



Project Name & Address: 312 Wisconsin Avenue
Application Type(s): Certificate of Appropriateness for a demolition
Legistar File ID # [77929](#)
Prepared By: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner, Planning Division
Date Prepared: May 30, 2023

Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Steve Lawrence, Bethel Lutheran Church
Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of an accessory structure.

Background Information

Parcel Location/Information: The subject property is in the Mansion Hill Local Historic District.

Relevant Ordinance Sections:

41.18 STANDARDS FOR GRANTING A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

A certificate of appropriateness shall be granted only if the proposed project complies with this chapter, including all of the following standards that apply.

- (2) Demolition or Removal. In determining whether to approve a certificate of appropriateness for any demolition or removal of any landmark or structure within a historic district, the Landmarks Commission shall consider all of the following, and may give decisive weight to any or all of the following:
 - (a) Whether the structure is of such architectural or historic significance that its demolition or removal would be detrimental to the public interest and contrary to the general welfare of the people of the City and the State.
 - (b) Whether a landmark's designation has been rescinded.
 - (c) Whether the structure, although not itself a landmark structure, contributes to the distinctive architectural or historic character of the historic district as a whole and therefore should be preserved for the benefit of the people of the City and the State.
 - (d) Whether demolition or removal of the subject property would be contrary to the policy and purpose of this ordinance and/or to the objectives of the historic preservation plan for the applicable historic district as duly adopted by the Common Council.
 - (e) Whether the structure is of such old and unusual or uncommon design, method of construction, or material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty and/or expense.
 - (f) Whether retention of the structure would promote the general welfare of the people of the City and the State by encouraging study of American history, architecture and design or by developing an understanding of American culture and heritage.
 - (g) The condition of the property, provided that any deterioration of the property which is self-created or which is the result of a failure to maintain the property as required by this chapter cannot qualify as a basis for the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness for demolition or removal.

- (h) Whether any new structure proposed to be constructed or change in use proposed to be made is compatible with the historic resources of the historic district in which the subject property is located, or if outside a historic district, compatible with the mass and scale of buildings within two hundred (200) feet of the boundary of the landmark site.

Prior to approving a certificate of appropriateness for demolition, the Landmarks Commission may require the applicant to provide documentation of the structure. Documentation shall be in the form required by the Commission.

Analysis and Conclusion

The proposed project is to demolish a 120 Square Foot nonhistoric parking attendant structure and replace the space with landscaping. The church property includes a gated surface parking lot on the southwest half of the lot and the historic church with attached educational building on the northeast half of the lot. The existing accessory structure is not in keeping with the historic character of the property and is substantially set apart from the historic structures on the property. The proposed landscaping is in keeping with the character of the landscaping surrounding the surface parking lot.

A discussion of relevant standards follows:

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 - (a) The parking structure is not architecturally or historically significant.
 - (b) N/A
 - (c) The parking structure does not contribute to the historic or architectural character of the Mansion Hill historic district.
 - (d) Removal of this nonhistoric structure is not contrary to the purpose of this ordinance.
 - (e) The accessory structure is not of such old and unusual or uncommon design, method of construction, or material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty and/or expense.
 - (f) Retention of the structure would not promote the general welfare of the people of the City and the State by encouraging study of American history, architecture and design or by developing an understanding of American culture and heritage.
 - (g) The demolition of this structure is not due to neglectful maintenance of the property owner, but due to changes in how the site is used.
 - (h) The changes to the site will be compatible with the historic district and historic resources within 200 feet.

Staff does not believe that addition photographic documentation beyond what was submitted for this application is necessary.

Recommendation

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness are met and recommends the Landmarks Commission approve the project as proposed.