



Project Name/Address: 1018 Williamson Street
Application Type: PUBLIC HEARING
Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of an existing residence.
Legistar File ID # [35572](#)
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Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Jim Glueck
Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of an existing residence in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District.

Background Information

Parcel Location: The subject site is located in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District

Relevant Landmarks Ordinance Sections:

33.19(5)(c)3. Standards. (for Demolition)

In determining whether to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for any demolition, the Landmarks Commission shall consider and may give decisive weight to any or all of the following:

- a. Whether the building or structure is of such architectural or historic significance that its demolition would be detrimental to the public interest and contrary to the general welfare of the people of the City and the State;
- b. Whether the building or structure, although not itself a landmark building, contributes to the distinctive architectural or historic character of the District as a whole and therefore should be preserved for the benefit of the people of the City and the State;
- c. Whether demolition of the subject property would be contrary to the purpose and intent of this chapter as set forth in Sec. 33.19 and to the objectives of the historic preservation plan for the applicable district as duly adopted by the Common Council;
- d. Whether the building or structure is of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture and/or material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty and/or expense;
- e. Whether retention of the building or 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;
- f. Whether the building or structure is in such a deteriorated condition that it is not structurally or economically feasible to preserve or restore it, provided that any hardship or difficulty claimed by the owner which is self-created or which is the result of any failure to maintain the property in good repair cannot qualify as a basis for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness;
- g. Whether any new structure proposed to be constructed or change in use proposed to be made is compatible with the buildings and environment of the district in which the subject property is located.

33.19(1) Purpose and Intent It is hereby declared a matter of public policy that the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of improvements of special character or special historical interest or value is a public necessity and is required in the interest of health, prosperity, safety and welfare of the people. The purpose of this section is to:

- (a) Effect and accomplish the protection, enhancement and perpetuation of such improvements and of districts which represent or reflect elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history.
- (b) Safeguard the City's historic and cultural heritage, as embodied and reflected in such landmarks and historic districts.
- (c) Stabilize and improve property values.
- (d) Foster civic pride in the beauty and noble accomplishments of the past.
- (e) Protect and enhance the City's attractions to residents, tourists and visitors, and serve as a support and stimulus to business and industry.
- (f) Strengthen the economy of the City.
- (g) Promote the use of historic districts and landmarks for the education, pleasure and welfare of the people of the City.

Analysis and Conclusion

The applicant was granted a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the building in 1993. According to the submission materials, the building had been gutted by the previous owners and was purchased in uninhabitable condition in 1992. The building has been vacant for at least 22 years.

Staff toured the building on July 16, 2014 and determined that it would require significant investment to return the structure to livable standards; however, it could be accomplished. The current property owner may find that the gutted building would be desirable to someone who has the resources and determination to rehabilitate it into their residence.

A discussion of the demolition standards 33.19(5)(c)3. follows:

- a. The existing structure is not of such architectural or historic significance that its demolition would be detrimental to the public interest and contrary to the general welfare of the people of the City and the State.
- b. The existing structure contributes to the historic character of the District as an example of a typical vernacular residence in the Queen Anne style; however, the historic integrity of the structure is questionable in its current state.
- c. The demolition of the existing structure would be contrary to the purpose and intent of the Ordinance because the structure has historic value as a typical vernacular residential form in the historic district; however, the historic integrity of the structure is questionable in its current state.
- d. The existing structure is not of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture and/or material that it could not be reproduced.
- e. The 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.
- f. The property owner purchased the building in uninhabitable condition. Staff believes the condition of the structure is poor overall.
- g. A new structure is not being proposed to be constructed in this location. The narrow site will remain green space.

Recommendation

Given the previously approved Certificate of Appropriateness and existing condition, staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the existing structure are met and recommends approval by the Landmarks Commission.