

6/7/2019

Legistar
1927 21st Terrace South
La Crosse, WI 54601

Dear Mr. Gilman and City Planning Committee,

This letter is in request to use federal grant money to mediate the structural concerns at 314-316 Liberty Street and provide a safe, comfortable, and attractive living environment for those residing at the residence.

My wife and I are the proud new owners of the property as of 2/1/2019. We were excited to begin updating and improving the property and adding some much needed curb appeal once the ground thawed. Knowing that water has been a concern in the past, we had a dual pump system professionally installed as a condition of closing. This pump system did a great job of removing water from the basement and pumped into the yard as recommended by both the company and the city of La Crosse. Unfortunately, this set up also removed much of the sediment from the surrounding structure, causing the ground nearest the house to cave toward the foundation and lead to significant cracks in the foundation.

Thankfully, the basement waterproofing company came in and reinforced with metal beams a portion of the front wall showing the most movement. We thought we were in the clear. However, as this year's water levels remained at unforeseen highs, we continued to get water in the basement, and the pumps that were designed to keep the basement dry ended up removing enough dirt from the yard that the pressure was unsustainable. Cracks in the foundation continued to occur. Numerous calls to the company for suggestions on how to fix this resulted in a final recommendation to stop pumping altogether to allow the pressure on both sides of the walls to stabilize.

Now, we have over two feet of standing water in our basement, which has remained at this level for the past month. We are reaching out to the City of La Crosse for recommendations, advice, and assistance in resolving this issue and returning the property to a safe and attractive property that benefits not only the residents living in it but also the neighborhood in which it is located.

Specifically, we are asking for your consideration of a few key strategies, or non-structural risk techniques, that were recommended by the Army Corps of Engineers, who presented to the committee on 6/6/2019. The options we are interested in implementing are listed below:

Option 1: Elevate the premises and brace the front wall to ensure safety of structure and allow for maximum usable space. This would be our primary option. Ideally, we can use existing grant

funds earmarked for flood properties to complete this project and this would allow for an elevation that is high enough to keep a standard basement. If this is not feasible, we would be interested in elevating the property to a level that would still provide a small storage area and crawl space to reach mechanical equipment.

Option 2: Brace front wall and fill in basement to recommended level to ensure no additional damage should waters reach these levels again. We would also ask to use existing grant money to accomplish this project.

With either option, we plan to implement the addition of new landscaping and two rain gardens, one at the front corner nearest the driveway and the other at the front border near the existing sidewalk to aid in water retention and filtration. This will not only improve the curb appeal of this property but also bring value to the neighborhood. By not using the pumps and channeling the water through the rain gardens instead, we will reduce runoff into the storm drains and lessen the need for the City to maintain the streets in front of our property. In addition, we have already been actively removing fallen tree limbs and are installing new gutters next week to preserve the foundation.

With your guidance and financial assistance, combined with our continued efforts to improve the property, we can create a safe, comfortable, and attractive living space together for residents of La Crosse that benefits them individually and the neighborhood they live in.

We look forward to working with you all to make this a success, not only for us and the folks living at 314-316 Liberty, but also the dedicated people at the City of La Crosse who have helped along the way.

Sincerely,

Legistar
Hopeful Citizens, Optimistic Flood Plain Property Owners