

“1892 Building”

A. Concept

Restore, maintain, adapt, and use the building as a property of the Stoughton School System for the following reasons.

- 1) With its' brick exterior, elegant roof line, wide formal front and side entries, and multiple arched corbeled brick windows, the 1892 Building is a remarkably well built and attractive structure. Its' presence makes it a centerpiece for the River Bluff Middle School campus and symbolizes the original and continuing tradition of Stoughton's appreciation and respect for public education. It remains one of the outstanding examples in the State of Wisconsin of the 19th century relatively rare stand-alone building designed specifically for high school use. The preservation of this nationally registered and historic building is a significant contribution to what makes Stoughton the unique and attractive city it is.
- 2) The building and land are already owned by the school system, and no purchase would be required.
- 3) The School System has approximately \$220,000 available in remaining saved funds specifically earmarked for use in regard to the building.
- 4) Full consideration has not yet been given to how this property might be utilized to enhance the quality and potential of both the River Bluff Middle School as well as the City of Stoughton and surrounding school systems as well.

Sample Use Plan (See Floor Plans – attached)

- 1) Use 1st level room A (west side) and 2nd level rooms C (west side) and D (east side) as a “Lego” lab for the 6th graders (A), and robotics lab for 7th graders (C) and 8th graders (D). These rooms would need minimal renovation with the addition of secure screened project storage shelving and open work tables for construction and testing. Room E on the second floor could be used for more extensive testing for larger robotics projects. Legos segueing into the more complicated field of robotics together represent one of the most popular and valuable fields of education for the future, combining mechanical skills with computer and technological skills for future professions in high demand in an increasingly technical and robotic world and work force.
- 2) Room B could be used for minimal administrative and supervisory staff, receiving area, and check point for guests and visitors and material receiving area.
- 3) Restrooms would remain as shown on the Plunkett Raysich drawings, or similar.
- 4) Room F and Basement area would receive minimal remodeling and be used by staff and maintenance for storage or general needs, with its own separate existing entry at rear (north) of building.

- 5) East and west side entries would be changed as required to meet emergency exit and disability requirements, if any. These portals would not be designed for daily use.

Option for Sample Use Plan

Room A as 19th Century Replica School Room

- 1) Move 6th grade (“Lego” Lab) from Room A (west side) to Room B (east side) to share space with admin/reception services, or to Room F upstairs.
- 2) Activate room A west side direct outside entry for students and visitors.
- 3) Decorate to match 19th Century one room school house finish, including antique student desks as available, chalk boards, pot belly stove (electric facsimile), and slates and pencils for writing (no computers or electronics).
- 4) Possible visits from classes from nearby/other districts for ½ day or full day, or perhaps a full week. Instructor curriculum to include old approach to learning (rote learning, recitation, memorization, etc. as well as history of public schooling). Use one teacher willing and able to specialize in this area. Fees would be charged to non-Stoughton school systems.
- 5) Use group of 6th graders to teach group of 3rd graders, and similar old style techniques for one room school house style of teaching with mixed age groups.
- 6) Classes might also be held for other teachers with an interest in educational history and theory taught by a UW guest professor or similar authority on educational history, theory and practice.
- 7) This room could become a public museum regarding education as well – finished out as a “one room schoolhouse” with local school artifacts and records and displays. Original Stoughton and adjacent area artifacts to be collected and used as possible.

Conclusion of Sample Use Plan

Don’t tear down this building to “make it a parking lot.” Or sell it to someone and minimize the existing independence and potential future of the River Bluff Middle School Campus.

Keep the 1892 Building to enhance the unique historical attractions of Stoughton and use it to enhance our educational potential and the uniqueness and attractions of the City as a whole. It can always be demolished in the future as need be, but it can never be replaced as an aesthetic and historic piece of Stoughton’s development.

The 1892 Building is a remarkable building in the remarkable small City of Stoughton. Let’s not tear it down. Let’s find a way to use it wisely and creatively for the enhancement of our City.

B. Funding

There are several factors that could reduce the net cost to the Stoughton School System (SS).

- 1) There would be no purchase price since the property is currently owned by SS.
- 2) SS currently has approximately \$220,000 in reserve funds dedicated to this property.
- 3) As a nationally and locally registered historic property, several standard requirements for a modern school building may be modified or in some cases (not safety issues) even eliminated for the sake of aesthetics and historical accuracy.
- 4) If the contract were to call for the Contractor to purchase the building (for \$1.00 for instance) and then be required to sell it back to SS following modification for \$1.00 plus the contracted amount for changes, the Contractor would be eligible for 45% value in tax credits (25% National and 20% local). This means the contractor should be willing to do the work at roughly 40% less than his typical bid for the job, since the contractor will ultimately receive an additional 45% in direct tax credits for the bid amount. The Contractor also has the option to sell these credits on the open market if the Contractor is unable to use them.
- 5) Typical costs to rehab a 100+ year old building would normally incur several costly aesthetic and general finishing items, such as siding, painting, flooring, paneling, in order to bring it to modern standards. Much of this would be eliminated in that we would be attempting to retain the original look and finish as much as possible. The more aged and original the look the better.
- 6) Although access to the disabled will remain an important issue, generally this requirement can be modified for the goal of historic authenticity, provided reasonable alternate and like kind services are offered on other levels of the building.
- 7) Costs for additional parking surface would be minimal, including, perhaps added bus parking on the west side and three dedicated personnel spaces on the north (rear) side.
- 8) Volunteer docents, workers, and fund drive proceeds may reduce operating costs.
- 9) If the replica one room school (Side A) were used for public display and used by surrounding school system classes, revenue might come through public donations and service fees for use by visiting school classes. Special meetings may also be offered for appropriate commercial entities and organizations. The school room could be open to public one Saturday a month with a volunteer docent.

C. Cost to Complete (Example)

800,000	Total cost of project
-320,000	Reduction due to Contractor's tax credit (40%)

<u>-220,000</u>	Reserve fund held by SS
260,000	Added funds required for completion. (Possibly to be paid to GC when 1892 Building is "bought back" from GC)

D. Schedule for Proposed Use

2/28/16	Complete job description as summarized and receive certified bids for all specified work, using local area contractors as possible. General Contractor presents to School Board for Approval Cost to prepare schedule & certified bids: \$8,000.
8/1/16	Contract deadline for completed work.

E. Scope of Work

1. Repairs to front (south) entry.
2. Repairs to side (west) entry: Include entry to disabled and working entry if one room school replica is used for room A.
3. Repairs to side entry (east) (not used). As required by code.
4. Rear (north) entry for storage and maintenance.
5. Replace round top windows with facsimile custom units for original appearance and natural light.
6. Install rest rooms approximately as shown in Plunkett Raysich drawings.
7. Replace/restore entryway hardware as needed.
8. Install computer services for administrative and robotics use only.
9. Added lighting/electrical as needed.
10. Repair and/or replace mechanicals as needed.
11. Build secure wire storage cages, work tables, and track as needed in areas B, C, D (might be done by wood working group at Senior Center if City bought materials.)
12. Landscape exterior grounds.
13. Security system/ alarm.
14. Prepare west and north parking surfaces (2 buses: 3 cars) – west and north sides.

F. Conclusion

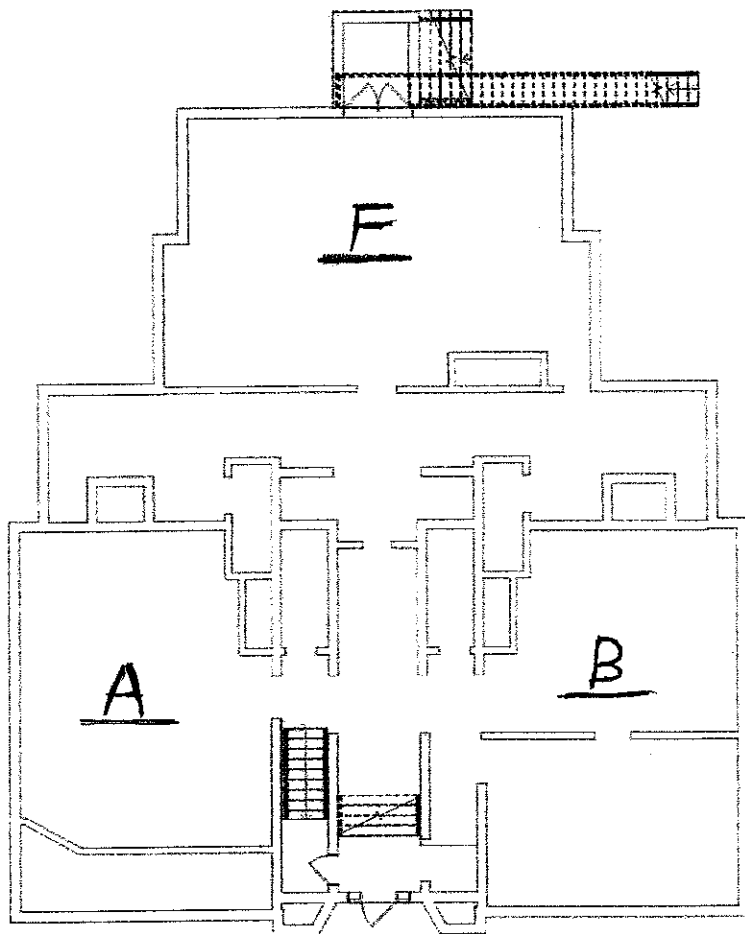
If the 1892 Building is sold for use by the City or for any other outside use, it will in all probability have a significant negative impact on the existing River Bluff Campus. Parking will become more condensed as will the general use and atmosphere of the grounds as it becomes a multi-use

area whether shared with the City or some other non-educational user. In essence SS loses control of a significant portion of its campus.

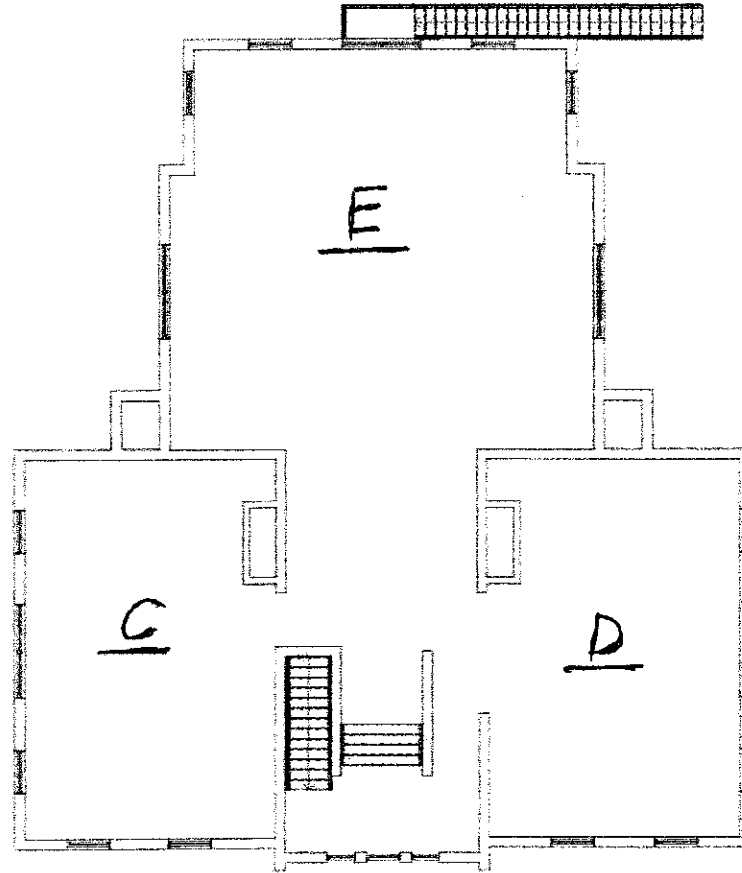
If the building is demolished to create room for additional parking, this will perhaps be of some value in terms of greater convenience and efficiency, but will be a significant negative to both SS and the City in terms of the loss of the aesthetic value of its' landmark and historic status and appearance, as well as its' possible functional use.

It may be a difficult choice, but I'd suggest that the best long term financial and cultural solution is to renovate the 1892 Building and use it as positively and efficiently as possible to enhance the Stoughton School System as well as the tradition, history, and unique identity and appearance of the City of Stoughton.

Tom Selsor
Stoughton Resident



Existing First Floor Plan



Existing Second Floor Plan