



18 February 2022

Dear Ms. Hatala,

We are in receipt of your notice dated February 15, 2022, regarding the application for Temporary Historic Designation for the former Columbia Hospital (Northwest Quadrant Building A). We appreciate receiving notice from your office.

Please note that the property in question is state-owned and has already been listed on the state register of historic places pursuant to *Wis. Stats. s. 44.36*. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has engaged with the Wisconsin State Historical Society as required by statute. The following is a summary of the actions taken in preparation for the demolition:

The state Department of Administration developed an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), prepared by Ayres Associates on behalf of the University of Wisconsin System in consultation with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) in compliance with the Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act (WEPA) per *Wis. Stats s. 1.11*, and Ch. NR 150, Wis. Adm. Code. It was completed in February 2020 and includes the required assessment of Historical Environments.

- The WEPA compliance process began in November 2019 with the issuance of a scoping letter to solicit input issued on November 20, 2019 and posted in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel newspaper and UW-Milwaukee media services. WI State Historical Preservation Office and City of Milwaukee Historic Preservation were contacted for input.
- The first draft was made available for public input for the period of December 18, 2019, through January 7, 2019.
- A public meeting that presented the project and EIA findings was held on January 7, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.
- The final EIA's Historical Environment findings from the report are as follows:
 - Does the action (demolition) conflict with official agency plans or with any local, state, or national policy, if so, how? (Is the action inconsistent with long-range plans or policies?) These actions do not appear to conflict with official agency plans or any local, state, or national policy. These projects are consistent with the UW-Milwaukee Campus Master Plan and will support future anticipated needs.
 - The historical relevance of the project, while controversial with local groups and individuals, will be considered in negotiations with the Wisconsin Historical Society to mitigate the proposed project elements. The owner is not pursuing registry on the National Register of Historic Places, which is part of that process since a third-party cannot pursue this without the owner's consent.
 - UW-Milwaukee Northwest Quadrant Building A is not on the National Register of Historic Places.
 - UW-Milwaukee Northwest Quadrant Building A is on the State of WI Historical Society, Architecture and History Inventory database as under review for being eligible for NRHP listing.
 - UW-Milwaukee Northwest Quadrant Building A is not on the City of Milwaukee locally designated properties list.
- After completion of the EIA, the campus and design project team began the mitigation requirements set by the Wisconsin Historical Society, and the UW System Historic Preservation Officer.

Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) Mitigation Plan

- On 9/13/2019, in accordance with *Wis. Stat. s.44.40*, the UW System along with the Division of Facilities Development notified Wisconsin Historical Society's compliance officer of the intent to demolish Building A of the Northwest Quadrant. WHS requested back up information.
 - 1/2/2020 WHS requested the university to enter into a mitigation agreement as follows:
 - The project will undertake digital images of all elevations of the exterior, and character defining features of the interior, including photographs of the defining spaces such as lobbies, stairwells, corridors, gathering spaces, and a representative room from each floor. (The UW-Milwaukee Campus will accomplish this.)
 - Written data: We will compose a summary of the building history in a 200-300-word document for your agency to upload into the AHI. (The historic consultant to Kahler Slater will compose this.)
 - The project will hire a consultant to undertake a survey of UW-Green Bay, Parkside and Superior as they were not Certified Local Government's (CLG) at the time of the recent UW System building survey.
 - Mitigation plan agreed to by UWS and WHS on February 12, 2020
 - The mitigation exercises were completed by October 2021

State Building Commission Approval.

- In February 2020, the State Building Commission granted authority to demolish Building A and construct the Northwest Quadrant & Student Health Renovation Phase 2 project.

Other Considerations

- Before UWM purchased the building, it was considered for residential use for students, but that was not feasible due to the poor condition of the building, and because there is a memorandum of understanding agreement between UWM and surrounding neighbors that prohibits the development of the building for student housing.
- It is also not feasible to restore the building for academic purposes due to its deteriorated condition and hospital layout. In the meantime, the building continues to deteriorate every year that it remains unoccupied, and it costs UWM substantial annual operating costs to provide life safety requirements, minimum maintenance, utilities, and security.

If you have any questions regarding the actions relayed above, please feel free to reach out to Alexandria Roe, Senior Associate Vice President Capital Planning and Budget at aroe@uwsa.edu.

Sincerely,

