

HISTORIC HOUSE MUSEUM CORPORATION
Post Office Box 1 Atlanta Georgia 30301

March 4 1967

Honorable Ivan Allen Jr
Mayor, City Hall
Atlanta Ga

Dear Mayor Allen:

Thank you for your kind inquiry of January 24 regarding the property at 327 St Paul Avenue S E. This is the L P. Grant home. At the time it was built about 1850 it was near the center of 3,000 acres owned by Colonel Grant. This was approximately the same area which you propose to renew.

We apologize for delaying reply, but we had hoped to have a personal interview. Since this has not been convenient, we send this letter so that you can move ahead with any plans you have in connection with the renewal project.

When the historians told you that this is an important house in Atlanta's history they may not have told you the most important event in the history of this landmark. This event was Margaret Mitchell and her book "Gone with the Wind".

The full story of Margaret Mitchell's association with this house probably will not be told until I publish my "Forbidden Biography of Margaret Mitchell" which cannot be published in the lifetime of Stephens Mitchell, the writer's brother. The true story depicts her brother and her husband as rascals. They conspired with others and seized control of her fortune. She was frustrated in her own plans to restore the Grant House and make it a public museum. If she had completed her plans Atlanta would have received a cherished memento of the author provided by the writer herself, a true memorial.

Oakland Cemetery, the site of Fulton Bag, and of course Grant Park were once part of the land attached to the present house. The house is of brick and fieldstone, and structurally sound despite its appearance.

Margaret Mitchell and I purchased the property 27 years ago to prevent it being converted into tenements. Our original restoration plans included purchase of 14 frame dwellings in the same block, razing them and using the entire block for gardens and parking area. The 14 houses are on small lots and probably could be bought for an average of \$5,000 each.

We placed title in Historic House Museum Corporation which under its charter and under Georgia law is taxfree. Assistant City Attorney Charles Murphy, however, very stubbornly required us to pay taxes until we recently went into court and put the Tax Commissioner under a restraining order. This attitude on the part of the City had prejudiced us against any negotiations with the city, but we will not hold this against you. We are delighted to learn that at least someone in the city has interest in preserving a landmark. We had thought the only interest the City had was in the possible tax revenue.

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Our prejudice against the City also stems from Mayor Hartsfield's administration. Mr Hartsfield wanted to operate a Grant House museum in connection with Grant Park Cycloorama. A big oak in front of the Grant House shows on the distant horizon in the painting. However, Mr Hartsfield disrupted negotiations when he hinted that he would take the property by condemnation.

We do not wish to show the interior of the house until we can remove our 10,000-volume library and other belongings. We need 12 months for moving, but we will start immediately.

We recently refused an offer of \$40,000 because the buyers intended to convert the house into apartments. We always have held the property for restoration and preservation. We have refused to rent it for fear tenants would damage it. The house occupies a lot 100 by 240 feet, extending through the block from St Paul to Orleans Street. The lot is about one third of the block in area.

If you care to buy the property sight unseen and within the next 60 days we would be willing to:

1. Accept \$40,000.
2. Throw in suitable antique furniture which we value at \$20,000.
3. Drop our claim for \$1,600 back taxes and dismiss the present litigation.

In our efforts to preserve the house we have passed up \$75,000 in possible rents.

Any funds which we derive from sale of the property would be used for restoration and preservation of other landmarks.

If you wish to go into other details, please write and we will call for appointment. We do not have a telephone.

With cordial good wishes

HISTORIC HOUSE MUSEUM CORPORATION

Boyd Eugene Taylor
Boyd Eugene Taylor Trustee