

RANDY K. LINDENBERG

229 S. First Street  
Geneva, IL 60134

December 2, 2025

Via Email: [preservation@geneva.il.co](mailto:preservation@geneva.il.co); [estood@geneva.il.us](mailto:estood@geneva.il.us)

Paul Zellmer, Chairman  
Historic Preservation Commission  
City of Geneva  
22 S. First Street  
Geneva, IL 60134

Re: Demolition of the Mill Race walls

Dear Commissioners:

As I am sure you are all aware, the hearing on the demolition of what remains of the small interior section of what we refer to as the old Mill Race Inn is scheduled for December 16, 2025. My wife and I have lived in Geneva for decades. I have watched with disappointment the City's refusal to allow the demolition of the remaining structure. The site is an embarrassment to the City; it is the diametric opposite of what the alleged "entry way" to the City of Geneva should be. It is clearly in the best interest of the City and the majority of the people who live here to remove the eyesore immediately.

I sat through the Charrette; I sat through many of the various hearings. After all of the hearings it is clear there is no reasonable justification exists for the City to prohibit this demolition. No one, not the City, not the Park District, not the County, not Preservation Partners have come up with a realistic plan for the stone structure. It has been offered for sale for \$1.00 and I have been told that multiple individuals have looked at attempting to move it but have not been able to guarantee that it would survive the move. At the very first hearing on a resident's Petition to Landmark the stone, a promise was made that they were only looking for a short "delay" in the ultimate demolition process to research available options; that was eight (8) years ago. Yet here we are eight (8) years later discussing the demolition of what the Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. map from over one hundred (100) years ago classified a structure as either unusable or nonexistent.

Shodeen has repeatedly agreed to reuse the stone, to build whatever "memorial" to the Mill Race Inn and/or river stone and/or blacksmith shop reasonably requested, yet the Commission and the vocal minority of preservationists believe they should be able to dictate how an owner should spend their money and what should be there, notwithstanding the impossibility of each of the hypothetical plans. Enough is enough. The Downtown Station Master Plan sets out specific visions, objectives and redevelopment concepts for this area. A simple review of the Plan clearly reflects that no preservation of any existing structure was ever contemplated. What remains of the Mill Race Inn is neither historic nor functional and it is absolutely time to close this unfortunate chapter and move on.

Sincerely,

  
Randy K. Lindenberg

RKL:dlj

cc: Jewel Jensen; Lisa McManus  
Mike Riebe; Andrew Tobler  
Kevin Philips; George Salomon

## Blacksmith Shop Demo Request



Colin C. Campbell

To: Stood, Emily

You replied to this message on 12/11/2025 12:26 PM.



Thu 12/11/2025 12:15 PM

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Ms. Stood,

I have been involved in the effort to see that the blacksmith building be preserved, restored, and repurposed since at least 2014. I'm sorry that I am not able to attend the HPC meeting this evening but I have a prior commitment that I must attend.

It seems to be fairly obvious at this point that the owners of this building are willing to spend unlimited time and money in an effort to wear the City down and get their way.

Given their history of successfully restoring and repurposing historic buildings in the immediate area (Herrington Inn and Riverside Banquets) I simply can't understand their refusal to undertake the relatively small project of doing the same with the blacksmith shop.

I urge the HPC and will urge the City Council to reject their request and to offer appropriate incentives to the owners to make it clear that the City will not issue a demolition permit for this building.

Thank you.

Colin C. Campbell

# Mill Race Inn Development



To: Stood, Emily

 You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 8:08 AM.

 Reply	 Reply All	 Forward	
--	--	--	--

Fri 12/12/2025 1:21 PM

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Stood,

I'd like to express my support for the demolition and development of the former Mill Race Inn property. My wife and I feel blessed to be able to call Geneva home for the last 25 years and raise our children here. Over the years, we've invested in residential properties in town based on our confidence in the city.

Regarding the Mill Race Inn, it's time to remove the landmark status on the remaining structure and move forward. The site has the potential to be a marquee residential/retail development that will be a needed boost for the East Side and ultimately benefit the residents and city of Geneva.

I appreciate your attention to this situation and your dedication to Historic Preservation in Geneva.

Terry Krueger



## LANDMARKS ILLINOIS

People Saving Places for People

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Jackie Taylor Holsten**  
Chairman

**Ron Clewer**  
Vice Chairman

**Jean Follett, PhD**  
Secretary

**Terri Salas, CPA**  
Treasurer

**Bonnie McDonald**  
President & CEO

Gary Anderson, AIA  
Joe Antunovich, FAIA  
Catherine Baker, FAIA  
Mariah DiGrino  
Alyssa Frystak  
Jeff Goulette  
Zeb McLaurin  
Jackie Montesdeoca  
Magdalena Novoa Echaurren  
Sara Phalen  
Judy Tighe  
Allison Toonen-Talamo  
Sarah Van Domelen, PE

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Eric Dexter  
Rachel Firgens  
Cheryl Johnson  
Lisa Yun Lee, PhD  
Chelsea Medek  
Brad Mulay  
Lauren Pacheco  
Emilio Padilla  
Jay Rowell  
Steve Schneider  
Diana Shott  
Korinne Smillie  
Martin C. Tangora\*  
Rabbi Rob Thomas  
Alex Wolking

\*Life Director

### CHAIRMAN EMERITUS

Richard A. Miller

233 S. Wacker Drive  
Suite 4400  
Chicago, IL 60606

[www.landmarks.org](http://www.landmarks.org)

December 12, 2025

(VIA EMAIL)

Historic Preservation Commission  
City of Geneva  
22 S. First Street  
Geneva, IL 60134

*RE: HPC Case No. 2025-114 - 4 E. State Street Historic Landmark  
Demolition*

Commissioners:

Landmarks Illinois strongly opposes the application to demolish the building at 4 E. State Street, otherwise known as the Mill Race Inn or as the Alexander Brothers Blacksmith Shop. In both 2018 and 2023, our organization included this building on our annual list of the Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois in response to the current owner's plans to demolish the building. Both times, the City of Geneva has denied permission to demolish based on the historic significance and value of this building, one of the oldest in Geneva. Having reviewed the application for demolition available on the City's website, is our perspective that nothing has materially changed since the last time this commission recommended against approving demolition in 2023.

One particular aspect of the 2025 application for demolition to which we would like to draw attention is the applicant's claim that economic assessment has not been part of previous deliberations by the Historic Preservation Commission regarding this property. That claim is demonstrably false. As part of the series of hearings that took place in 2023, the City of Geneva engaged Teska Associates and the Planera Group to analyze the applicant's pro forma and consider alternatives to demolition. The resulting analysis found that a stand-alone reuse of the building would allow the applicant to break even with an annual ROI of 1.3%. With public private partnership, a stand-alone project would yield a 10% ROI, in line with typical returns for a public private partnership. The study concluded that reuse of the historic building is financially viable as part of a public private partnership, providing clear direction for the applicant regarding the future of the building. This analysis informed the commission's final recommendation. We are therefore puzzled that the 2025 application does not acknowledge the 2023 assessment, nor indicate that the applicant has taken any steps since 2023 to pursue this alternative or initiate conversation with the City regarding a public private partnership. The pro forma submitted with the 2025 application is the same pro forma that was submitted in 2022.

In the absence of initiative to coordinate with the City, the lack of movement regarding the future of this property falls to the applicant. To approve demolition now would be to reward the applicant for their lack of action to protect and repurpose the historic building despite an evident path forward. It would also set a dangerous precedent that property owners wishing to demolish a historic landmark in Geneva can eventually expect to be allowed to do so if they are able to wait sufficient time, putting the authority of the Geneva Historic Preservation Ordinance at question. We urge the commission to again recommend against allowing demolition of 4 E. State Street. Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kendra Parzen", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Kendra Parzen  
Advocacy Manager

Black smith building

 Jerry Rumps  
To Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 11:46 AM

 You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 12:12 PM.

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.**

I strongly suggested it be demolished and replaced with a very attractive wood sign showing what it looked like in its glory days

---

They should grant the demolition and move on the taxpayers are losing money by not having that property improved. How straightforward is that?



Michael Sweeney  
To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 11:48 AM

 You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 12:12 PM.

\*\*\*\*\*

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sent from my iPhone

# Demolition

 Maureen Grady  
To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 11:49 AM

 You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 12:13 PM.

\*\*\*\*\*  
CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.  
\*\*\*\*\*

Please let the blacksmith shop be torn down. It is an eyesore driving into Geneva.  
Thank you,  
Maureen Grady  
Sent from my iPhone

# Historical Preservation



Lisa Mills

To: Stood, Emily

 You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 12:13 PM.

 Reply	 Reply All	 Forward	
--	--	--	--

Mon 12/15/2025 11:50 AM

\*\*\*\*\*

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

I am a 40+ resident of Geneva. I would attend the hearing but I fell & broke my femur. I am at Delnor but beg the Preservation org to STOP Shodeen from erasing our Geneva history. They are relentless, the people in Geneva need to protect Geneva's history. When it is gone, we cannot get it back.

Sent from my iPhone

## Strong Support for Approving Demolition Permit -4E. State Street



Mary  
To: Stood, Emily

Reply Reply All Forward

Mon 12/15/2025 11:56 AM

You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 12:14 PM.

Action Items

+ Get more add-ins

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

I feel that it is in the **best interests** of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Enough time has passed without a practical path forward. It's time to let go and permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,  
Mary Callahan  
[1032 James Street](#)  
[Geneva, IL 60134](#)

Sent from my iPhone

## Demolish the unsightly blacksmith structure



John Callahan

To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 11:58 AM

[i](#) You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 12:14 PM.

Action items

+ Get more add-ins

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

I feel that it is in the best interests of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Enough time has passed without a practical path forward. It's time to let go and permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,

John Callahan

[1032 James St](#)

[Geneva, IL 60134](#)

## Blacksmith shop in Geneva



Mike Rosier  
To: Stood, Emily

 You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 1:14 PM.

 Reply  Reply All  Forward 

Mon 12/15/2025 11:59 AM

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

This property appears to be a Prime location for many things. It does not appear to be a prime location for a museum or blacksmith business. Erect a SMALL monument and tear the remaining building down. Anyone who wants to buy the property must retain the monument.

Mike Rosier  
Geneva and US citizen

## Strong Support for Approving Demolition Permit - 4 E. State Street



To Stood, Emily



Mon 12/15/2025 12:01 PM

 You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 12:14 PM.  
This message was sent with High importance.

Action Items

+ Get more add-ins

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.**

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location. I have attended many meetings on this for a long time.

I feel that it is in the **best interests** of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition. We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Given enough time has passed without a practical path forward, the time is now to move on and let this blighted area be improved and redeveloped.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,

Pattie Lane

[P.O. Box 146](#)

[Geneva IL 60134](#)

# Blacksmith building



Troy Jones  
To: Stood, Emily

Reply	Reply All	Forward	
-------	-----------	---------	--

Mon 12/15/2025 12:01 PM

You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 12:15 PM.

\*\*\*\*\*

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

Let's remove this eyesore that is at the Entrance of our town!

Move it to the Viking ship park immediately.

Thanks  
Troy Jones

## Historic Blacksmith Shop



Debbie Kanarowski

To: Stood, Emily

 You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 12:16 PM.

 Reply  Reply All  Forward 

Mon 12/15/2025 12:03 PM

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Emily,

Thank you for all of your work in preserving our quaint town of Geneva. I have been a proud resident of Geneva for 34 years. I have an event tomorrow night so I am unable to attend the meeting to express my support of the demolition of the Mill Race Inn Blacksmith Shop.

Currently the Blacksmith Shop is an eyesore. As an Eastside resident, I frequently travel by the chain link fence and the dilapidated building. It would be great to have a beautiful gateway into Geneva that truly represents our community.

Too much taxpayers money has been spent on trying to save this building. It is time to move forward and keep the charm of Geneva that we all love.

Sincerely,

Debbie Kanarowski  
755 Westfield Course

# Demolition permit



Jean Gaines  
To: Stood, Emily

Reply	Reply All	Forward	
-------	-----------	---------	--

Mon 12/15/2025 12:05 PM

You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 12:16 PM.

\*\*\*\*\*

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

Please add my name to those in favor of approving the demolition permit for the structure at 4 E. State Street. This gateway to the downtown business district is an embarrassment and not the welcome we want visitors to see.

A nod to history can be accomplished with an art piece similar to the sculpture at Old Mill park. It is time to move forward.

Jean Gaines  
100 n River Lane  
Geneva  
Sent from my iPhone

## SUBJECT: Support for Approving Demolition Of the Blacksmith Shop



Tim Dreyer

To: Stood, Emily



Mon 12/15/2025 12:11 PM

 You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 12:16 PM.

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Hi Emily,

I'd like to register my support for approving the demolition permit for the structure at 4 E. State Street, aka the blacksmith shop.

The lot has been an eyesore for years now and after closely following the proceedings on this, there looks to be no financially reasonable solution the city has offered to preserve what is now nothing more than a dilapidated foundation.

If the city was so keen on preserving the site they should have done so years ago. So in my opinion, it is unfair to lay the burden of preservation at the feet of Shodeen when the city and the previous owners of the site were far more instrumental in the demise of the structure. I've lived in Geneva for over 27 years now and as much as I love how the city keeps its historical charm, I am 100% in favor of moving forward with demolition.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tim Dreyer

8 S. Greenwich Ln.

Geneva

## Strong Support for Approving Demolition Permit - 4 E. State Street



Marcy Curran

To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 12:14 PM

[i](#) You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 12:17 PM.

Action Items

+ Get more add-ins

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

I feel that it is in the **best interests** of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Enough time has passed without a practical path forward. It's time to let go and permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,

Marcia Curran

[865 Samantha Circle](#)

[Geneva, IL 60135](#)

# Blacksmith Shop



Amanda Jones

To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 12:16 PM

[i](#) You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 12:17 PM.

[Action Items](#)

[+](#) Get more add-ins

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Hi,

I respect our historic preservationists but not everything in this town can be preserved or salvaged.

I urge you to please allow the demolition of the blacksmith shop. The Mill Race corner has been a dilapidated eyesore for too long. It seems the preservation committee is not really interested in developing this corner and instead wants to block Shodeen out of spite. Lets not forget he is the one who developed the old hospital into a vibrant area that has added to the charm and economic growth of 3rd St. He is also responsible for The Herrington. I don't think anyone would argue that these were unfavorable developments.

It's time to move on and let go. Stop with the vendetta against Shodeen and let's move forward with developing this gateway to our downtown.

Sincerely,

Amanda Jones

Geneva Resident

## Strong Support for Approving Demolition Permit - 4 E. State Street



Alina Brigham ·

To: Stood, Emily



Mon 12/15/2025 12:37 PM

 You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 1:13 PM.

Action Items

+ Get more add-ins

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

I feel that it is in the **best interests** of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Enough time has passed without a practical path forward. It's time to let go and permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,

Alina Brigham

## Blacksmith building



Katie Oconnor

To: Stood, Emily



Mon 12/15/2025 12:43 PM

 You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 1:13 PM.

\*\*\*\*\*

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Emily,

As a resident of 40 years in Geneva I've seen many changes from a small town to one that has become more than huge. Some changes are good and appreciated but to hold on to a dilapidated building is a waste of money, to refurbish would be too much money. Our city is in need of infrastructure repairs such as a new police station.

No more wasting tax payer dollars, please. Tear it down, it's an eyesore.

Sincerely,

Katie Oconnor

Sent from my iPhone

---

## Strong support for approving demo permit 4 E State



Sharon Reed

To: Stood, Emily



Mon 12/15/2025 12:43 PM

 You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 1:13 PM.

Action Items

+ Get more add-ins

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

I feel that it is in the **best interests** of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Enough time has passed without a practical path forward. It's time to let go and permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,

Sharon Reed

[2692 Stone Circle #103](#)

[Geneva IL 60134](#)

Blacksmith shop



Ernie B  
To: Stood, Emily

Reply	Reply All	Forward	
-------	-----------	---------	--

Mon 12/15/2025 12:46 PM

You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 1:13 PM.

\*\*\*\*\*

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

Hello Emily, I hope you are well. Received a text today regarding the blacksmith shop and an event on the agenda for tomorrow evening. I'm unable to attend, but wanted to at least let you know that it is my position that the blacksmith shop should be allowed to be torn down.

I recognize the issue is not that simple, however in an effort to respect your time I would ask the building be allowed to be demolished and then a reasonable size building be built in its place, no more than four stories.

Thank you,  
Ernie Belmonte  
Geneva Resident/  
Commissioner - Geneva Board of Police and Fire Commissioners

Blacksmith shop



Tom Manson  
To: Stood, Emily

Reply	Reply All	Forward	
-------	-----------	---------	--

Mon 12/15/2025 1:43 PM

You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 1:44 PM.

\*\*\*\*\*

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

Please grant the request to demolish the remnants of the former blacksmith shop on E. State St. It is an eyesore and an embarrassment and this has gone on long enough.  
Geneva resident over 40 yrs. Tom Manson

Sent from my iPhone

## Strong Support for Approving Demolition Permit - 4 E. State Street



Michelle Rasche ·

To: Stood, Emily



Mon 12/15/2025 2:05 PM

 You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 2:08 PM.

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

I feel that it is in the **best interests** of Geneva and its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

My husband & I have lived in Geneva since 2020 and would love to see a vibrant entrance approaching the river to this beautiful city. There is a time and place for keeping old buildings, but the time for this building has passed and Geneva's citizens are ready for new and vibrant possibilities in the space surrounding 4 E. State St.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,  
Michelle & Nick Rasche

101 Sandholm St  
Geneva, IL 60134

4 E State Street



Rachael Able

To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 2:47 PM

You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 2:47 PM.

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

**SUBJECT:** Strong Support for Approving Demolition Permit - 4 E. State Street

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my **firm** support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and **deteriorating** spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

I feel that it is in the **best interests** of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Enough time has passed without a practical path forward. It's time to let go and permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,

Rachael Able

201 Sandholm St.

Geneva, IL 60134

## Demolition of Blacksmith



Kristie Dienst ·  
To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 2:32 PM

 You replied to this message on 12/15/2025 2:37 PM.

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Hi Emily,

Hope you're having a good week!

I'm writing to you today to enthusiastically lend my support to the approval of the demolition permit for the building located [at 4 E. State Street. Please count me](#) among those who believe this is a crucial and positive step forward for our downtown area.

As you know, that particular structure sits right at the entrance to our beautiful downtown business district. Frankly, it doesn't quite reflect the vibrant and welcoming spirit of Geneva that we all cherish, both for our residents and the visitors who come to explore our town. It really feels like it's presenting a less-than-ideal first impression, and I think we can do better to showcase what Geneva truly offers.

I come from a family that's been part of the Geneva community since 1922, so I truly hold our history and heritage in high regard. I completely appreciate the importance of preserving significant landmarks and the stories they tell. However, in this specific case, considering how this building has been largely out of sight or in disrepair for decades, it honestly feels like its time has passed. Sometimes, moving forward means making tough decisions about structures that no longer serve our community's best interests or contribute positively to our aesthetic.

I genuinely believe that removing this building will allow us to create a more attractive and fitting gateway to our downtown, helping Geneva always put its best foot forward.

Thanks so much for considering my input on this matter.

Best,

Kristie Dienst

# Demolition permit



Scott Lebin  
To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 2:49 PM

\*\*\*\*\*

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

I think it is time to get rid of the eye sore caused by the old remains of what was once a blacksmith shop or some mill structure where the mill race inn was. Please had my name to the list of those wanting to see it gone.

Scott Lebin  
12/15/2025

Sent from my iPhone

## Support for Demolition Request – 4 E. State Street Historic Landmark



Patrice Bertheau ·

To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 3:04 PM

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am a Geneva resident writing to strongly support the approval of the demolition request for the landmarked limestone structure at 4 E. State Street.

This long-vacant and deteriorating building has become a prominent eyesore on our Fox River riverfront, detracting from the vibrant and attractive gateway that downtown Geneva deserves.

I believe it is in the **best interests** of residents to allow its prompt removal.

Despite years of discussions and delays, no funded or feasible plan has emerged to rehabilitate or repurpose the structure. The property owner has made reasonable offers, such as salvaging stone materials or incorporating a memorial, which I feel would better reflect and educate residents on the relevance of this area.

We've had more than enough time without a viable preservation solution. Approving demolition will finally enable positive redevelopment that benefits the entire community.

Please share my comments with the full Historic Preservation Commission ahead of the December 16 public hearing.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Patrice Bertheau

520 Ray St

Geneva

Sent from my iPhone

## Support for Demolition Permit – 4 E. State Street (Blacksmith Shop)



Paul Descoteaux ·

To: Stood, Emily

Signed By: There are problems with the signature. Click the signature button for details.



Mon 12/15/2025 3:35 PM



Emily Stood  
Preservation Planner  
City of Geneva

I am writing to express my strong support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, commonly known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For many years, this long-vacant and deteriorating building has been a significant blight on our city and a poor reflection of Geneva—particularly given its highly visible riverfront location at a major gateway to downtown. Rather than contributing to a vibrant and welcoming environment, the structure stands in stark contrast to the lively and attractive entrance that residents and visitors expect and deserve.

It is in the best interests of Geneva and the majority of its citizens to allow this structure to be removed without further delay. After more than eight years of discussion and review, no viable or realistic proposal for restoration or adaptive reuse has emerged. During this time, the property owner has made good-faith efforts to find compromise solutions, including incorporating salvaged stone into new construction or creating a memorial feature. These efforts have not been met with sufficient flexibility, and the ongoing restrictions effectively require the owner to fund outcomes that are neither feasible nor practical on private property.

If historic originality is the primary concern, it is my understanding that the original structure on this site was a wood building that burned down. If architectural significance is the concern, the existing use of modern cinder block and concrete does not accurately represent the historic period. If the site's importance lies in its placement as a vista or landmark, it is difficult to reconcile that position with the fact that the bridge and new turn lane have already impeded and obstructed the original prominence of the view.

At this point, ample time has passed without a workable path forward. Continuing to block demolition serves neither historic preservation nor the broader community. It is time to allow redevelopment that will enhance this critical location and better serve Geneva as a whole.

Please share my comments and my support for granting the demolition permit with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

As a forty-year resident of Geneva, I appreciate the opportunity to share my perspective for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Paul W Descoteaux  
628 South Street  
Geneva



john hagen  
To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 4:07 PM

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Good afternoon Ms. Stood

I've been a resident in Geneva, more specifically Fox Run, for over 18 years. In that time I've seen St. Charles and Batavia continue to beautify their respective riverfronts. Though I'm partial to the historic and beautiful downtown of Geneva, our riverfront continues to be uninspiring. The Eastside has always been treated as the proverbial stepchild in Geneva and the SW corner of State and Rte. 25 has been a literal dump since The Mill Race Inn was torn down. Now I appreciate history, especially the city of Geneva's interesting history, as I have Scandinavian ancestry and live on what used to be the IL State Training School for Girls. I also understand the need to preserve said history, but common sense (if it exists anymore) is commonsense. Tear down that eyesore, put some of the bricks in the Geneva Museum with original condition pics and a plaque and be done with it. That location is a great spot for something useful to our community. The Eastside deserves better!

Sincerely,

**John M. Hagen, D.C.**  
[701 Fox Run Drive](#)  
[Geneva, IL 601134](#)

**SUBJECT:** Strong Support for Approving Demolition Permit - 4 E. State Street

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure at 4 E. State Street, known as the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

I feel that it is in the **best interests** of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Enough time has passed without a practical path forward. It's time to let go and permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,  
Gregory N. Corda and Amy L. Corda  
778 Fox Run Drive  
Geneva, IL 60134

*Gregory N Corda*

*Amy L Corda*

# Blacksmith Shop



Michael H.  
To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 4:44 PM

\*\*\*\*\*

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

Your committee should allow the blacksmith shop to be torn down and the property will be put to a better use.

Regards

Mike Hughes  
[683 Chandler Ave.](#)  
[Geneva, IL](#)

Sent from my iPad

## Strong support for approving demolition permit 4 E. State Street



Julie Halborg  
To: Stood, Emily

Reply Reply All Forward

Mon 12/15/2025 4:46 PM

Action Items

+ Get more add-ins

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location. I have attended many meetings on this for a long time.

I feel that it is in the **best interests** of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition. We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Given enough time has passed without a practical path forward, the time is now to move on and let this blighted area be improved and redeveloped.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,  
Julie Halborg  
Geneva Historical District Resident

Sent from my iPhone

# Stong Support for Demolition Permit for Blacksmith Shop



Jeff Conforti  
To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 4:49 PM

Action Items

+ Get more add-ins

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop. The property is an abandoned eyesore which holds zero appeal or functionality to the City of Geneva or it's residents. Please approve the demolition permit for the structure. I have full confidence in Shodeen Development making sufficient improvements to the entire site including the razed Mill Race Inn. This charade that the city has placed against the citizens in Geneva has gone on for many years and the waste of tax payer dollars is Abhorrent.

If this project would of been approved in a timely fashion , the City of Geneva would of received tax dollars into the city coffers instead of the excessive spending fighting the project.

Regards,

Jeff Conforti  
[2559 Walnut Ave, Geneva, IL 60134](#)

# Demolition permit for historic blacksmith shop



Scott Moreen ·  
To: Stood, Emily

Reply	Reply All	Forward	
-------	-----------	---------	--

Mon 12/15/2025 5:17 PM

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

This has gone on long enough. Take the plague offered and allow the demolition to proceed. We have had enough delay allowing the corner to languish unbuilt upon.

Scott Moreen  
[1272 Alexandria Ct, Geneva, IL 60134](mailto:1272.Alexandria.Ct.,Geneva,IL.60134)

---

## Strong Support for Approving Demolition Permit - 4 E. State Street



Matt Grabowski ·  
To Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 5:30 PM

Action Items

+ Get more add-ins

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

I feel that it is in the best interests of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Enough time has passed without a practical path forward. It's time to let go and permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,  
Matt Grabowski  
2019 Sheffield Ln, Geneva

# Blacksmith shop in Geneva



Phillip Smith  
To Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 6:00 PM

[Action Items](#)

[+ Get more add-ins](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

I feel that it is in the best interests of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Enough time has passed without a practical path forward. It's time to let go and permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,

Phil Smith

# Strong Support for Approving Demolition Permit - 4 E. State Street

 Joseph Schambach  
To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 6:04 PM

[Action Items](#) [+ Get more add-ins](#)

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.**

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

I feel that it is in the **best interests** of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Enough time has passed without a practical path forward. It's time to let go and permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,

Joseph Schambach

[THIS EMAIL MAY BE SPAM] BLACK SMITH SHOP



Camille McCue  
To: Stood, Emily

 This message was sent with Low importance.

 Reply  Reply All  Forward 

Mon 12/15/2025 6:13 PM

\*\*\*\*\*

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

Hopefully, the restoration of the black smith shop will be authentically restored so visitors will be able to walk along the bridge and go in and view this restored sight that was once part of Geneva's heritage.

Camille McCue  
[41 Garfield St](#)  
[Geneva Il 60134](#)

Sent from my iPad

old blacksmith shop



Brendan Maguire  
To: Stood, Emily

[Reply](#) [Reply All](#) [Forward](#) [More](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 6:41 PM

[Action Items](#)

[+ Get more add-ins](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Stood:

Typically, I am one to guard history but in the case of the eyesore Geneva blacksmith shop, I find that this particular history is best moved elsewhere. The site should be stripped and, in the process, perhaps the bricks and be saved and preserved elsewhere.

It is past time to rid the area of this blight. Please allow for the demolition under consideration and make all arrangements to do the demolition as soon as possible. I don't doubt that those who oppose this move are well-intentioned but the city, in so many instances, has resisted beauty and appeal in favor of other considerations.

Thank you for your consideration.

Brendan Maguire (resident at 100 River Ln. Geneva)

## Strong Support for Approving Demolition Permit - 4 E. State Street



Lindsey Schambach ·

To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 6:48 PM

Action Items

+ Get more add-ins

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

I feel that it is in the **best interests** of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Enough time has passed without a practical path forward. It's time to let go and permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,

Lindsey Schambach

[THIS EMAIL MAY BE SPAM]



Pat Engel  
To: Stood, Emily

 This message was sent with Low importance.

 Reply	 Reply All	 Forward	
---	---	---	---

Mon 12/15/2025 7:10 PM

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.**

Let's stop wasting money and time. I hate giving into Shodeen company's underhanded dealings, but this ugly building has been the gateway to our community for too long. Save the building materials and incorporate them into something income/tax producing. I've been a resident long enough to remember the same controversy when the hospital was demolished, the building along the river, the creamery, etc. Now hardly anyone remembers what was there before. Basically, no one else has come forward with the money to repurpose the building.

Pat

# Support for the demolition of the blacksmith shop

 Carol Smith  
To: Stood, Emily

 Reply  Reply All  Forward 

Mon 12/15/2025 7:42 PM

Action Items + Get more add-ins

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,  
I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop. For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location. I feel that it is in the **best interests** of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition. We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property. Enough time has passed without a practical path forward. It's time to let go and permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community. Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter. Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,  
Robert & Carol Smith  
514 N Pine St  
Geneva

Concerning the call for demolition at 4 E. st.



Lee Eysturlid  
To: Stood, Emily

[Reply](#) [Reply All](#) [Forward](#) [More](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 7:50 PM

[Action items](#)

[+ Get more add-ins](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

To Whom it Concerns:

This is a public statement in reference to the effort to destroy the the historic landmarked 1840s blacksmith shop in Geneva (also known as the Mill Race Inn) at 4 E. State Street. This is a travesty. I will list reasons.

1. The owner has not been honest about their intentions from the start. The commission has seen through this previously. Hence their "no" votes. The owner has not paid fines due and has intentionally allowed the building to decay. If its an "eye-sore" then that is on the owner and the city. The owner has made it clear that they will not cooperate. Why is that ok?
2. That the statement given, "The retention of a building, structure, object, improvement, or site is not in the best interest of the majority of the community" is at best an exaggeration and at worst just dishonest. I don't know anyone (I live in the immediate area) that is keen to see the structure go.
3. What happened to the city's plan to preserve our "historical" character? Have we abandoned that?
4. It seems they are claiming it is "their" property. Yet lots of regular folks have to get permission to change (not destroy) anything historical, windows, fronts, etc. Why is this different?
5. Not only will the destruction of this building remove a historical landmark, it will allow for the building of a completely ahistorical and oversized structure that will demean the overall historical appearance and feel of Geneva. People coming from the east on 38 will be greeted by what? Not the iconic and historic Geneva town sky-line. That will be obscured.

I strongly encourage the commission to vote no. Do right by Geneva and by the little history we have left.

Thanks!

Lee Eysturlid  
108 Oak St

—  
Lee W. Eysturlid, Ph.D., NBCT  
IMSA  
1500 W. Sullivan Rd  
Aurora, IL 60506-1000

"All things are ready, if our minds be so."  
- Henry V

December 14, 2025

Geneva Historic Preservation Commission  
c/o Emily Stood, Preservation Planner  
Geneva City Hall  
22 South First Street  
Geneva, IL 60134

Dear Commissioners:

As a resident of Geneva, as well as the First Ward where the Alexander brothers' foundry and blacksmith shop is located, I wish to express my opposition to the petition to demolish the historic landmark.

In the two previous petitions for demolition, the arguments principally were financial. This third petition argues that public opinion has shifted toward demolition. I don't think that is true. I know of no neighbors who favor demolition.

The petition presents a false choice between two outcomes: keeping an eyesore or demolishing it. I don't think the majority of Geneva citizens fully support either of those outcomes. Most would prefer that the landmark be restored, redeveloped or re-purposed so that it returns to being an asset, as it was throughout the first of the past two centuries in our community.

If public opinion is to be the deciding factor, members of the community should be given an opportunity to creatively develop, evaluate and recommend to the property owner ways in which the landmarked structure can be restored, redeveloped or re-purposed. So far, that opportunity has been denied.

During a hearing on the most-recent demolition petition, I proposed a study group composed of representatives of interested citizen organizations to develop reasonable, big-idea ways to restore, redevelop or re-purpose the structure. I even offered to organize the study group that could include participation by the property owner.

If the study group is unable to conceive and recommend one or more solutions that the owner finds acceptable, then that outcome indeed might augment the argument for demolition.

To date, the petitioner has brought forward only one alternative for preserving the structure – an adaptive use as an office – and argued that that would be economically unrealistic. A single potential use is not in compliance with City Code 10-6-10 regarding demolition of landmarked structures that states "Demolition shall be considered **only** when **all other** redevelopment options for a building, structure, object, improvement or site have been **exhausted.**" (Attached)

I maintain that one adaptive use does not exhaust all redevelopment options.

The current petition, published last Wednesday, includes about 20 letters from citizens who essentially state they don't like the unsightly remnants of the blacksmith shop. I agree. I don't like them either. However, the solution does not have to be demolition. I'm confident that the majority of citizens would favor a faithful restoration, redeveloped or repurpose of the blacksmith shop, especially when shown that the structure has immense historical, educational, commercial, recreational and tourism potential.

Sincerely,



Alan K. Leahigh

## **GENEVA CITY CODE**

### **Title 10 – Building Regulations**

#### **Chapter 6 – Historic Preservation**

##### **10-6-10: - DEMOLITION OF DESIGNATED PROPERTIES:**

Requests for demolition of any portion of or the entirety of any building, structure, or object shall require review by the Historic Preservation Commission when such demolition request affects:

1. More than twenty-five percent (25%) of any exterior street façade of a building, structure or object;
2. More than twenty-five percent (25%) of any combination of exterior foundations, walls, and/or roofs;
3. Any purposefully-designed landscape by a notable individual; or
4. A significant, naturally-occurring land or geological formation when such building, structure, object or site has been designated as a historic landmark or has been identified as a contributing or significant property within a designated historic district.

Demolition shall be considered only when all other redevelopment options for a building, structure, object, improvement, or site have been exhausted.

# The blacksmith



Lesley  
To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 8:32 PM

Action Items

+ Get more add-ins

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.**

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

I feel that it is in the **best interests** of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Enough time has passed without a practical path forward. It's time to let go and permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this.

Merry Christmas

Lesley Saccotelli

515 Windett Lane

Geneva

Sent from my iPhone

## Blacksmith shop in Geneva



Susan Boyle  
To: Stood, Emily



Mon 12/15/2025 8:58 PM

\*\*\*\*\*

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

Geneva Preservation Committee:

Kindly reconsider your previous position regarding this eyesore. It should be torn down as it has no significant historical value and is an embarrassment to our charming city.

Susan Boyle  
Geneva Resident

---

## SUBJECT: Strong Support for Approving Demolition Permit - 4 E. State Street



Susan Dixon  
To: Stood, Emily

[Reply](#) [Reply All](#) [Forward](#) [...](#)

Mon 12/15/2025 9:31 PM

Action Items

+ Get more add-ins

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

We are contacting you to voice our firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

We feel that it is in the **best interests** of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Enough time has passed without a plan for this beautiful property. It's time to permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,  
Susan & Leslie Dixon  
1210 Sunset Rd

# Support for Approving Demolition Permit - 4 E. State Street



Greg Marston  
To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Tue 12/16/2025 3:49 AM

\*\*\*\*\*

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

I support approving the demolition permit.  
Thank you  
Greg Marston  
[121 N 1st Street](#)  
[Geneva IL 60134](#)

# Blacksmith demolition



Jon Hull  
To: Stood, Emily

 Reply	 Reply All	 Forward	
---	---	---	---

Tue 12/16/2025 6:35 AM

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Emily. Tear it down. It's past time.

Jon Hull

[THIS EMAIL MAY BE SPAM] Strong Support for Approving Demolition Permit 4 E. State Street.



Kevin Holt  
To: Stood, Emily

Reply Reply All Forward ...

Tue 12/16/2025 7:00 AM

This message was sent with Low importance.

Action Items

+ Get more add-ins

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

Geneva citizens see this blight every time they enter the City from the east. Geneva should have a much more attractive entrance to the City.

It is in the best interests of the citizens of Geneva to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

Enough time has passed without a reasonable and practical path forward. It's time to move forward and permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,

Kevin Holt  
1 Cambridge Ct.

[THIS EMAIL MAY BE SPAM] Re: Strong support for approving demolition permit - 4 State Street



Becky Smith  
To Stood, Emily

Reply Reply All Forward ...

Tue 12/16/2025 7:35 AM

This message was sent with Low importance.  
Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.

Action Items

+ Get more add-ins

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

I feel that it is in the **best interests** of Geneva and most of its citizens to clear this unsightly structure without further delay. There's simply no solid reason for the city to keep blocking this demolition.

We're now well over eight years into this drawn-out saga, and still no feasible proposals have materialized for restoring or repurposing the old stone building. The property owner has made good-faith efforts, including suggestions to incorporate the stone materials or create a memorial feature, but the Commission continues to impose restrictions that essentially force the owner to fund outcomes on private property.

Enough time has passed without a practical path forward. It's time to let go and permit redevelopment that serves the broader good of our community.

Please share these comments and my support with the full Historic Preservation Commission as they review this matter.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

# Blacksmith shop debate this evening



Thomas Burgan ·

To Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Tue 12/16/2025 8:58 AM

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.**

Miss Stood,

Tear it down, don't tear it down, tear it down, don't tear it down. In Mayor Burns we have a Richard J. and Richard M. Daley who has been in office twenty years to long.

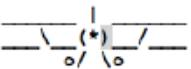
My name is Tom Burgan and I am a 35 year resident of Geneva. I enjoyed Mill Race Inn back in the day. I enjoyed Island Park until it became a crappy pass through on the trails, which by the way I frequent nearly daily on foot, bike and rollerblades. This standoff has got to end and unfortunately I guess I am going to side with Shodeen, who I think is shady developer in his own right, used to getting his way. SO my thinking...

1. Tear it down, but make Shodeen celebrate its existence by keeping all of the pieces and doing something for the community out of it in that location somewhere not buried in a corner.
2. I do NOT want to see his crappy condos or whatever else he has planned on that location without paying homage to the residents who are giving him THEIR permission to do so. This means public space for passerby's on the trail to take in and enjoy much like was possible years ago when Mill Race was a vibrant destination on the river trail, especially the gazebo.
3. Finally, Island Park has become a mess with the yearly flooding of the river. We're all so worried about taking out the dam, that we lose sight of the fact that the Army Corp will NOT allow any raising of Island Park to help with the annual flooding and mud making machine. I remember well summer concerts there and other events that brought out the residents. The pavilion building just had the bathrooms rebuilt by I assume The Geneva Park District. Time to finish the job and improve the park itself. I believe Shodeen should be a part of this renovation of the park, with his money and his company's mouth. Face it, he has name recognition and I'd like to see it put to use for THE PEOPLE of Geneva. **That location is a jewel of a gem and we need to polish it, NOT destroy it for personal gain.**

I cannot attend tonight's meeting, but I thank you for your time and effort in heading the discussion this evening.

Tom

Thomas J Burgan  
Delta B-737 Captain (Ret)



December 12, 2025

Emily Stood  
Preservation Planner  
Historic Preservation Commission  
22 South First Street  
Geneva, Illinois 60134

Re: 4 East State Street

Dear Emily,

My husband and I first visited Geneva in 1983 while we were house hunting. I had a good friend from college that was from Geneva and I always remembered she loved where she was from. I knew she was right the moment we drove into town. It was like entering a movie set. We had lunch at Mill Race Inn, walked the river, the parks, the schools and were amazed with the variety of shops on tree lined streets. Most of all we couldn't believe the great neighborhoods. We could envision the history of the town by seeing the different styles of homes. Each street had a wonderful mix of well cared for homes dotted with beautiful historic ones. We knew if we could find a house to buy Geneva was going to be our home. A month later we purchased the 1892 Davis House on Batavia Avenue. It was a perfect place to raise our 4 children. Even though they've traveled extensively they still say they can't imagine a better place to have grown up.

We were drawn to Geneva because it dares to be different! Since 1835 it's managed to maintain it's own unique identity. There are many reminders of the people that settled this river town. It makes me extremely grateful to the Geneva Historic Commission, the Geneva History Museum and Preservation Partners for the work they do every day. It's also one of the reasons we have record amounts of visitors to our town every year. In the scheme of things, we're all here for a short time. We all have a responsibility to encourage the City to continue to move forward in a way that compliments and preserves what began here almost 200 years ago.

Growth is inevitable. Thoughtful and careful growth is a necessity!

The Alexander Brother's Blacksmith Shop, 4 East State Street, has sadly been horribly neglected! What can be done? The answer is easy, save it and protect it! This historic commercial building is where everything was made that was needed to build the early settlements along the Fox River.

It's unthinkable this landmarked structure be demolished. Throughout the Tri Cities there are hundreds of examples of buildings that have been partially or completely restored. The time and creativity it takes is always well worth it! Third Street is a perfect example of historic buildings beautifully adapted to house shops, restaurants and offices. Kent Shodeen did remarkable work transforming the 1874 Creamery and Pump House into the stunning Herrington Hotel.

When the Shodeen Family purchased the Mill Race Inn property, they committed to incorporating the Blacksmith Shop into their plans. Apparently, they've changed their mind. To allow this significant part of Geneva's history to be completely neglected was their decision. Were they hoping if they didn't maintain it, they'd be allowed to demolish it? This structure was their responsibility. They've been building in this area since 1961 and are very familiar the

City codes. They have the means, methods and opportunity to incorporate the blacksmith shop into whatever they plan to build. They've proven it with the hotel.

Adaptive reuse is applauded in every community across the country. It's regularly written about, always attracts attention, conversation, clientele and endless accolades for the creative methods used while preserving history.

I respectfully request the Historic Preservation Commission uphold their unanimous decision to deny the demolition of 4 East State Street.

Thank you for your continuous work and attention to this irreplaceable piece of Geneva's industrial history.

Sincerely,

Karen Lando  
424 South Street  
Geneva, IL 60134

[karenlando@yahoo.com](mailto:karenlando@yahoo.com)

Blacksmith



susan lechtenberg  
To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Tue 12/16/2025 9:33 AM

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Why can't they tear it down and incorporate some of the bricks into the new development with a dedication wall or something like that

Sue  
Geneva resident on east side

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

# Save the Blacksmith Shop



Rick Loehrke  
To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Tue 12/16/2025 9:55 AM

You replied to this message on 12/16/2025 10:07 AM.

\*\*\*\*\*  
CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.  
\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Ms. Stood,

I am writing to express my vehement opposition to the demolition of the blacksmith shop. It's a blessing that such an important relic of our town's history is still standing and it would be a shame to lose it for the sake of erecting another generic, modern structure.

Please save the blacksmith shop!

---

Rick Loehrke

## Re: Support for Preservation of the 1840s Blacksmith Shop at 4 E. State Street



Allison Wall  
To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Tue 12/16/2025 10:24 AM

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Emily Snood,

I'm writing in support of preserving the historic blacksmith shop at 4 E. State Street, also known as the Mill Race Inn, and in opposition to its proposed demolition.

This limestone structure is more than just a "stone remnant." It represents a direct and irreplaceable connection to Geneva's early history—and once it's gone, that connection is gone for good.

I was recently reminded of why places like this matter when I visited the Durant-Peterson House in St. Charles during their 'Candlelight' event. Stepping inside that preserved home made it easy to imagine the people who lived and worked in the Fox Valley generations ago. It wasn't about the size or grandeur of the building, it was about the stories it held. The blacksmith shop offers that same opportunity in Geneva, telling the story of the everyday men and women whose work helped shape this community.

I respectfully disagree with the claim that keeping this building is "not in the best interest of the majority of the community." Preserving historic structures like this one is in the public interest. They give the downtown character and a sense of continuity, especially at a time when State Street is already busy and built out. Adding more dense housing by removing one of Geneva's most significant historic buildings feels like a loss that can't be undone.

The value of this building isn't just architectural, it's cultural. It reminds us that Geneva wasn't only shaped by grand homes or prominent figures, but by working people whose stories deserve to be remembered. Growth and progress don't have to mean erasing those stories.

Preservationists have shown that there are realistic ways to incorporate the former blacksmith shop into redevelopment plans at minimal cost to the property owner. Adaptive reuse is a common and successful approach in communities that care about both growth and history.

For these reasons, I do not believe this demolition request meets Criterion 10-6-10-B.4 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance. When there is strong historic significance, clear public value, and feasible alternatives to demolition, it's difficult to argue that preservation is not in the community's best interest.

I urge the City to deny this demolition request and instead support a plan that allows the blacksmith shop to remain part of Geneva's future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Allison Wall

# Blacksmith shop in Geneva



P Balaja  
To: Stood, Emily

[Reply](#) [Reply All](#) [Forward](#) [...](#)

Tue 12/16/2025 10:43 AM

We removed extra line breaks from this message.

\*\*\*\*\*  
CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.  
\*\*\*\*\*

I am a firm believer that the blacksmith shop should be saved. This building is a major part of our communities history. Well, I understand the need for modernization, I do not believe in eliminating history. These buildings should be saved! I feel that this building could easily be incorporated into a new building attachment. I pleaded with everyone to not let history be erased thank you for all consideration.Pamela Balaja Sent from my iPhone

# Blacksmith shop

 marie.jones ·  
To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↩ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Tue 12/16/2025 10:46 AM

 You replied to this message on 12/16/2025 11:00 AM.

[Action Items](#) + Get more add-ins

**CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.**

Please, please, we need to preserve the history of the blacksmith shop by keeping it!  
It can be incorporated into the developers plan somehow to please all.  
Marie Jones-stenger  
Docent and member of preservation partners

[Sent from AT&T Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

## Geneva Blacksmith Shop Proposed Demolition



To: Stood, Emily



Tue 12/16/2025 11:18 AM

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Hi.

I have been interested and have been involved in some building preservation efforts in the Geneva and St. Charles and Fox River area in the past few years. I just wanted to share that I am definitely opposed to the demolition of the Blacksmith Shop. It is an important part of the very early local history. Once it's gone, it can't be brought back.

I am hopeful a solution can be found that will preserve the shop. If it were to be demolished, that connection to the area's early history would disappear. Thank you for your time.

-Mark Peterson

## Save the Blacksmith shop



Joe Stephano  
To: Stood, Emily



Tue 12/16/2025 12:03 PM

\*\*\*\*\*

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

Save the Blacksmith shop. I go by there daily and appreciate its rustic essence. Shodeen is intentionally not maintaining it so it will crumble. Millrace Inn was able to incorporate it into their building. Why can't Shodeen?

Sent from my iPhone

Joe Stephano

## Demolition of the "Blacksmith " structure at 4 E Main in Geneva.



To: Stood, Emily

[↩ Reply](#) [↶ Reply All](#) [→ Forward](#) [⋮](#)

Tue 12/16/2025 11:37 AM

\*\*\*\*\*

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

Emily Stood,

Barbmy wife, and I could not agree more with the decision to take down the structure as a first step in moving ahead with redevelopment.

It seems that the primary argument for keeping the structure is that it is old. There certainly are higher and better usages of limited finances than preserving a useless, undistinguished, and unattractive old building.

I know first hand that being old doesn't make something special.

Let's promote through actions, an image and reputation of a town that makes wise use of resources.

Approve the demolition of 4 E Main Street, the "Blacksmith " structure asap.

Warmly,

Barb and Bob Telfer

Please move forward

 Reply  Reply All  Forward 

Tue 12/16/2025 12:14 PM



Jeannie Tisbo

To: Stood, Emily

 We removed extra line breaks from this message.

\*\*\*\*\*

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

I have lived in Geneva for 2 years in a renovated home built in the 1870's. We love this town.

Please allow the eye sore, that no longer resembles anything, to be replaced with an educational marker. It could tell the story of Black Smithing before modern farriers started to drive around and work from their trucks.

There are many markers on the Fox River Trails. They are a wonderful reminder of the culture and activities of days gone by.

Please find a way to fix what has gone on for too long on the corner of Hwy 25 and Hwy 38. It should be cleaned up and the entrance to our town from east will again be something of historical significance and beauty.

Sincerely,

Jeannie Tisbo

516 Peck Road

Sent from my iPhone

---



December 15, 2025

Historic Preservation Commission  
City of Geneva  
109 James Street, Geneva, IL 60134

*RE: CASE 2025-114: Demolition of a Historic Landmark at 4 E. State Street*

To the Distinguished Members of the Geneva Historic Preservation Commission,

For seven years, this community has wrestled with what to do with the 1840s blacksmith shop at 4 E. State Street in Geneva. One thing we are sure everyone can agree on, though, is that a resolution has been frustratingly elusive.

Preservation and reuse of this building is aligned with the purpose of Geneva's historic preservation ordinance, which is "to promote the educational, cultural, and economic welfare of the public of the city... [and] strengthen the economy of the city..."<sup>1</sup> Geneva's brand is built around this purpose of preserving history. Historic places have made Geneva a unique place to live, work, and visit.

Of course, not every building can or should be saved. The owner of the 1840s blacksmith shop argues that this is one of the buildings that should not be saved. They argue that the majority of the community wants the building demolished, which is one of the four criteria for which a building may be approved for demolition according to Geneva's historic preservation ordinance.

Many in the community are vocally in favor of demolition. Many are also vocally opposed to demolition. We agree with the applicant that the majority of the community wants 4 East State Street redeveloped.

---

<sup>1</sup> Geneva Municipal Code 10-6-1: Purpose, Chapter 6 – Historic Preservation,  
[https://library.municode.com/il/geneva/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TIT10BURE\\_CH6HIPR\\_10-6-1PU](https://library.municode.com/il/geneva/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT10BURE_CH6HIPR_10-6-1PU).

*Whether the majority of the community prefers the blacksmith shop to be a part of that redevelopment or not does not appear to be as clear.*

Our analysis of this demolition application, therefore, reviewed the possible negative consequences of demolition to the goal of redevelopment of the site, which appears to be the desire of the majority of the community. We reasoned that if demolition did not increase the likelihood of a redevelopment that the majority of the community would support, this demolition application would not likely be supported by a majority of the community.

The first negative consequence we considered was the viability of the site's redevelopment in a timely manner. We reasoned that a vacant lot for a decade, for example, would not accomplish the majority's interest in seeing the site redeveloped. Unfortunately, promised redevelopment is less realized than many might assume. According to a 2024 study of the historic districts in San Antonio, Texas, by [PlaceEconomics.com](https://www.placeeconomics.com), as one example, "Of all parcels with a primary structure demolition [between 2010 and 2023], **62.6% have either remained vacant or became a parking lot,**" (emphasis added).<sup>2</sup> A long-term vacant parcel in a prominent location would not necessarily be better for the community or advance the majority's interest in redevelopment any more than leaving the blacksmith shop standing at this time.

To determine the site's viability for redevelopment, answers to the following questions could be helpful:

- *What timeline can the public expect for a redevelopment proposal to be submitted to the City?*
- *What has the owner learned from federal and state agencies about the challenges that could impact a redevelopment of this parcel since it is largely within the 100-year and 500-year flood plains (see Appendix A)?*
- *What are the other challenges, such as federal and state permits, financial assistance from the City, etc, that may need to be addressed for a redevelopment proposal to move forward?*

The second negative consequence we considered was the impact on the community caused by the structures that will NOT be demolished with this demolition application. According to the demolition application, the non-historic concrete foundation of the former Mill Race Inn restaurant, which is directly west of the blacksmith shop and frequently filled with stagnant water, and the wooden pavilion near the river south of the blacksmith shop, are not

---

<sup>2</sup> PlaceEconomics, "Diversity, Demolition, and Housing in San Antonio's Historic Districts," July 2024, 12, [https://www.placeeconomics.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/San-Antonio-Diversity-and-Demolitions\\_edited\\_AUGUST6.pdf](https://www.placeeconomics.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/San-Antonio-Diversity-and-Demolitions_edited_AUGUST6.pdf).

included in this demolition application. If the blacksmith shop “stands in the way of [redevelopment] Goals,” to quote the applicant, then it would seem that other deteriorating structures would likewise “stand in the way of [redevelopment] Goals...”<sup>3</sup> A prominent parcel in the city would not necessarily be better off or closer to redevelopment with the blacksmith shop demolished, while other deteriorating structures remain.

An answer to whether or not the non-historic concrete foundation and wood pavilion would be demolished and, if so, when the public can expect that to occur could be helpful.

The final negative consequence we considered was the over \$300,000 in building code violation fines owed to the City by the owner. Enforcement of a city’s building code is often an effective tool for motivating the maintenance of any structure within city limits. The recent rehabilitation of the 1904 Heinz Cut Glass Factory in St. Charles is an example of using building code enforcement to transform an eyesore into a reused, rehabilitated historic structure. In this case, judicial review affirmed that the City acted appropriately in denying demolition and in levying fines to compel a property owner to comply with its building code. If the owner pays the full fine, the expense could stall their redevelopment of the property and therefore the majority’s goal of redevelopment. If the owner does not pay any fine, building code enforcement could be undermined, which would make it more difficult for the City to fulfill the majority’s goals for historic preservation.

An explanation of how the property owner plans to address the fines they owe to the City if the demolition is approved could be helpful.

If the HPC were to deny this demolition application, there is an opportunity for the former blacksmith shop to be part of a larger redevelopment at a minimal cost to the property owner. Collaboration between the public and the owner, with that goal in mind, would likely accomplish something the community could be proud of that honors the legacy of Geneva’s industrial past and stimulates Geneva’s future.

Sincerely,



Al Watts  
Community Engagement Director  
Preservation Partners of the Fox Valley

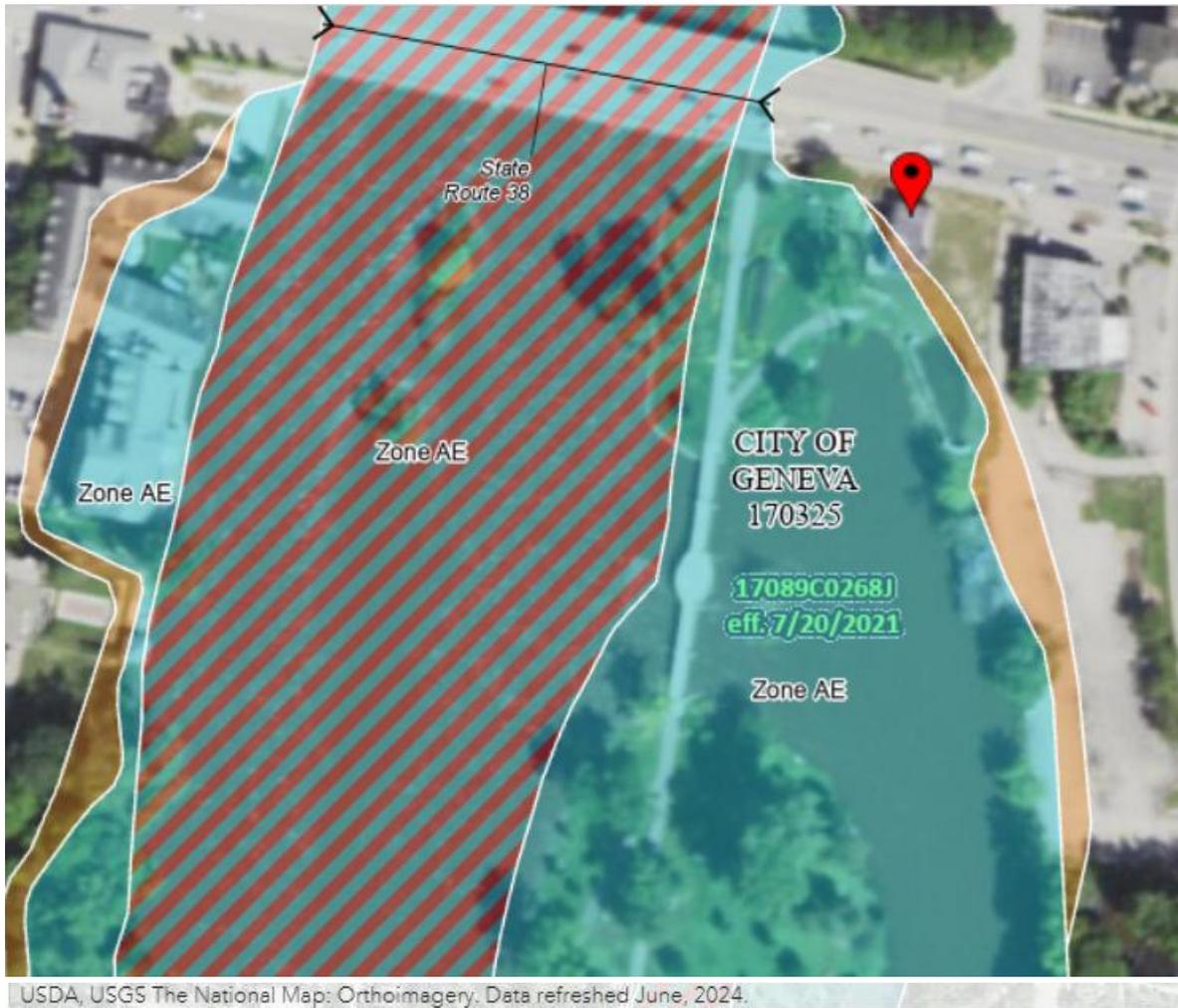
---

<sup>3</sup> David A. Patzelt to Emily Stood, Applicant Letter, “4 East State Street Stone Remnant Structure (Blacksmith Shop) Demolition Permit Application,” December 5, 2025, 7, <https://www.geneva.il.us/DocumentCenter/View/16662/Applicant-Letter---12525pdf>.

*The mission of Preservation Partners of the Fox Valley is to offer heritage education to promote the appreciation and preservation of the Fox Valley’s rich architectural and historical resources.*

P.O. Box 903 • St. Charles, Illinois 60174 • (630) 377-6424 • [ppfv.org](http://ppfv.org)

Appendix A: Flood Map of 4 E. State Street, Geneva, IL<sup>4</sup>



USDA, USGS The National Map: Orthoimagery. Data refreshed June, 2024.



<sup>4</sup> “FEMA Flood Map Service Center,” Federal Emergency Management Agency, accessed December 15, 2025, <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>.

*The mission of Preservation Partners of the Fox Valley is to offer heritage education to promote the appreciation and preservation of the Fox Valley’s rich architectural and historical resources.*

P.O. Box 903 • St. Charles, Illinois 60174 • (630) 377-6424 • [ppfv.org](http://ppfv.org)

# Support to Demolish the Blacksmith building



Nancy Hayhurst

To: Stood, Emily



Tue 12/16/2025 1:04 PM

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Emily Stood,

I am contacting you to voice my firm support for granting the demolition permit for the landmarked limestone structure [at 4 E. State Street, known as](#) the blacksmith shop.

For years now, this vacant and deteriorating spot has been a real blight on our city—a stark contrast to the attractive, lively entrance to Geneva that we all want and expect in such a prime riverfront location.

It's time to make our entrance to Geneva a beautiful one.

Thank you

Nancy Hayhurst

Sent from my iPhone

## Stop Blacksmith Shop Demolition



Linda Gruber  
To: Stood, Emily  
Cc: Ice, Linda Gruber

[Reply](#) [Reply All](#) [Forward](#) [More](#)

Tue 12/16/2025 1:12 PM

\*\*\*\*\*

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the City of Geneva. Exercise caution when opening attachments or on clicking links from unknown senders.

\*\*\*\*\*

Ms. Stood:

While we might reside halfway across the country from Geneva, IL, our hearts are still with your charming and historically significant City history and architecture.

Having being involved in preservation issues in different locales from Galena, IL to DeKalb, IL to Chicago, IL to Phoenix, AZ—all spots in which we have lived over the years—, we have seen firsthand that preserving what is reflective of history is not just a tourist-attracting feature but a feature that speaks to the longstanding integrity of the area and those entrusted with upholding it.

Please stop the demolition of the Blacksmith Shop and retain what is special about Geneva. Please do not commercialize its future by denying its past.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Drs. Linda and Frank Gruber  
Phoenix, AZ