

NABA requested to review proposal for acquisition of Samuel Hannaford designed property: December 2020

Description

default watermark

â?•**NABA (the North Avondale Business Association) has been asked to review a proposal made by Rosemaryâ??s Babies for acquisition of the Samuel Hannaford designed property at the corner of Lenox and Reading Road.** This structure is the only existing architectural example of the Colonial Revival style designed by Hannaford and is uniquely significant in that regard.

While no one can question Rosemaryâ??s mission, the worthiness of her cause or challenge her past accomplishments, she is undoubtedly a person of significant good will, but approval by this organization will not be made on the validity of her cause but only on the appropriate use of the property as it relates to previous neighborhood consensus, and the likelihood of her success based on the structure of her proposal and financial capability to meet the expressed requirements of the community and the property restoration. In short, does this use satisfy the desire of the community as previous community engagement sessions revealed and does it make business sense for our district?

Many questions remain unanswered. NABA has determined that it is not the best use for the property for the following reasons:

1. It is not catalytic to the business district and its redevelopment.
2. It is questionable whether the proposed use by Rosemaryâ??s Babies meets the qualifications for the use of the Neighborhood Business District Improvement Funds that leveraged significant funds necessary for the completed stabilization that brought the property into code compliance.
3. The financial viability of her restoration budget is doubtful. Rosemary has allocated a mere $150,000 for restoration improvements. A tour of the property indicates a proper restoration of this huge property will be more in the neighborhood of at least $500,000, while others estimates range from $800,000 to $1,000,000. The structure needs everythingâ??HVAC, floors, drywall, insulation, windows, plumbing, kitchen(s), bathroom(s).
4. This rather significant underfunding raises another serious concern that statements regarding current participation of a professional architect may be hopeful and yet unresolved conjecture. Is the architect on retainer? Has the architect approved the budget and devised a plan?
5. Of utmost importance is the preservation of the historic significance through a proper restoration.

6. The reported number of residents keeps changing causing us to question the intended design for its use, growing from 2 to 10 and now 16. This can leave the door open to further mission creep.
7. What is the disposition of the property should Rosemaryâ??s Babies 501c.3 dissolve?

These are but a few of the many unanswered questions and concerns, but comprise the most significant broad strokes.

Michael Caporale, President NABA

â?•A Special Merit Award for the stabilization of the Rubel Property was awarded by The Cincinnati Preservation Association (CPA) to our partners:

- **The Port of Greater Cincinnati Development Authority & Structural Systems Repair Group (SSRG) Advantage Group Engineers.**





From the CPA:

â??Oscar T. Rubel commissioned architect Samuel Hannaford to design a Colonial Revival brick residence in North Avondale. The completed house remained in the Rubel family for more than forty years. The house was sold and sat vacant, slowly decaying. Suffering from masonry deterioration and

porch collapse, the house, Hannafordâ??s only known example of the style, was at risk of demolition. North Avondale leaders saw the houseâ??s potential, and the City and the Port intervened with emergency repairs and stabilization. The work went above and beyond mere repair work.â?•

Congratulations to the Port, City of Cincinnati, NANA and NABA on the significant work to successfully stabilize this historically significant property and bring it into code compliance. Together the neighborhood secured a $30,000 Neighborhood Business District Improvement Grant, and partnered with the City and the Port, both contributing significant funds and extra care to maintain the historic integrity during the stabilization process. Due to its prime location in our designated business district, it could prove to be catalytic to its redevelopment. You can find a great articles here about the stabilization:

- https://www.wcpo.com/news/transportation-development/move-up-cincinnati/can-this-old-house-be-great-again-landbank-stabilizes-historic-homes
- https://ssrg.com/our-work/the-rubel-house/?fbclid=IwAR3VxZHp_NmF9xWi2PAHB6keFCfM3fbsBDCJ2SoBlj_XjYNZwPnqYUuWC3E

default watermark

Note: Correction to articles in the links â?? the property was not used as a nursing home before the stabilization. It was owned by a single family for more than 25 years, and Bayview bank until the city declared it a public nuisance. Because of NANA/NABAâ??s investment, it is now stabilized and compliant with our cityâ??s municipal codes. It sits within the original Rose Hill plat nominated for historic designation.

Maura Wolf

Date Created
December 1, 2020
Author
northavondale