



MEMORANDUM

TO: Ron Anderson, NAI Avant
FROM: Amy Moore
CC: Krista Hampton, Nancy Lee Trihey
DATE: 7/2/08
RE: Bull Street--Department of Mental Health Property

As our City Ordinance states, the Mills Building, the South Gate, the wall, and the central portion of the Babcock Building are all protected structures on this property. These are significant structures, both because of their fine architecture as well as their contribution to Columbia's history. Also included as part of the landmark designation are the grounds to the Bull Street complex, which will include trees, shrubbery, and circulation patterns.

Changes to the exterior of landmark structures are reviewed by the Design Development Review Commission or its staff. The intent of review is to keep the buildings' appearance as close to original as possible, while allowing for contemporary use. As such, historic materials are required for repair or new additions. Changes to exteriors will include but may not be limited to changing out doors and windows, replacing original materials, roof work, cleaning masonry, and so on. Additions to any of these structures would also require review.

Only the Babcock Building's central portion is landmarked as noted above, but its wings are actually the oldest parts of the building and rehabilitating and reusing these would be encouraged. Likewise, the Chapel of Hope and the central portion of the Williams Building are excellent structures and their rehabilitation would be heartily encouraged and welcomed. Additionally, there are several small cottages on the grounds where former physicians lived—many of these buildings appear to be in good condition and could be relocated elsewhere in the City if not wanted on the property. They would fit into several of our historic neighborhoods easily, given their Arts & Crafts detailing, massing, and materials.

The grounds of the Bull Street property are more complex and are continuing to undergo review by members of the Planning Department. The landscape was considered an important element in the Kirkbride system of treatment of patients and so much care was given to the grounds. The avenue into the property and the circle in front of the Babcock Building should certainly be maintained as the grand entry it was planned to be. Likewise, Pickens Street should also be retained, not only for its relationship

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to the main avenue, but because there are also many exceptional old trees along its edges. The allees that exist should be maintained; if the trees are deemed to be in poor shape, they should be taken down and replaced. Although there are many trees on-site which are in poor condition or which may be removed outright, there are many large, valuable trees which should be retained and which would be a great amenity to those who may be living and working here. Staff from the Preservation Office and Land Development Planning are working together to identify the key healthy trees most important to protect and get them mapped for your use.

There are some venerable collections of shrubbery typically used in the South, camellias, azaleas, gardenias, and so on which should certainly be relocated if they are problematically located.

I am delighted that this property may see development and actually be put back into a more public use where many more people may appreciate the special buildings and environment there. Please let me if I can be of further assistance.

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