

Hello all,

I am writing to voice my opinion of strong opposition to the recent raze order for the Teweles & Brandeis Granary Elevator.

While I am no longer a current legal resident of Sturgeon Bay, this is still the only place in the world that I would consider my home. Since graduating from Sturgeon Bay high school in 2011, I've been a full-time student at the University of Minnesota (Twin Cities). In 2015, I graduated with a Bachelor of Design in Architecture, and will be graduating this coming spring with a Master of Architecture as well. I've also had the privilege of working at Collage Architects in Minneapolis throughout the duration of my graduate education. Both in practice and academic exploration, I've spent the past six years learning about the theory, history, and current practices in architectural design and, more broadly, the ways in which the world around us has the power to transform our lives (for better or for worse).

I've learned that the places we live are fundamentally a part of our existence. Each has a unique identity, simply because it exists. It is our perception of these expressions of identity that create our connections to (and memories of) a specific place.

Not unlike my own personal memories of my childhood in Sturgeon Bay, this building represents the City's collective memory of its maritime past and historical foundation. It once stood as the community's central hub for commerce, public engagement, and connection to the water (and, therefore, the communities beyond). Places and buildings like this are ripe with the tremendous opportunity for *placemaking*. Placemaking can help a city establish a unique identity around which the community can grow. More specifically, the Granary has the potential to firmly link our city to its history, and use this as a foundation for growth and change to come.

This Granary is not only a place, but represents a story. It is a story that happens to be a fundamental part of our city's history. It is a piece of history that happens to stand on a publicly-owned piece of *waterfront* property in the *heart* of our downtown (and happens to be right next-door to the well-known Door County Maritime Museum). It is a place that has the potential to link two currently disparate sides of downtown, creating a district for retail, recreation and tourism that successfully connects the east and west sides. And, perhaps most importantly, this is a place that has the potential to establish an identity in Door County that is unique from any other around it.

As a candidate for a Master of Architecture, the next seven months of my education will be spent exploring these ideas in depth through my Thesis project. I've been both inspired and angered by the discussions surrounding the Granary's future for a few years now – and come May, I will perhaps be an expert on the possibilities, constraints, and opportunities this building presents to the community. I've already begun discussing this project with my thesis advisors and professors, and no one – *no one* – I've talked to has needed convincing on this building's and this site's importance to future of the community.

The decision to raze the building is not only short-sighted, but it negates the potential for these types of discussions to be brought up further in public debate.

Surely if one anonymous tip can spur a hastened timeline for building demolition, I would hope that my voice, and my opinion, will at least be given equal consideration during the debates to come.

I believe I've made my own opinion for the Granary's future perfectly clear. However, I know that there are many people in Sturgeon Bay who do not currently share the same hopes for its restoration – and that is *absolutely* their right. The potential for this building and this place are limitless and *must* be continued to be discussed by community members, local experts, and public officials. I can envision a multitude of potential futures for this building - some of which are already being discussed and brought forward by local groups and organizations. This is not a decision that should be made by any one person – this affects us all, and therefore cannot, and *should* not be discussed behind closed doors. This raze order is a symptom of a much larger issue in the public processes in Sturgeon Bay.

In August, the City Council voted to suspend a decision on the demolition of the Granary until 2018, giving the community time to discuss and generate support for alternatives. Why is the City not honoring this decision? The Granary has stood for 116 years despite city neglect and lack of upkeep – so, what is the rush? I understand that the building is currently in a state of disrepair, however, the City has owned this property for years. Just as community groups have found funding and the support necessary to stabilize the structure and restore the character of the building, then it suddenly becomes unsafe beyond hope for repair? I don't buy it.

I am aware that there was a Structural Analysis Report conducted in 2013 by Meyer Borgman Johnson. This is a very well known (and legally licensed) engineering group who specialize in these types of analysis. While myself and Chief Dietman both practice in professions that deal quite a bit with building structure, human safety, and well-being, I have learned through my few years of professional practice that it is *always* best to trust our consultants. They are the experts, and I would hope that before any rash decision is made about the Granary building that an expert is again consulted and the results of their thorough analysis are discussed.

To conclude, the Granary building in Sturgeon Bay has been the subject of heated public debate and investigation for several years now, and - personal opinions aside - that primarily means one thing: this place is *important*. Important decisions such as these call for appropriate time and consideration in order to find the best solution possible for all involved. I am hopeful that my plea may help redirect the conversation from demolition to that of transformation. I know that when buildings get political like this debates and conversations surrounding their future often become heated and messy. However, you have all been given positions of authority in our community, and it is my hope that these decisions are made in a way that is both respectful of the opinions of community groups and organizations, consults the research and opinions of the appropriate experts, and takes the general well-being and future of the community into consideration.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

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