

MPA

MILWAUKEE PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

PO Box 510642 Milwaukee, WI 53203

January 10, 2013

ZND Chair Alderman Jim Bohl
City of Milwaukee
200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Alderman Bohl and committee members of Zoning Neighborhood and Development,

MPA strongly endorses the resolution designating the Garden Homes development as a City of Milwaukee historic district and congratulates the City of Milwaukee for its recognition of the significance of this neighborhood.

The original Garden Homes development initiative embodied a social ethic that is central to Milwaukee's history. It was an ambitious plan to provide decent affordable housing. Today rehabilitation of older and historic houses achieves both affordability and quality, so the preservation and restoration of these homes honors both the neighborhood and Milwaukee's social ethic.

Early in 2010 members of Garden Homes Neighborhood Association approached MPA for assistance in learning how to protect their neighborhood. Recognized by the federal government as a nationally significant historic district the character of the neighborhood was being threatened by requests to demolish homes in the district. From that time MPA has followed the progress of and worked with the neighborhood association as they have pursued local historic designation and the protection designation provides. This has been a long but thorough process.

GHNA held meetings, including one with a commissioner, so that district homeowners could learn about and discuss the responsibilities and obligations that are required when living in a historic district. A neighborhood survey indicates that the majority of property owners living in the district support the designation.

A recurring question about the designation of this neighborhood is the cost to property owners. To address that concern the guidelines for the Garden Homes historic district have been written to accommodate:

- Roofs do not require architectural shingles and a three-tab shingle, **the least expensive variety is strongly encouraged.**
- Existing siding that was applied before the district was created may remain, and if small areas of siding are damaged they may be replaced with new matching siding.
- Many porches have been altered. They may remain as they are.
- **Steel bar security doors and window guards for basement windows are permitted.**

Many historic neighborhoods in Milwaukee, including Historic Concordia, Historic Brewers Hill and the Third Ward have benefitted from historic designation. Residents have seen their neighborhoods stabilized and property values maintained or improved. Rather than a burden to the residents of Garden Homes, this designation and historic preservation will serve to revitalize the neighborhood.

The resolution designating the Garden Homes development as a City of Milwaukee historic district is well deserved and will benefit the future of the neighborhood. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Dawn McCarthy
President