

**CITY OF SAINT PAUL**  
**HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION**  
**FILE NUMBER: 412 Goodrich Avenue, Historic Resource Review**  
**RA-SPC-1548**  
**DATE: June 23, 2107**

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**WHEREAS**, the City of Saint Paul has declared as a matter of public policy, in Chapter 73 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code, “that the preservation, protection, perpetuation and use of areas, places, building, structures and other objects having special historical, community or aesthetic interest or value is a public necessity and is required in the interest of the health, prosperity, safety and welfare of the people;” and

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 73 also establishes the purposes of heritage preservation to be to: “safeguard the heritage of the City of Saint Paul by preserving sites and structures which reflect elements of the city’s cultural, social, economic, political or architectural history; protect and enhance the City of Saint Paul’s attraction to residents, tourists and visitors, and serve as a support and stimulus to business and industry; enhance the visual and aesthetic character, diversity and interest of the City of Saint Paul; foster civic pride in the beauty and notable accomplishments of the past; and promote the use and preservation of historic sites and structures for the education and general welfare of the people of the City of Saint Paul;” and

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 73 also establishes the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission and states that it “shall serve as an advisory body to the mayor and city council on municipal heritage preservation matters;” and

**WHEREAS**, the John Lewis House, located at 412 Goodrich Avenue is now threatened with demolition as the City has issued an *Order to Abate*; and

**WHEREAS**, The John Lewis House at 412 Goodrich Avenue is a one-story, wood-frame, side-gabled, Greek Revival-style house constructed in 1856. The symmetrical façade features a pedimented stoop entry with box-columns, and single entry door flanked by double-hung windows. The roof-pitch is shallow which is typical of the style. Photos from the 1970 and the 1983 Historic Site Survey show the house with wood lap-siding, corner-boards, two-over-two wood double-hung windows, a wide frieze board, gable-returns, and two decorative brick chimneys. At the time of the 2011 Uppertown Survey in 2011, the windows on the front had been replaced and the house was wrapped in vinyl siding and the stoop partially enclosed. Photos from March 24, 2017 shows news vinyl siding with wood siding intact in locations, the window openings altered from double-hung to slider on the rear ell, one double-hung opening on the front reduced in size, the chimneys removed, and the interior gutted. The historic massing and footprint remain intact and the house still displays its Greek Revival form. The 2011 Uppertown Survey states, “This property has been identified as having been constructed from 1850 through 1865 and is one of the earliest constructed residences in Saint Paul. As a result, this property is recommended for intensive-level research to determine eligibility for local and/or National Register designation.” Additional research and survey has not been undertaken.; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 13, 2017 at the Legislative Hearing, the Legislative Hearing Officer requested the HPC consider this property for review as a historic resource. A historic

resource is defined as “a property that is believed to have historical, cultural, architectural, archaeological or engineering significance and to meet at least one of the criteria for designation as a heritage preservation site or district as provided in Chapter 73.05;” and

**WHEREAS**, the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission, based upon information gathered by staff and presented at their June 23, 2017 meeting, made the following findings of fact:

1. The John Lewis house at 412 Goodrich was surveyed during the 1983 Historic Sites Survey of Ramsey County (RA-SPC-1548), the 1992 Uppertown Survey, 2001 Pioneer Houses: 1854-1880 Historic Context Study, and the 2011 Neighborhoods at the Edge of the Walking City Context Study and Reconnaissance Survey of the Uppertown neighborhood. Photos dating back to the 1970s were made available by local historian Jim Sazevich and prior surveys.
2. The John Lewis House at 412 Goodrich Avenue was constructed in 1856; he and his family are listed as residing there in the 1857 Minnesota Territorial Census.
3. **Property Description:** The John Lewis House was constructed in 1856. According to Ramsey County Property Records, the lot is 35 ft. wide by 122 ft. deep – the parcel size is 0.10 acres. The house is ~800 sq. ft. and one-story. The property is zoned R4.
4. **Sale Information:** According to Ramsey County Property Records, the property was sold for \$95,000 in 2004 as part of a qualified sale. In 2014, the property was sold for \$30,400 as part of a non-qualified, bank sale.

**5. Property Value:**

Assessment Date	1/2/2014-15	1/2/2015-16	1/2/2016-17	1/2/2017-18
Total Est. Mkt. Value	\$56,100	\$58,700	\$66,300	\$81,800
Est. Land Value	\$18,500	\$18,500	\$27,300	\$27,300
Est. Building Value	\$37,600	\$40,200	\$39,000	\$54,500

6. The consultant recommendation from the 2011 *Neighborhoods at the Edge of the Walking City* Historic Context Study – Reconnaissance (Phase I) Survey of the Uppertown Neighborhood states, “This property has been identified as having been constructed from 1850 through 1865 and is one of the earliest constructed residences in Saint Paul. As a result, this property is recommended for intensive-level research to determine eligibility for local and/or National Register designation.” An intensive-level (Phase II) survey has not been undertaken and would be required to determine if the property would be eligible for local designation or National register designation as an individual site or as part of a district.
7. **Strategy 3.1** in the City’s *Historic Preservation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan* recommends: *Implementing an ongoing survey program to identify and evaluate all types of historic resources in Saint Paul, including buildings, structures, objects, archaeological sites, districts, and landscapes.* Given the recommendations for 412 Goodrich Avenue in the 2011 Survey of the property, an intensive-level survey should be the next step.

8. **Strategy 3.6** in the City's Historic Preservation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan recommends: *Continuing to develop new and expand on existing historic contexts to allow for the continual identification of a full spectrum of historic resources.* Given the construction date of the property, it is part of the Pioneer Houses Context Study and there may be further context architectural style or ethnic contexts to explore.
9. **Strategy 4.5 and 5.3** in the City's Historic Preservation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan recommend: *Acquiring key threatened historic properties until a suitable owner can be found and realizing the full economic potential of key historic resources.* It is preferable to work with the current owner to avoid demolition and rehabilitation the building. Per City of Saint Paul Legislative Code Sec. 73.04(5), "The heritage preservation commission may recommend to the city council, after review and comment by the city planning commission, that certain property eligible for designation as a heritage preservation site be acquired by gift, by negotiation or by eminent domain as provided for in Chapter 117 of Minnesota Statutes." The rehabilitation of 412 Goodrich Avenue could serve as a catalyst for additional rehabilitation of historic resources in the surrounding neighborhood.
10. The number of Pioneer Era houses extant in St. Paul can be estimated based on the properties identified in the 1983 survey and the 2001 context study, however, not all have been identified, and because many are not designated, it isn't know how many remain.
11. The Sanborn Insurance map for this site indicates the footprint of the house has changed very little since 1925. While the pedimented entry is not shown on the map, it is stylistically appropriate to the modest Greek Revival style. The barn was demolished and replaced with a smaller shed in 1886. The second dwelling at the rear of the lot was removed between 1903 and 1925. There is no alley access on this block nor is there a curb cut or off-street parking.
12. Staff has not extensively researched other historical associations with the subject building such as persons that have contributed in some way to Saint Paul's history and development or an architect or an association with an important event. The name, Walla, is associated with the property for several decades, and further research would be necessary.
13. It is always better to retain historic buildings, materials, and details that are associated with a context and/or a period of significance for a neighborhood than it is to demolish and create a hole in the neighborhood.
14. The integrity, or authenticity as evidenced by a site's location, design, setting, workmanship or association is fair because the architectural alterations that have occurred, such as the changes in window sizes and styles and the application of vinyl siding over the clapboard and stoop – these alterations can be reversible. The design features associated with Greek Revival style architecture appear to be mostly intact and the neighboring properties have varying degrees of integrity and detail that give this area a fair degree of architectural integrity and context. The site's location and setting would be considered to have good integrity. The property was built during the first decade of Minnesota statehood and is one of the oldest remaining residences in Saint Paul.

15. In general, the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation recommend against removing buildings that are important in defining the overall historic character and destroying historic relationships between buildings and open space. Given the alterations to the building and its current condition, HPC staff finds that the building generally reinforces the architectural and historic character of the neighborhood and with the removal of non-original materials and restoration of siding, trim, windows and front stoop would help to restore the properties architectural integrity.

16. HPC staff finds that the demolition of the John Lewis House at 412 Conway Avenue would have an adverse impact on the Uppertown neighborhood. A vacant lot can have a negative impact on the neighborhood and the loss of historic fabric is irreversible; and

**WHEREAS**, the HPC were informed that the property owner, Tim Murphy, met with neighbors and the Executive Director of Historic Saint Paul earlier that day to discuss rehabilitation opportunities for the property; now

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that based on the above information the Heritage Preservation Commission emphatically encourages the City Council to delay an order to demolish 412 Goodrich Avenue to fully explore and consider all options for rehabilitation. The HPC further requests that the Department of Safety and Inspections or the property owner, in cooperation with HPC staff, create a plan to “mothball” 412 Goodrich Avenue until a rehabilitation plan has been established and can be implemented.

Further, it is the opinion of staff that 412 Goodrich Avenue has, “historical, cultural, architectural, archaeological or engineering significance” and meets “at least one of the criteria for designation as a heritage preservation site or district” as provided in Chapter 73.05 of the City of Saint Paul Legislative Code.

**MOVED BY** Commissioner Barbara Bezat

**SECONDED BY** Commissioner William Lightner

**IN FAVOR** 10

**AGAINST** 0

**ABSTAIN** 0