

Letter to Jason Heimdal, Chief of Police, Earlham

Date: October 6, 2021

Dear Chief Heimdal:

I have restored and renovated homes in Washington, D.C., two cities in Virginia, six cities in California, 20 homes in Winterset, Iowa, several homes in Stuart, Adel, Patterson and Lorimor. Everywhere I have worked during the past 55 years, I have been welcomed. I have received praise for many of my restorations and several have been placed on Historical Preservation lists.

I was surprised by your first letter concerning 235 SE 2nd. I knew that my restoration efforts had been considerably delayed by several factors, and while the garage had been deteriorating for the prior ten years, it certainly took a turn for the worse in the spell while my workers were off the job because of Covid.

Therefore, I had the garage torn down and contracted for all new wiring be installed in the house, which job was completed and inspected by the State of Iowa and approved, after 18 months of work and rework. I doubt if 50% of the homes in Earlham could pass such an inspection. All receptacles need to be grounded, for instance.

Then, I contracted for a new roof to be installed and hired the home to be resided and repainted. The gas and water to the home are turned off while we work on it. I was feeling pretty good about my construction site when I received your second letter. It seems to me there is something going on I do not understand. How could this home under renovation be dangerous to anyone? Its electricity is superior to most if not all older homes in Earlham. The water and gas cannot be dangerous as they are not connected at present. The next step for the renovation

is to gut the kitchen and redo it, keeping the existing plumbing and electricity in place.

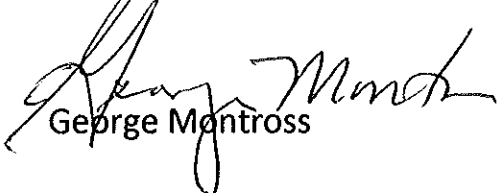
However, your second letter leaves me wondering what is really going on. (When I tried to sell the home to a man from Des Moines, he told me he talked to someone in the Earlham city government who told him 235 was to be condemned.) Therefore, I have hired the law firm of Jordan, Oliver, Walters and Smith in Winterset to advise me. I don't want to invest further in this effort if my success is questionable.

I considered that the home had sat vacant, used as storage, for many years before I got involved. Apparently, the home was not dangerous when no one worked on it. I also enclose a photo of another property across the alley from 235. Is it not dangerous?

The Montross family is not an unknown entity in Earlham. I have personally worked in the Montross Pharmacy. I have purchased many items for the 235 restorations from your Earlham BC hardware store.

I await wordP from my attorney as whether to proceed or not. You or the mayor may write him directly: Attorney Mark Smith, Farmers and Merchants State Bank Building, First and Jefferson, Winterset, Iowa 50273.

Sincerely,



George Montross

CC: Mayor Lillie