

Hiawatha resident seeks to save former church from demolition

(KNZA)--A Hiawatha resident is seeking to save a former church from demolition.

Brenda Bolden appeared before the Hiawatha City Commission Monday evening to request that the former Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church located at the corner of 4th and Pottawatomie be preserved.

Bolden said not only is the church a part of black history, but also is a part of Hiawatha's history.

The building has been cited for violations of the city's minimum housing codes.

Bolden said she would be willing, along with the Historical Society, to help maintain the building.

The property is currently owned by a limited liability corporation, and Code Enforcement Officer Dave Wilson said it doesn't appear the owners have any plans to repair the structure.

Mayor Bill Collins said that because Bolden does not own the property, there is not a lot the city can do to help.

Wilson said he would provide Bolden with the owners contact information.