

STURGEON BAY **Historical Society**, INC.

P.O. Box 827 | Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235

The mission of the Sturgeon Bay Historical Society is to preserve Sturgeon Bay's living history, which defines our community character and our cultural evolution, for future generations.

For immediate Release – October 19, 2017

City prepares to tear down Historic Grain Elevator without proper study

The Sturgeon Bay Historical Society was surprised to learn Wednesday that, on October 17, Fire Chief Dietman issued an immediate Raze Order with few other details to the City of Sturgeon Bay for the Historic Grain Elevator on Sturgeon Bay's West Waterfront. The Raze Order is to be completed within 30 days, on the basis of inspection by the Fire Chief.

The Teweles and Brandeis Granary was officially listed on the Wisconsin Registry of Historic Places on August 18, 2017. It is expected to be added to the National Registry of Historic Places within the coming weeks. The fate of a historic, 116-year old icon of Sturgeon Bay should not be decided over a weekend.

The Sturgeon Bay Historical Society announced today that it has raised the required \$150,000 in private funds, which are in-hand and ready to spend immediately on stabilization and repair of the Granary. The successful fundraising occurred in the short time since a City Council resolution on August 1, 2017, instructed the City to secure bids for demolition "not to occur before January 1, 2018," unless a group came forward with a plan for future use.

Over the past two weeks, SBHS has had preliminary conversations with City staff and officials communicating their efforts, along with SBHS's sincere commitment to the Granary's stabilization and repair in preparation for a new future use. On October 19th, SBHS submitted an official letter to the Common Council stating that funds had been raised and are immediately available for use in stabilization. In the letter, SBHS also asked for an 18-month period in which to solidify and present a community-devised proposal that adheres to the Public Trust Doctrine and State Historical Society and outlines a clear plan and timeline for implementation and funding. SBHS and granary supporters are disheartened that SBHS's offer to the City of private funds for restoration seems coincidental with the raze order.

On Friday, October 13, the Fire Chief sent a letter to Mayor Birmingham stating that a complaint had been received that the Granary may have shifted in recent strong winds. The Fire Chief noted that he'd instructed City staff to "shoot some elevations at certain locations on the building" and indicated readings would be repeated "next week." The Fire Chief stated in his letter, "We cannot

determine if the Granary has moved to date as we have no prior readings that we know of.” The Fire Chief’s order to raze the grain elevator was dated four days later.

It is not true that the City has no prior readings to refer to. In 2013, the City of Sturgeon Bay hired Meyer Borgman Johnson (MBJ), a professional structural design and engineering firm, to conduct a thorough structural analysis of the granary’s superstructure. After taking measurements, the firm stated, “a detailed computer analysis model was constructed to capture the elevator behavior. The model includes over 1,000 pieces, over 700 plates, and over 1,200 connections. Twenty-six different load combinations of wind, self-weight, and live load were considered... The computer analysis was supplemented by hand calculations and MBJ analysis spreadsheets to determine loads and to confirm the computer results.”

In summarizing its findings, MBJ goes on to state, “Based on the information gathered during the site visit report and the subsequent calculations, it is our conclusion that the existing elevator is in generally good condition and retains sufficient capacity to support this intended use, with some modifications.” The firm’s report is publicly available and can be seen on the Friends of Sturgeon Bay Public Waterfront website.

Yesterday, Alderwoman Hauser spoke with engineer Dave Holten of MBJ, who had signed off on the 2013 report. Holten had not been contacted by the City or the Fire Chief regarding these latest concerns. Holten was able to identify prior measurements from the 2013 report that may be helpful as baseline. Holten mentioned that it is not unusual for contractors and others to be concerned about suspected movement that, in some cases, has not occurred. The only way to assess movement is to work off of baseline measurements and utilize expert analysis in interpreting results. Holten suggested that, in addition to looking at the 2013 measurements, a local surveyor could take current position measurements and monitor the situation for three months to assess exactly how much shift is happening and where.

SBHS requests a thorough study be conducted. Should findings bear out the need for demolition, the group requests that a plan be made to salvage the interior beams, working mechanisms and grain bins.

The Sturgeon Bay Historical Society’s offer to the City of Sturgeon Bay is attached. SBHS hopes that the City Council, Mayor Birmingham, and the Fire Chief will allow our historic Teweles and Brandeis Granary to be saved, restored, and become again the West Waterfront’s iconic hub.

For further information, contact Kelly Avenson, Communications Director, Sturgeon Bay Historical Society at (920) 559-0504.

https://www.facebook.com/groups/1441126569248422/?ref=br_rs

<http://www.centerlineforum.org/historic-granary>



photo: Melissa Clark

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To the Sturgeon Bay Common Council:

The Sturgeon Bay Historical Society (SBHS) is prepared and able to fully fund stabilization of the Teweles and Brandeis grain elevator, in order to halt deterioration and secure the structure for future use.

The Sturgeon Bay Historical Society has \$150,000 in-hand, contributed by the community at large, to immediately commence stabilization of the historic grain elevator.

SBHS requests that the City Council, 1) authorize SBHS to stabilize the elevator, preparing it for future use; and 2) allow SBHS an 18-month period, during which the elevator remains protected from demolition, to solidify and present a community-devised plan that adheres to the Public Trust Doctrine and State Historical Society and outlines a clear plan and timeline for implementation and funding, including provisions for an adequate endowment.

In 2013, the City of Sturgeon Bay hired Meyer Borgman Johnson (MBJ) to conduct a comprehensive structural analysis of the grain elevator. Based on MBJ's findings, Middleton Consulting and Contracting estimated it would cost between \$15,000 and \$25,000 to complete the engineering design for stabilization of the grain elevator and another \$123,739 to do the work, resulting in a total cost for stabilization of \$138,739 - \$148,739. This estimate was provided in July of 2017.

For the following reasons, SBHS believes the grain elevator is a community treasure worth preserving:

- On August 18, 2017, Door County's Teweles and Brandeis grain elevator, located on Sturgeon Bay's westside waterfront, was officially listed on the Wisconsin Registry of Historic Places. It is expected to be added to the National Registry of Historic Places within the coming weeks. According to the Wisconsin Historical Society, "The Teweles and Brandeis grain elevator is an excellent, highly intact example of a grain processing and storage building of a type that was once frequently encountered in communities in Wisconsin and in many other Midwestern states....It is now the only surviving historic resource in the city that can attest to the city's historically important role in agriculture production in Door County."

- Sturgeon Bay’s Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2010, states, “Cultural resources encompass historic buildings or structures and archeological sites, as well as institutions and organizations which contribute to the cultural or artistic life of the community. Cultural resources help to provide the City of Sturgeon Bay with a sense of heritage, identity, and civic pride...and can also provide economic development opportunities for the City and its residents. For these reasons, it is important to identify historical and cultural sites in the City of Sturgeon Bay.”
- In its December 13, 2013, Phase-II Structural Condition Assessment report, the Minneapolis-based engineering firm Meyer Borgman Johnson (MBJ) reported the following:

“...a detailed computer analysis model was constructed to capture the elevator behavior. The model includes over 1,000 pieces, over 700 plates, and over 1,200 connections. Twenty-six different load combinations of wind, self-weight, and live load were considered. See Diagram 1. The computer analysis was supplemented by hand calculations and MBJ analysis spreadsheets to determine loads and to confirm the computer results.”

It went on to state, “The City of Sturgeon Bay intends to salvage and adaptively reuse the elevator as part of its waterfront redevelopment program. Based on the information gathered during the site visit report and the subsequent calculations, it is our conclusion that the existing elevator is in generally good condition and retains sufficient capacity to support this intended use, with some modifications.”

The 1901 Teweles and Brandeis grain elevator is a distinct part of Sturgeon Bay’s brand and stands as an iconic symbol of our past. Stabilized and refurbished, it can be a proud and distinctive part of our future, a gathering place and a draw for visitors and residents alike.

Sincerely,



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