

Department of City Development

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March 26, 2018

John N. Vogel, Ph.D
Heritage Research, LTD
Suite 203
N91 W17194 Appleton Avenue
Menomonee Falls, WI 53051

Re: WisDOT ID #2703-00-04
16th Street
STH 32 to Main Street
City of Racine
Racine County

Dear Mr. Vogel:

During the March 12, 2018 meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, members considered the potential effect on a historic district and on historic structures brought on by the proposed 16th Street reconstruction project, as expressed through concept plans. This review was prompted by letters received from you by City Development staff on March 7, 2018, and by a Landmarks Commission member.

One letter asked for comments related to the effects on the SC Johnson property containing the Frank Lloyd Wright structures known as the Research Tower and the Administration Building. Another letter sought comments related to the Southside Historic District and the project's effect on the intersection of the 16th Street and College Avenue. Both the SC Johnson properties and the Southside Historic District are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The SC Johnson Properties

In regards to the effect of the 16th Street project on the SC Johnson properties, the Commission found that the potential loss of sidewalk inlays between Franklin and Center Streets represented an adverse effect on the total "landscape" or "setting" for these properties. The subject inlays are found in the side walk at approximately ten foot intervals, measure approximately 1 square foot in area, and are composed of brick similar in color and texture to that used on the Research Tower, and the Administration Building. The project, as illustrated in Mr. Vogel's letter, would result in the elimination of these inlays; an outcome that Commission members do not support. It is unclear whether these features are original to the streetscape as contemplated by Frankl Lloyd Wright. However, they do create a subtle yet effective, and logical, lure for the eye from the utilitarian street surfaces of 16th Street to the elegant yet simple form of the administration building's street wall. Designs should be modified to preserve this detail.

The Historic District

In regards to the effect of the 16th Street project at its intersection with College Avenue, Commission members felt the concept design did nothing to recognize the historic district. The concepts illustration of encroachment concrete pavement (whether stamped to simulate brick or left smooth) into the College Avenue brick pavement was unacceptable to Commission members. The members emphasized that the

City of Racine
Landmarks Preservation Commission
16th Street Project Comments

Page 2 of 3.

College Avenue brick pavers were specifically called out as a significant detail contributing to the character of the Southside Historic District.

Commission members felt that the treatment of the 16th Street and College Avenue intersection should be prioritized in the following manner:

<u>Most Appropriate...</u>	Entire intersection (all four crosswalks paths and traffic lanes) paved using the original brick paver currently stockpiled by the City for College Avenue projects (Fig. 1).
<u>Moderately Appropriate...</u>	All four crosswalk paths paved with the original brick paver currently stockpiled by the City for College Avenue projects (Fig. 2).
<u>Least Appropriate...</u>	16 th Street fully paved in concrete with College Ave. crosswalks paths paved/re-established with original brick paver currently stockpiled by the City for College Avenue projects.
<u>Inappropriate...</u>	First 2 options using concrete pavement with a brick imprint(Fig. 3).
<u>Inappropriate...</u>	Standard concrete intersection (cross-walks & traffic lanes) (Fig. 4).

Commission members also felt if to be more appropriate, and more durable, that the handicap access ramps tactile feature be composed of textured concrete rather than metallic panel inlays (Fig. 5).

Other Matters

In addition to the above effects, the Commission also expressed concern with the increased pavement width illustrated in the concept plans. The concern expressed is the effect on existing mature street trees from Park Avenue to Main Street, and their potential loss.

The Commission also requested advanced notice to all its members of the next public meeting regarding the 16th Street reconstruction project.

In Summary

Commission members see this project as an opportunity to call attention to the traveler and pedestrian that they are passing through special/significant areas. Historically sensitive treatment of the SCJ sidewalk and the 16th Street/College Avenue intersection will help achieve this.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

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Department of City Development

CC: Alder Mollie Jones
Amy Connolly
John Rooney
Racine LPC Members
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