

Written by Barb Braun  
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ROCK ISLAND – The board of the Broadway Historic District Association has voted unanimously to recommend the Rock Island City Council stabilize old Lincoln School at 22nd Street and 7th Avenue. The board made the decision at its meeting June 16, 2011, based on results from a recent email survey sent to Broadway residents and property owners, as well as surrounding neighborhoods. The 118-year-old school is located within the boundaries of the Broadway Historic District, a residential area comprised of late 19th and early 20th century homes.

Of the 100 survey respondents, 83.5 percent are in favor of the city council spending \$221,000 to repair the building's roof and structural elements, and install basic electric service and ventilations. About 16 percent said they would prefer the school to be demolished. An architect firm's study estimated it would cost \$200,000 to \$300,000 to demolish the building. The Broadway board was dismayed to learn last Monday the city council was leaning toward demolishing the school without a plan to enhance the property.

“Demolishing a structure of great significance to the neighborhood and the city without a purpose in mind reflects a lack of vision,” says Deb Kuntzi, president of the Broadway Historic District Board. “The support from the neighborhood and other Rock Island residents for saving this school is tremendous, and so is its potential for reuse. We urge the city council not to make a hasty decision without further thought and exploration.”