

August 03, 2017

Request from Landmarks Commissioner Helmick for action:

Constructive debate has as one of its goals better communication, understanding, and eventual education among the participants of the debate. Such debate, I believe, has always been welcomed by this Landmarks Commission.

Unfortunately, since his appointment to the Commission, I believe that Councilman Grady's intent is to subvert and disrupt the procedures, responsibilities, and duties of the Landmarks Commission rather than support the same. I base this belief on the following:

1. At a public, Library Board meeting, when a possible restriction to tearing down a city landmarked building as outlined in the city's ordinance (Chapter 17) was brought to Councilman Grady's attention, he replied that he would have the ordinance changed. (Library Board meeting, 12-19-16)
2. Without any prior discussion with the Landmarks Commission or the Commission's chair, Councilman Grady proposed to the city council a series of proposed ordinances to restrict the Commission's procedures and responsibilities. (City of Whitewater, Council Agenda, posted on 07-07-17)
3. Despite lengthy discussions with Landmarks Commissions at a special meeting and repeated requests from the Commission's chair to remove the proposed ordinances in lieu of mediation, Councilman Grady refused to alter or amend his proposed ordinance amendments. (Landmarks Commission, special meeting, 07-13-17)
4. At an open City Council meeting (07-18-17), when asked by Council President Singer, if he had discussed the proposed ordinance amendments with the Landmarks Commission, Councilman Grady responded "not really." This is contrary to the discussions held on 07-13-17.
5. In a recent email to the Landmarks Commission's Chair, Councilman Grady stated that the city attorney's proposed ordinance additions governing Landmarks Commission's procedures and responsibilities were written and "unlikely to change significantly." However, directions given by Council President Singer at the Common Council meeting (07-18-17) indicated that such ordinance proposals be discussed and reviewed by the Landmarks Commission prior to being considered by the City Council.
6. In the same email (07-31-17), Councilman Grady implied that the Landmarks Commission was delinquent in performing its duties in notifying property owners of a hearing to consider nominating a property for Landmark status as set forth in the City's ordinance. He pointed to the "lack of contact with the owner's representatives before taking the park (Walton Woods) to a hearing." (Notifications were sent by the City Clerk on 07-13-17 to the City Council, city staff, the Park and Recreation Board, the CDA, neighboring property owners, and other, interested parties. This included Councilman Grady.)



The posted minutes of the Landmarks Commission show that Councilman Grady's first meeting as the City Council's Representative on the commission occurred on May 4, 2017. Since then, his actions on the Commission as well as those at City Council Meetings make me doubt his constructive involvement with the Commission as the City Council's representative. It for the reasons listed that I move the Landmarks Commission take a vote of no confidence in Councilman Grady's continued participation as a member of the Commission.

