

From: [Kay Weisman](#)
To: [Stamper II, Russell](#); [Rainey, Khalif](#); [Lee, Chris](#)
Subject: Case #180804 - 2804 N Grant Blvd
Date: Monday, November 19, 2018 9:45:22 AM

Dear Alderman Stamper, Alderman Rainey & Committee:

I am writing to ask that city ordinances be enforced in Case 180804 for 2804 N Grant Blvd.

To set some context for my reasoning, let me repeat something you as alderman probably hear a lot: when I tell someone that I live in Sherman Park, a common response is “Oh, the housing stock is so great there!” It’s great because 80-100 years ago, builders and architects built houses to last, with quality materials and craftsmanship. The fact that Sherman Park has **three** historic districts demonstrates that in some cases, builders and architects went above and beyond, resulting in a collection of one-of-a-kind houses that are still attainable by folks with moderate incomes.

In the 1980’s and 1990’s, other people went to some effort to get Grant Blvd designated as both a local and national historic district. I think most owners realize what they’ve got, but some rules were enacted just to make clear what changes are appropriate when houses need maintenance.

It is these rules that were recently violated at 2804 N Grant. Historic Preservation Commission guidelines state in part:

“Avoid the filling in or covering of openings with materials like glass-block ... Avoid using modern style window units such as horizontal sliding sash in place of double-hung or the substitution of units with glazing configurations not appropriate to the style of the building.”[\[1\]](#)

The developer at 2804 did all three: filled in basement windows with glass block, used a sliding sash in place of double-hung kitchen windows, and changed the glazing configuration on dining room and living room windows. Where the original windows had “6 over 1” windows (6 separate panes in the upper panel over one large bottom pane), now there are just “1 over 1” windows. Since this house is on a corner, all of these windows are publicly viewable.

If long-time homeowners must follow the guidelines, it doesn’t seem fair that a transient developer can get away with doing less. Chipping away at the architectural fabric of the neighborhood sets a bad precedent. Other homeowners or developers may think that it’s OK to do these things, resulting in a gradual but definite diminishing of value for all homeowners in the district. It’s death by a thousand cuts.

Sherman Park has had some troubles in recent years, and our business streets are struggling. Housing stock is what we are known for. If we don’t keep that up, what will we have?

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Kay Weisman
2750 N Grant Blvd
Milwaukee, WI 53210

[\[1\]](#)

<https://city.milwaukee.gov/ImageLibrary/Groups/cityHPC/DesignatedReports/vticnf/HDGrantBlvd.pdf>