

“Old” Does Not Mean “Historic”

Historic refers to what is important in history. *Historical* refers to whatever existed in the past, whether regarded as important or not. (*Am. Heritage Dict.* – 4th Ed. – 2006). This distinction is important in the debate regarding the expansion plans of the ABC Board.

The quibble comes from those, who wish to thwart those plans. These protectors of all things historical argue that the change is out of character with the neighborhood. The most damning argument is that the razing of structures would destroy items of “historical architectural significance.”

This last argument preys upon the desire in most of us that we do the “right thing.” However, propounding a personal cause as some esoteric common good does not make that cause the only one, which is just and proper.

Were it not for the proposed use, hardly anyone would object to the demolition of these structures. The structures are not historic. They are old and derelict. If they had any true historic significance, someone should have stepped forward long before now to save them.

Many years ago, there was talk of demolishing Bellamy Mansion as it stood damaged by fire. There was a cry in support of saving what is truly a structure of historic and architectural significance. That was a proper use of preservation efforts. Preservation is a shield to protect items worthy of protection. It should never be a sword to prevent a landowner from making a legitimate use of its property, simply because someone else opposes that use.

NOTE: Letter to the Editor – *Star News*