US Modernist

Monday, July 13, 2026

Welcome, Modernist architecture fans, to the USModernist newsletter, sharing Modernist news and events since 2008. USModernist is an award-winning nonprofit 501C3 educational archive for the documentation, preservation, and promotion of Modernist architecture.

Modernist House Archives: 30,000+ Houses	Architecture Media Library: 5.5M+ Pages	USModernist Radio Podcast: 470 Shows

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Editor: **Ron Gallagher** Newsletter Staff: **Virginia Faust, George Smart**
Got Modernist News? Contact **Ron Gallagher** at rpg.modernist@gmail.com

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Meet the USModernist Team

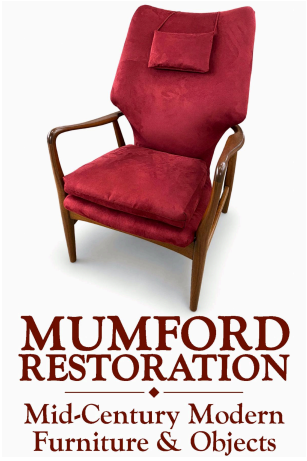
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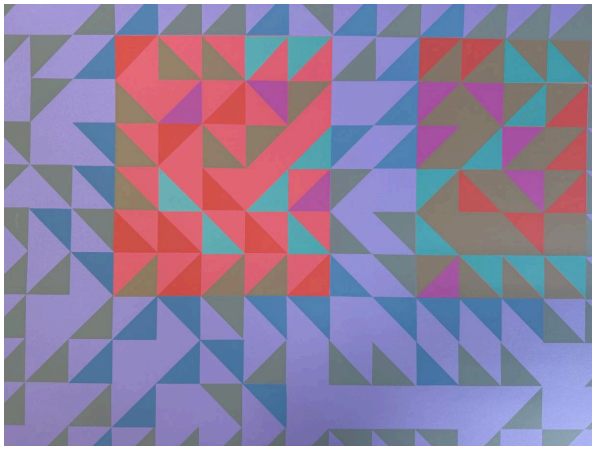
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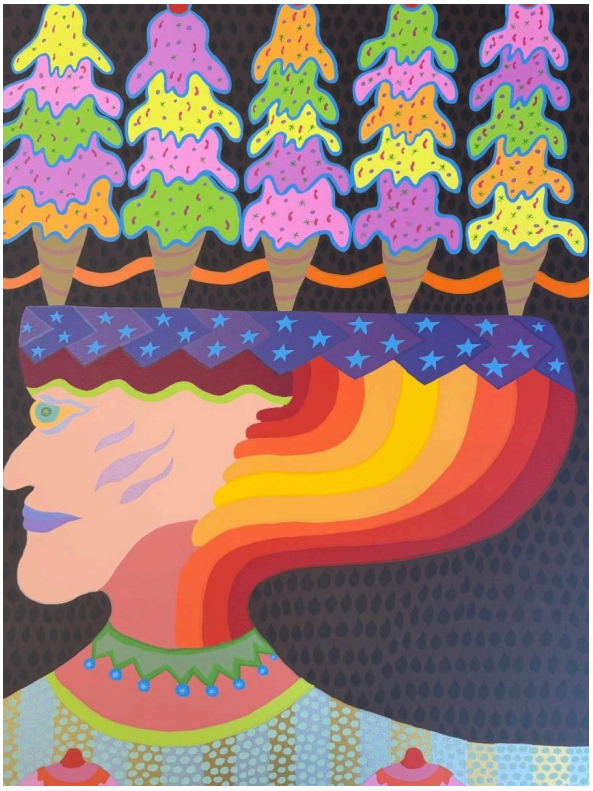
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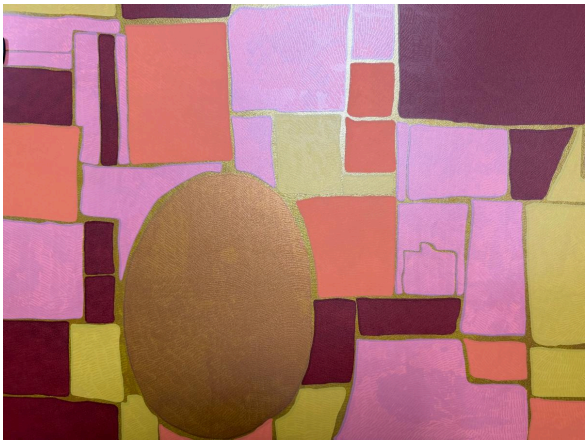
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Featured Upcoming Events









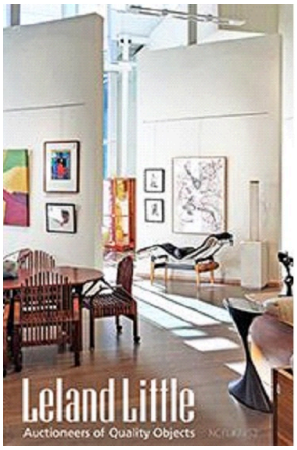




This Saturday, July 18, 10am-Noon: NCModernist's Midcentury Michigan Art Sale, 5409 Pelham Road, Durham NC, offering 250+ original prints, watercolors, paintings, and other media by talented 1970s and 1980s artists at the Cranbrook Academy of Art and University of Michigan. ***All works $29***

unsigned, $59 signed. Free admission, registration required. Enter MICHIGAN on the form. Details.

Wednesday, July 22, 6-8pm: NCModernist Thirst4Architecture Happy Hour and the 2026 George Matsumoto Prize Awards at Leland Little Auctions, 620 Cornerstone Court, Hillsborough NC. Preview hundreds of wonderful Modernist items going on auction the next day. Free, registration required. Capacity is limited to 300. Enter MATSUMOTO on the form. Sponsored by:



Thursday, August 20, 5-7pm: NCModernist Thirst4Architecture Happy Hour at the new Building Product Showroom of Fitch Lumber and Hardware, 3010 Stony Brook Drive, Suite 105, Raleigh NC. Free, registration required. Enter FITCH on the form.

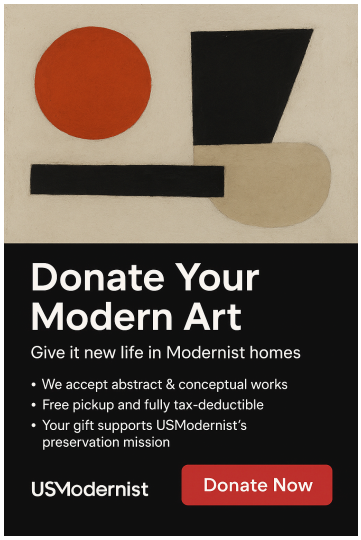


Thursday, August 27, 6-8pm: NCModernist's George Smart shares the story of incredible Modernist architecture in North Carolina in the entertaining and informative talk *Mayberry Modernism*. NC Masonic Grand Lodge, 2921 Glenwood Avenue, Raleigh NC. Includes refreshments and light bites. Details and tickets. Proceeds benefit the Grand Lodge building fund.



NEW: Friday-Saturday, October 9-10, 9am to 3pm: Harkrader House Tour and Celebration Party, Durham NC, sponsored by Preservation Durham and NCModernist. From 1972-2000, **Richard and Lonna Harkrader** founded, owned and operated New Morning Construction and New Morning Realty, two businesses that built numerous passive solar, energy efficient homes and apartments with a unique architectural style in and around the Morehead Hill neighborhood of Durham. Details and tickets.

Support USModernist's Mission and National Impact



So many ways to be part of the intrepid USModernist community!

Sponsor this newsletter or the USModernist Radio podcast. Join the Mod Squad. Make a tax-deductible donation. Donate your midcentury furniture or modern art.

Donate your old architecture and design magazines to the USModernist Library, the largest open digital archive for these in the world. We scan and give them new text-searchable, online life – with free user access. We even pay for shipping.

Can't sleep? Volunteer to do online research, work events, or assist with fundraising. Travel with us. Come to a free Thirst4Architecture Happy Hour (see schedule above).

Contact **Caroline Francis,** USModernist's Chief Development Officer, at **caroline@usmodernist.org.**

NCMODERNIST MOVIE SERIES

Design firms: Every month September to May, the NCModernist Architecture Movie Series gathers a dedicated community of local design enthusiasts, builders, and potential clients at the historic Rialto Theatre to watch visually captivating documentaries celebrating Modernist design. Check out this year's exciting lineup of films!

As a sponsor, your firm gets the undivided attention of a highly targeted audience passionate about exceptional residential architecture. Connect directly with design-savvy potential clients and champion Modernist preservation. Sponsor one film or the entire series! Every sponsor gets 10 tickets to their sponsored movie. Series sponsors get 10 for each film. Contact George Smart, george@usmodernist.org, or 919 740 8407.





USModernist Benefit Auction:
Experience The "Mad Men" House in La Jolla CA

Floating above the California coast, where 1960s soul meets modern luxury, you can stay in the carefully restored 1967 post and beam masterpiece designed by **Weber & Edwards,** featured on the *La Jolla Modernism Tour* in the prestigious Muirlands neighborhood. With panoramic ocean and canyon vistas framed by floor-to-ceiling glass walls, there is 2890sf of seamless indoor-outdoor living and mid-century sophistication. The 3 bedrooms and 2.5 baths are perfectly tailored for architecture fans.

Owners **Joan and Gary Gand** spent summers in the house next door at the Liebner/Ivans House, which they landmarked and protected. When this house went up for sale they outbid everyone and spent the next six months restoring it. Toured as part of the 2026 AIA national convention, the house is furnished with MCM furniture, including a super cool vintage hi-fi system.

The Gands have donated a two-night stay to USModernist, and you can bid on this priceless experience! Bidding ends in just 9 days. You have a year to schedule the booking.

Endangered Modernist Houses



Know an endangered Modernist house? Through our preservation alert program, **Modernism In Danger,** USModernist calls attention to the Modernist buildings around the country at risk for deterioration, demolition, lowball auction, or inappropriate renovation (like turning your Modernist house into an Italianate villa). Tell us.

Endangered: From a town known as Oyster Bay, Long Island, NY made famous in song by **Billy Joel**, there's is a rare, long-neglected Burke House at 144 Center Island Road for sale on 17 acres for $6.75M. **Benjamin Thompson** of TAC was the project architect. TAC leader **Walter Gropius** was friends with the Burkes.

Endangered: Frank Lloyd Wright's Sturges House in Los Angeles was built in 1939. Located at 449 North Skyewiay Road, the house is long-abandoned and in significantly deteriorating condition, with the cantilevered balcony falling down. The Los Angeles Conservancy has named the Sturges House the first advocacy priority on its 2026 L.A. Watch List. If you are concerned about this Frank Lloyd Wright house, contact LA City Council Member **Traci Park** at traci.park@lacity.org and urge the council to step in now.

News



Pfizer's former headquarters, the Emery Roth-designed 1961 office tower at 235 East 42nd Street, showed signs of collapse last week, triggering evacuations and street closures. Why? Developers expanded and widened 15 upper floors to add approximately 18,000 square feet of real estate. Two critical structural steel columns buckled under the immense weight of the new addition. The specific columns that failed were either completely unreinforced or insufficiently reinforced to handle the massive new load resting above them. Floors between the 21st and 26th stories sagged by up to 4 inches, triggering widespread building evacuations and immediate street closures.





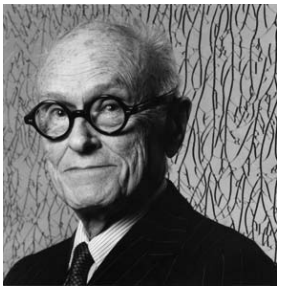
The Prix Versailles - often called the Oscars of architecture - recognizes some of the world's most impressive public buildings. And since 2020, that has included airport terminals. This year's awardees included Pittsburgh's new $1.7 billion terminal, designed by Gensler and HDR in association with luis vidal + architects. Plus San Diego's new Terminal 1, designed by Gensler, replaces the decades-old building at America's busiest single-runway airport Of course, even the most beautiful airports can't make a $24 chicken salad sandwich seem like a good deal but that's not a problem architects can solve.



The National Park Service has determined the 53,500sf Herald Mail Building in Hagerstown MD designed by William Pereira qualifies to be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. The owner objects to the nomination, which blocks actual listing, so the decision provides no protection against demolition, and the drama continues. Hat tip to **Tom Vitanza.**



A desk, aka Icehenge, designed by Frank Gehry goes to auction this week. 7 tons, 16 pieces.



It was architect **Philip Johnson's** 120th birthday last week, and Parametric shared ten of his key projects.



From the LA Times: 12 years to build a new Modernist house on a hillside...but they perservered!

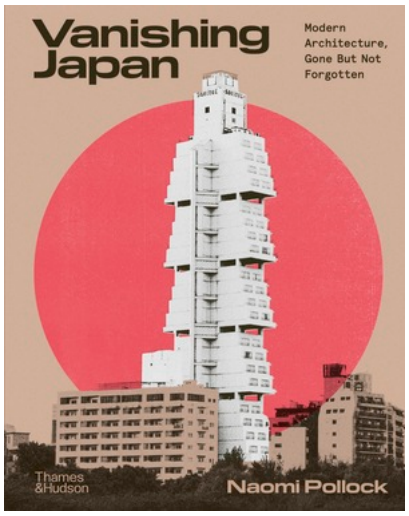


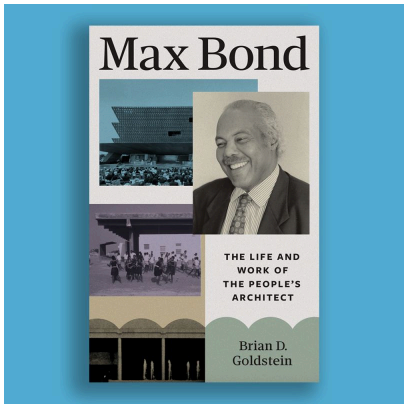
Movie of the Week: architect Edward Durell Stone
on the old TV show, What's My Line.



Available now: *Alan Dunn: The Cartoonist as Architectural Critic*, by Gabriele Neri. The first in-depth study of American artist Alan Dunn (1900–1974), whose incisive cartoons mocked twentieth-century architecture, expanding the field of architectural criticism. Featuring 200 carefully selected images, including Dunn's correspondence, preliminary sketches, unpublished cartoons, watercolors, and rare photographs, this book demonstrates the critical potential of caricature and cartoons for architectural history. It also reveals the complex intersections of architecture with media, publishing, commerce, society, art, and politics. The toon above is a real house, the Myron and June Goldfinger house in Waccabuc NY, designed by the owners. It will be on the market later this year.

Available September 1: *Vanishing Japan: Modern Architecture Gone But Not Forgotten*, by Naomi Pollack. As in America, not every mid-century modern building in Japan can saved. Yet a swathe of these works warrant international attention. Vanishing Japan is the first book to shine a light on these gems, becoming an important record of buildings that have already been lost and making their memory available to a wide, global audience. The book focuses on some ninety buildings demolished since 2000, featuring beloved theaters, shopping centers, and offices built between the 1950s and the '90s as well. Pre-order.





Available September 15: *Max Bond: The Life and Work of the People's Architect*, by Brian Goldstein. Bond was a civil rights activist, educator, and architect who shaped such iconic structures as the King Center for Nonviolent Social Change in Atlanta, the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington DC, and the 9/11 Memorial & Museum in Manhattan. Driven by the concerns of the civil rights movement, he insisted on a practice centered on social engagement when his profession became preoccupied with celebrity and spectacle. Harvard educated and son of an eminent family, Bond designed housing, cultural institutions, community centers, and campuses amid an era of sweeping changes in architecture, urbanism, and American culture. Pre-order.

Modernist Houses For Sale



An icon of Modernism, architect Edward Durell Stone designed the 1959 Celanese House in New Canaan CT. Meticulously restored, the beautiful 5,000sf house on 2 full acres is back on the market, reduced to $4M.



The Benson House, an early Frank Gehry design in Calabasas CA, is up for sale at $1.745M.



The 1951 Abraam Steinberg House in Pittsburgh PA is a masterful example of organic architecture designed by **Peter Berndtson** and **Cornelia Brierly**—both former apprentices of Frank Lloyd Wright who worked on Fallingwater. For sale at $1.2M. Hat tip to **Frank King.**



The 1954 O'Connell House in San Rafael CA, designed by **Charles Callister**, is for sale at $4M.



The Kelton House in Los Angeles, designed by Paul Williams, is for sale at $18M.

Upcoming Events



July 25: Thoroughly Modern Montgomery Walking Tour, San Francisco, CA, sponsored by Docomomo Northern California. Details and tickets.

August 22: How Downtown Became Modern – The Work of Hertzka & Knowles Walking Tour, San Francisco, CA, sponsored by Docomomo Northern California. Details and tickets.

Through September 30: Modernism: Born in California. An Exhibition of the works of Ernest and Esther Born. UC Berkeley Environmental Design Archives. Details and Hours.

Through September 2, AIA Center for Architecture, New York: Dutch photographer Arjan Bronkhorst published 15 lesser-known houses by renowned architect Gerrit Rietveld). Curated by **Arjan Bronkhorst** and **Barry Bergdoll**. Details.

September 13-15: AIA regional design conference, ASPIRE. Asheville NC. Open to architects and non-architects. *Save $50 with code **ASPMODERNIST26**.*

October 1: AIA Center for Architecture, New York. *Humanist Modernity* showcases the work of Stanisława (Siasia) Sandecka-Nowicka and Maciej (Matthew) Nowicki, two significant figures in American and Polish architecture. While Nowicki died tragically at age 40 when his plane crashed,

Sandecka-Nowicka went on to become the first woman in the US to be appointed as a full professor of architecture in 1963. Through March 2027.

October 3: La Jolla Modernism Home Tour, La Jolla CA. Details.

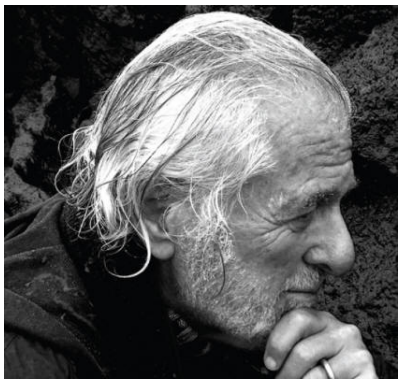
October 15-18: Modernism Week Preview Weekend, Palm Springs CA. Details.

Wednesday, October 21, 6-8pm: NCModernist Thirst4Architecture Happy Hour at Raleigh Architecture at their new office in Raleigh NC. Free, registration required. Enter RACO on the form.

Thursday, November 19, 6-8pm: NCModernist Thirst4Architecture Happy Hour at PELLA Windows Showroom, 3252 South Miami Blvd, Suite 107, Durham NC. Free, registration required. Enter PELLA on the form.

USMODERNIST RADIO
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Latest Podcast





#465/Understanding Richard Saul Wurman + Fighting the White House Teardown with Kim Hoagland + Musical Guest Quinn Lemley

Architect and author **Richard Saul Wurman** wrote more than 90 books, founded TED talks, among other innovations, and pretty much created the field of information architecture. Architectural historian **Kim Hoagland** sued Trump over the demolition of the White House East Wing, and musical guest, the lovely **Quinn Lemley**, brings Hollywood glamour back to life.

USModernist Radio is underwritten by The Brent R. Harris Charitable Trust, restorer of Richard Neutra's Kaufmann Desert House in Palm Springs and six other houses in California; by the E. Fay Jones Conservancy, preserving the legacy of Modernist architecture in Northwest Arkansas. Visit

efayjonesconservancy.org; and by Diane Bald and The Budman Family, restoring significant architecture in Toronto, Los Angeles, Malibu and Palm Springs.

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NCMODERNIST



Don Statham died June 15 in Nebraska at age 92. From 1956 to 1960 he attended the NCSU School of Design and always had a design business, even as a student.

Statham told of being in an early studio with a French design professor. Statham presented his project using metal trusses - which the professor had not yet covered in class. The professor asked, "Mr. Statham, why did you use these materials?" Statham produced a sketch and said "the architect of this shopping center (on Hillsborough Street) used them very successfully." The professor said, "What makes you think you're as qualified as the architect of this shopping center?" Whereupon Statham replied, "I am the architect of this shopping center."

See his Raleigh houses here. Services have not been announced.



Sold: After many years of on the market, off the market, maybe on the market, the Milton Small-designed Lewis house at 2700 Manning, Raleigh, has finally been sold. Uniquely built over a stream on what was the original Lewis Farm property, it made the cover of a few magazines at the time,

including Better Homes and Gardens, March 1957. The buyer is Manning LLC. No word yet on their intentions for the property.





Destroyed: 3401 Ocotea, Raleigh NC. Architect unknown. Anyone know the house's history?

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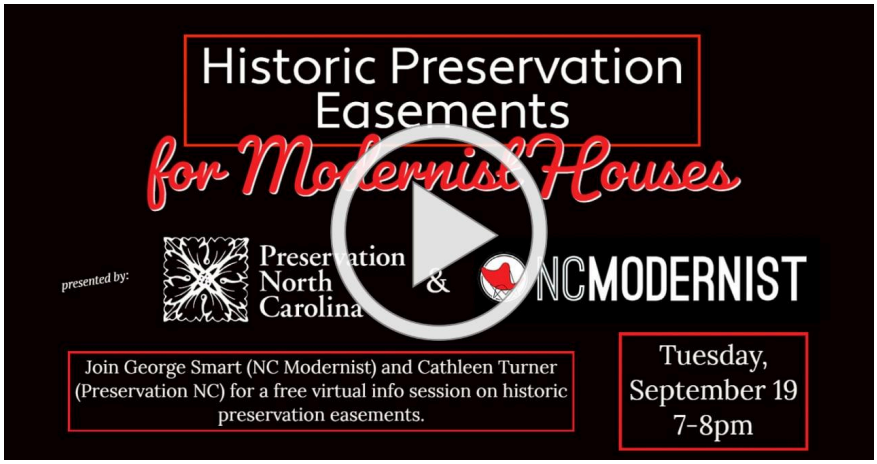
From Preservation NC: North Carolina's recent Senate Bill 876 abolishes Southport's Historic Preservation Commission and bars new or expanded historic districts, silencing the seaside town's preservation authority. Southport's beautifully preserved architecture defines its character, draws residents and vacationers, and made it a premier film destination. A proposed Historic Appearance Commission may replace it - but that lacks any real authority.

FOR SALE

Vacancy, not development, is the enemy of mid-century Modernist houses. Preserve and protect the architecture you love by notifying us when North Carolina houses go vacant or on the market.

Check out the NCModernist For Sale/Rent Database. Real estate agents and owners can list their NC Modernist houses for sale or rent for free. Submissions are subject to approval: single-family Modernist houses only, they can be old or new, the architect or designer can be from anywhere, but the house must be in North Carolina. Exclusively sponsored by:

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The **preservation easement** is one of the only legally enforceable ways to assure a Modernist house does not get destroyed by future owners. National Register status? Meaningless. Famous architect? Nope. Local historic designation? At best, a delay in demolition. And as history shows, there are plenty of smiling buyers who say, "I would never tear this down." Then after closing, it's gone.

The preservation easement is basically a homeowner's association for one house. The easement requires future owners to maintain the house in current structural condition and state of repair, or better, including necessary work to preserve its integrity. Here's a video featuring Preservation North Carolina and NCModernist, along with **Jane Levy**, who has an easement on her Greensboro Modernist home. Here's a sample preservation easement document.

There is another way, the deed restriction, or "preservation easement lite." When a once-cherished residence falls into the hands of new owners, there is always the risk that it will be destroyed, despite smiling promises to the contrary from those owners. One powerful legal tool families can use to guard against demolition is a **deed restriction**. Knowing that potential buyers can and do lie about destroying houses, a deed restriction is a legally enforceable binding promise attached to the property title. The restriction is usually ten years, and it becomes part of the chain of title. Implementing a deed restriction before putting a house on the market immediately scares off developers (or developers-in-hiding) in an owner-value-friendly way to protect a property. We're not attorneys, but here's a sample to get you started:

(Insert Owner, Site Address, Legal Description)

This restriction is made a covenant running with the land and shall be binding upon the Grantee, their heirs, successors, and assigns. For a period of ten (10) years from the date of conveyance recorded herein, the Grantee shall not demolish, raze, or cause the removal of the residential Structure located on the property described in this deed, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the Grantor or Grantor's designee. For purposes of this restriction, "demolition" includes any intentional act that renders the

Structure uninhabitable or results in the removal of more than 10% of the Structure's exterior walls, roof, or load-bearing elements. This restriction does not prohibit good-faith renovation, repair, or rehabilitation of the Structure, provided such work does not constitute demolition as defined herein. Any violation of this restriction shall entitle the Grantor or their successor to seek injunctive relief, specific performance, and/or damages in a court of competent jurisdiction. This restriction shall be recorded in the land records of the applicable county and shall constitute notice to all subsequent purchasers. Upon expiration of the ten-year period, this restriction shall automatically terminate and be of no further force or effect.

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