

Request for zone change of West Main St. property withdrawn

Future of historic home remains unknown as water runoff, traffic studies are conducted

By Tom Marshall
Senior Advocate
writer

The future of a historic home at 449 W. Main St. remains uncertain. The Planning and Zoning Commission is waiting for traffic and water runoff studies to be completed before taking action on a zoning change request to development of a 35-unit apartment complex and offices.

Earlier this month, the commission heard from the prospective developer, Countryside Investment Properties, as well as from some of those who live in the neighborhood.

Requests on a proposed zoning change from R-1 single family residential to P-1 (professional office front of property) and R-1 single family residential to R-3 (medium density residential rear of property) have since been withdrawn as the studies are being conducted.

Planning and Zoning Chairman Ray Robertson

told the Advocate the commission wants to know how the project could potentially impact traffic and water runoff in the area before moving forward on the matter.

The Advocate left messages for attorney Jesse Hodgson, a legal representative for Countryside, but had not heard back as of press time.

Among those who addressed the commission at a July 13 public hearing was Garrick Williams, who lives next door at 441 W. Main St., and owns another property at 439 W. Main that he rents out.

Williams told the Advocate he and his wife, Shonda, are concerned about the potential for flooding, property values in the neighborhood and traffic.

He claims the area surrounding his property has already flooded five times in the last 29 years.

"I hope they consider the wider implications of the water runoff," he

The next Planning and Zoning meeting is set for 6:30 p.m. Aug. 10 at city hall.

Meetings are open to the public.

said. "I think we're looking at a potential nightmare."

Williams also claims traffic backs up on West Main routinely as people wait for the light at the Bypass and Winchester Road and fears congestion could worsen if 35 apartments are added and an unknown number of vehicles are traveling the area.

While plans are to upgrade Winchester Road, Williams said that project has been talked about for some time and it's unknown when the state might begin that project.

Robertson said the developer presented a plan before the initial request was withdrawn that calls for the apartment complex, an office for the complex and a construction office.

He said the commission was told the apartments would be rented for an average of about \$1,200 a month.

Robertson assured the public the commission will take all issues into account when it comes back before planning and zoning for discussion.

"We're going to do the right thing for the city of Mt. Sterling no matter what that is," Robertson said.

The Advocate began looking into the matter after being informed of a post about the home on the property by Janie Rice-Brother, an architectural historian. She shared information about the history of the home in her blog, Garden to Gables, after recently taking a tour of the home. See story below.

Local native's blog details history about Sudie, Roger Parsons home

By Tom Marshall
Senior Advocate
writer

A post by Janie Rice-Brother, an architectural historian, in a Garden to Gables blog on social media about the history of a home at 449 W. Main St. that began circulating last week created quite a bit of discussion.

The Advocate began looking into the zoning change request for 449 W. Main after learning about Rice-Brother's blog.

By press time this week, a post on the Advocate's social media page regarding the property had generated more than 32,279 views.

Some posters

expressed concern about the historic home possibly being torn down.

Ricky Bowles shared, "Freida Jewell lived there. I always thought it was a unique home. I would hate to see it go."

Jeremy Michael Power wrote that his aunt lived there a few years ago.

"It's a beautiful little home that she used as a cat rescue."

Others commented that additional housing would encourage population growth as more individuals could move here.

Rice-Brother shares that the Sudie and Roger Parsons home at 449 W. Main St., built in 1932, is the only Spanish Revival influenced

house in Mt. Sterling. Her blog article provides a lengthy history of the home.

Rice-Brother, who grew up in Mt. Sterling, said the home has a rich history that is worth preserving.

While she said she understands development is sometimes inevitable she suggests a creative developer incorporate the home into its design.



The sign above advertised public hearings for proposed zoning changes for 449 W. Main St.

AUTO ACCIDENT ATTORNEY

Ryan Allison
Attorney
at Law
51 N. Maysville St.
Mt. Sterling, KY
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STORM

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reports as of Wednesday morning.

"We got very lucky," Beam told the Advocate.

Multiple counties in Kentucky were reporting damage, including substantial structural damage in the areas of Hart County, Grayson County, Owen County and Somerset.

Tuesday's storm came just days after an isolated incident last week caused some flooding in Jeffersonville.

Linville Spangler, pastor at Jeffersonville Baptist Church on Hwy. 599, was bracing for more storms this week.

"We're praying it doesn't do that again today," Spangler said Tuesday morning.

Beam said the pop-up storm Friday produced about four inches of rain in a half hour isolated to Jeffersonville.

At the same time, the northern end of the county remained dry.

"I've never seen that much water standing," he said. "It went down as fast as it came up."

With that in mind, Beam said the county road dept. did not have time to place road clo-

sure signs in areas that temporarily flooded.

Friday's storm flooded the sanctuary and forced Sunday services to be moved to the fellowship hall at Jeffersonville Baptist, which has a concrete floor and could be cleaned up more easily, Spangler said.

This week, the church had about 10 to 12 blowers and two or three dehumidifiers drying out the carpet in the sanctuary, he said.

Barring any additional problems Tuesday, Spangler was hopeful services this upcoming Sunday could be held in the sanctuary.

Spangler said every time the community gets a heavy rain in a short period of time, the church floods because the drain around the church can't handle the surface water, which backs up in the church.

Beam said Friday's storm also resulted in flash flooding at Sulfur Hill Field and along Camargo-Levee Road and U.S. 460 at Old Salem, among other areas.

County Road Dept. Supervisor Mark Walters said hay bales were seen floating down Slate Creek in Jeffersonville after Friday's storm.

ESTATE AUCTION

SATURDAY, JULY 25 @ 10:00 AM

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20' Gatormade Flatbed Trailer With Ramps.

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