate Program in Historic Preservation
College of Architecture and Planning
Ball State University
812.361.6719

Some structures worth saving

Saturday and Tuesday editions of The Star Press carried excellent front-page stories about Ball State student projects looking at historic buildings largely slated for demolition.

One bore the unfortunately apt headline "Tear Down City." Three of the five buildings that the students examined (including both of those shown in front-page pictures) are on the city's demolition list; one has been removed.

Those preparing the studies are graduate students in historic preservation. As some online comments have noted, the students may not fully understand some of the economic and structural issues.

On the other hand, I think their formal presentations and back-up reports make a sufficiently compelling case that the "supreme court" — in this case, Mayor Sharon McShurley — should grant these buildings a stay of execution to explore the ideas the students have pre-

sented. There is nothing urgent about demolishing these buildings — these three are structurally sound and pose no danger to anyone; one even has a relatively new roof and structural steel supports.

Several people commenting online have asked, in effect, "Who will take these? Who will arrange financing?" The city has for several months had a full-time land bank director.



ERIC KELLY

Land bank is something of a misnomer, because effective land banks find people to use vacant parcels and vacant buildings — and help them to arrange financing to do it.

I was excited when the mayor established the land bank and when Ball Brothers granted funding to help support it, but

I am disappointed that the land bank is not at the forefront of these issues. These buildings all need significant work that will cost money — but Habitat for Humanity, the local Housing Authorities (yes, we have two of them) and other organizations already spend money on affordable housing.

Believe it or not, replumbing and rewiring an existing building really is cheaper than building a new one. There is even a special Federal Housing Administration loan program that provides financing for people to buy, rehabilitate and then obtain a permanent mortgage on inner city properties — no subsidy, just a program to help us reuse what we have.

But arranging such rehab projects is complicated. Our land bank should be working with local lenders, investors, young families and social service agencies to help put people who want to invest sweat equity in housing together with buildings like these and available

financial programs.

Not all the news is bad. The Unsafe Building Authority and its staff have gotten the attention of many local owners of buildings that are not on the hit list — and worked with them to encourage repair and rehabilitation. But the hit list is too long and too aggressive.

Let's also take this opportunity to slow down and rethink the entire demolition program. Are there dilapidated buildings that need to be demolished? Absolutely. The problem is that we seem to have an agency driving around in a bulldozer seeking things to knock down instead of performing appropriate triage — studying resources and opportunities and putting those in categories: 1) must be saved; 2) easy to save; 3) can be saved, with effort; and 4) no hope. The bulldozer should start at the bottom of that list and stop way before it gets to the top.

Eric Kelly is an urban planning professor at Ball State University.

From: Brad King [mailto:kobayashi_jyubei@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, December 19, 2010 4:29 PM
To: Bill Morgan
Subject: Re: Proposed historic demos

Bill,

Just for the fun of it I overlooked Mike Mavis' reasons and took a look at each structure from a cultural resources management perspective.

322 E. Washington

This is exactly the type of historically significant association to a community that the Section 106 process would look for from my point of view in cultural resources management. It is directly the residence of a person that bears some historical significance to Muncie, in this case the entrepreneur history.

603 E. Jackson

Unfortunately houses by local attorneys are not usually considered significant unless that attorney had done something like started one of the first law offices/firms in the community.

703 E. Jackson

Unfortunately pure age doesn't cut it.

901 E. Adams

Now this could very well be another structure that has an associated historic significance to the community. If we knew more about the saw mill and it's exact location, together they could contribute a rich and better understanding of the community, and its businesses in the late 19th Century.

521 W. Adams

This is another structure that had a direct significance by ownership to the historicity of the community.

609 W. Main

No history explained pretty much covers this. Unfortunately the fact that it may be one of the last standing on the block doesn't cut it.

117 N. Jefferson

20th Century Flats and due to the amount of attention, I have left the student presentation to stand on its own.

I also did a percent of the low rehab to assessed value evaluation.

Address	Rating	Period	Assessed Value	Low Rehab Est.	Percent of Rehab to AV
322 E. Washington	Outstanding	c.1900	\$136,200	\$174,030	128%
603 E. Jackson	Contributing	c.1890	\$63,000	\$85,800	136%
703 E. Jackson	Contributing	c.1870	\$41,200	\$89,520	217%
901 E. Adams	Reference	c.1870	\$51,800	\$97,200	187%
521 W. Adams	Outstanding	c.1893	\$15,800	\$86,880	550%
609 W. Main	-	-	\$36,000	\$70,680	196%

It would be my recommendation based on the association historical significance and rated contribution to the historical landscape that structures: 322 E. Washington; 901 E. Adams; 521 W. Adams; should be preserved. Considering the cost of rehabilitating 521 W. Adams is 550% of its assessed value, preservation may not be possible.

Now obviously I, like everyone else would like to see every structure preserved but that's not always possible. In CRM, it would be our task to attempt to preserve those structures that have the most historic significance to the community and the local historic landscape. Now if there is private interests, and therefore private money, in any of these structure I of course welcome rehabilitation over demolition. I also think any incentives the city could offer to get that rehabilitation initiated would be wonderful. If the city must demolish some of these structures then the above is how I would approach the choice of which ones.

Hopefully this gives you a different perspective.

Brad

"Be like water.

Let no form be your form.

Let no limitation be your limitation." - Bruce Lee

January 11, 2011

Kathleen A. Scott
525 W. Main St.
Muncie IN 47305
(765) 717-0413

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a native of Muncie and have been a resident of Muncie's Old West End since 1983, first as a renter, then buying an 1896 Victorian within the National Register district in 1987 and restoring it. I have been active in the Old West End Neighborhood Association, including a term as president, and have served as the neighborhood's representative on the Muncie Historic Preservation and Rehabilitation Commission. I have several serious concerns with the city's application for the demolition of structures in the Old West End.

First, there are 16 houses in the Old West End on the demolition list, including six within a block of my home and a seventh within two blocks. I am not generally in favor of the demolition of historic structures, but I agree that most of the structures proposed for demolition in this neighborhood can be justified, unfortunately including those on my block. While the Old West End has had its ups and downs in the nearly 30 years I have lived here, I don't see the housing climate in this neighborhood improving to the point that rehabilitation of most of these structures will be feasible. I would like to point out that this deterioration has been exacerbated in recent months by the city, which advertised them for demolition without making sure they were secured. The theft of copper pipes and other metal, woodwork and virtually anything that could be sold for scrap has resulted in some structures that might have been landbanked and rehabilitated in the future being literally demolished by these looters, who also have threatened the safety and security of residents.

There are two houses, however that I believe are of such significance that I urge they be saved. One is the Vandercook House, also known as the Rector House, at 521 W. Adams St. This is probably the most elaborate Queen Ann structure in the district and was cited in the original nomination as one of the 34 most significant structures both architecturally and historically within the district. Demolition of this large corner house would damage the physical integrity of the National Register district and lead to further erosion of the endangered housing stock surrounding it. The second is the Spurgeon cottage at 115 S. Council St., a small, early cottage that was the home of Muncie's first physician, who was associated with the adjacent First Christian Church building — the earliest remaining church structure in the city. Also, the owner has made some effort to both secure and make some repairs to the house, which is listed as a local landmark and protected by city ordinance from exterior changes and demolition without the permission of the local historic preservation commission.

What most concerns me, however, is what the city of Muncie is presenting as its effort at mitigation in exchange for these demolitions: the paving of a few neighborhood streets and the municipally-supported rehabilitation of two apartment buildings on the fringe of The Old West End. Given that the maintenance of streets, curbs and sidewalks is a regular function of local government, I find the city's proposal that the paving of a few side streets makes up for the demolition of 16 historic houses both insulting to property owners who have invested in this neighborhood and pay their property taxes and laughable. Paving streets sadly is not going to result in any new investment in Muncie's inner city, though residents certainly do appreciate the new smooth surface, since many of these streets had deteriorated to the point of being little more than a series of potholes. The fact remains that given Muncie's and Indiana's climate, these streets will have potholes again within a year or two and the vacant lots these 16 historic structures once occupied will more likely than not still be vacant, chest high with weeds. I fail to see how the very temporary repair of a handful of streets can possibly mitigate the loss of multiple irreplaceable structures well over 100 years old.

I applaud investment in rehabilitation of the apartment building at 325 W. Charles St. and an adjacent structure at 321 W. Charles St. that was once a double house. I applaud the rehabilitation of any historic building in the city. I would point out that these structures are on the very edge of the National Register district and likely included only because of the rapid encroachment of downtown development that had resulted in the razing of dozens of nearby homes and other structures for parking lots a few years before the National Register application was filed in 1984. This small section of the historic district on the east side of Liberty Street, which does create a nice transition between the main body of the Old West End and downtown for those traveling down Charles Street, has lost additional contributing historic infrastructure since then. The structures are adjacent to a modern bus terminal building that will soon be demolished for community college parking and the grounds and parking lots of the city's convention center. Additional parking lots are located within a block. I would argue that these structures are tenuously connected to the Old West End and that they have grown more connected to downtown and less to the Old West End in recent years. A private owner had made considerable investment in them — they were neither abandoned nor blighted — and given that several similar small apartment buildings in the downtown area have been successfully rehabilitated by private owners within a few blocks of 325 W. Charles St., I believe it was only a matter of time before this building would have been redeveloped by a private investor. This is especially true since a state-funded community college recently acquired a four-story commercial building within a block of 321 and 325 W. Charles St. and is moving its main campus there.

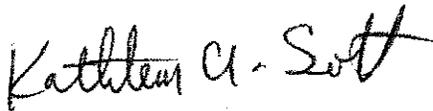
While it is important that these two structures be saved, I believe that their rehabilitation by the city will do nothing to mitigate the loss of 16 historic structures within the Old West End. For one, the neighboring section of the Old West End closest to these buildings along the west side of Liberty Street is a part of the

neighborhood that is in the best condition, with several houses that have been restored to varying degrees of historic accuracy and several that also are protected as local landmarks. None of the blighted properties slated for demolition are nearby — the closest being the Vandercook/Rector House. Also, architecturally, all of the structures slated to be demolished are the product of Muncie's early settlement or Victorian-era gas boom, dating from 1900 or before. The apartment building at 325 W. Charles is early 20th century in style and design. I fail to see how its federally-funded redevelopment will mitigate the destruction of older historic housing stock in parts of the neighborhood that are much more seriously blighted than this apartment building in a downtown district that is more than holding its own and poised for even greater private investment.

I am grateful for any city investment in and around the Old West End, but I don't believe that paving a few streets and the redevelopment an apartment building on the fringe of the neighborhood mitigates the destruction of these 16 historic structures. Mitigation would be plans to use CDBG block grant money to rehabilitate historic 19th century housing stock within the district such as the Vandercook/Rector House, or failing that, construction of appropriate in-fill housing that conforms to the character of the National Register district, especially in the most blighted areas. Mitigation would be city programs, policies and property tax incentives that encourage and support the redevelopment of its historic neighborhoods by private property owners, instead of demolition, and the threat of demolition, as first, last and only resort.

Destruction of historic housing stock is often a permanent solution to what could be a temporary problem, and in this case would lead to the loss of historically and architecturally significant structures perpetrated by government on a level that has not been seen since the heyday of urban renewal — something we all agree now was misguided. If these structures must go, and I agree that most of them, with the exception of the two cited above, now have little chance of rehabilitation, then the city, for both its recent and decades-long role in their deterioration, must make a greater and more sincere effort to mitigate their loss to the Old West End, as well as Muncie's other National Register districts.

Sincerely:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen A. Scott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "K".

Kathleen A. Scott

Fire Photos

- 210 East North Street
- 418 South Proud Street



Photo 3: South facade. Photo after fire, taken December 28, 2010



Photo 4: South window. Photo after fire, taken December 28, 2010



Photo 5: West window. Photo after fire, taken December 28, 2010



Photo 1: South and East facades. Photo after fire, taken December 28, 2010



Photo 2: South and West facades. Photo after fire, taken December 28, 2010



Photo 1: Front (West) Façade. After fire, photo taken January 11, 2011.



Photo 2: Front (West) and South Façades. After fire, photo taken January 11, 2011.

