



To: Madison Common Council
Re: Proposed House on Old Spring Tavern Property, 3701 Council Crest
Legistar File 80871; Common Council Meeting on January 9, 2024
Date: December 20, 2023

We Urge the Common Council to Oppose a Proposed Large New 4,200 Square Foot House on the Historic Old Spring Tavern Property at 3701 Council Crest

- We oppose the proposal to build a large new 4,200 square foot house on the west yard of the landmarked Old Spring Tavern property at 3701 Council Crest.
- The Old Spring Tavern, built in 1854, is one of Madison's oldest and most significant historic sites. The Tavern was originally a stagecoach inn on the road to southwest Wisconsin. It later served as a farmhouse and tavern, and for more than 100 years has been a private residence.
- We respectfully ask the Common Council to vote against the proposal for a large new house because the applicable standards for approval have not been met. The proposed house is incompatible with the Tavern and makes unacceptably large changes to the landmark west yard.
- The proposal was approved by the Landmarks Commission on a 3-1 vote with three members absent or not voting and with Alder Amani Latimer Burris voting no. There are ample legal grounds for reversing the decision.
 - If the decision is reversed, the owners can return with a proposal for a smaller house that is compatible with the Old Spring Tavern.
- The City's Preservation Planner has emphasized that under the Madison Ordinances the project needs to be evaluated using the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The project does not meet the standards in several ways.
 - The proposed house violates Standard 1 because it clearly makes far more than a minimal change to the defining characteristics of the site and environment.
 - It violates Standard 2 because it does not retain and preserve the historic character of the property.
 - It violates Standard 9, which requires it to be compatible with the massing, size and scale of the Tavern because it's much bigger than the Tavern. Its 4,200 square foot size, much larger overall mass, taller height, and location on a slope looming above the Tavern, all make it dramatically incompatible.
 - It violates Standard 10, because its environment would be significantly impaired and the construction would damage or kill the yard's historic 234-year-old black walnut tree, a defining feature of the site.

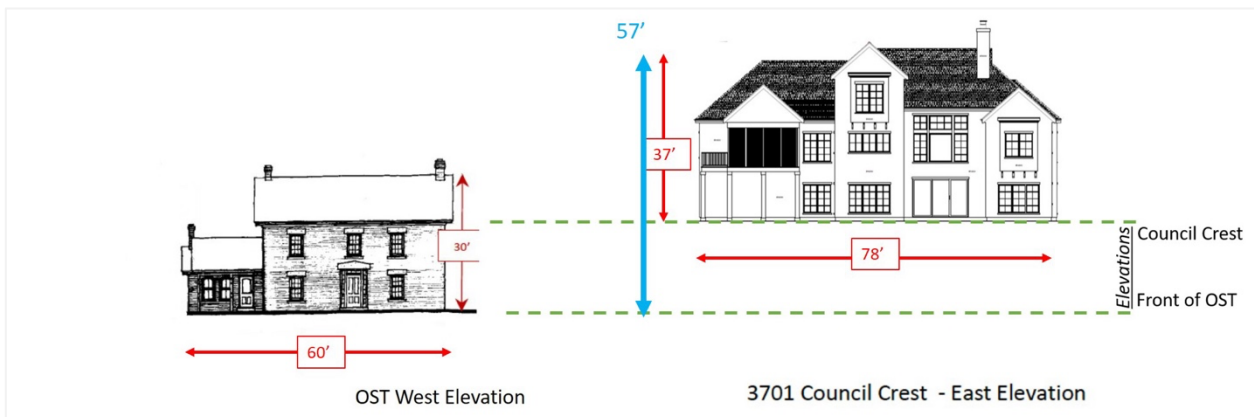
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View of front of OST from Spring Trail. The proposed house would be 13 yards from the lot line, on the slope above the OST.



View of front of OST and landmarked west yard from Council Crest. The proposed house would block this view.



Side view of OST and proposed house from Spring Trail