



**Project Name/Address:** 801 Williamson

**Application Type:** PUBLIC HEARING  
Demolition and new construction in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District

**Legistar File ID #** [43805](#)

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## Summary

**Project Applicant/Contact:** Jim Glueck

**Requested Action:** The Applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the existing structure and a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a new building in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District.

## Background Information

**Parcel Location:** The subject site is located on Williamson Street in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District

### Relevant Landmarks 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.
- (1) New construction or exterior alteration. The Landmarks Commission shall approve a certificate of appropriateness for exterior alteration or construction only if:
    - (a) N/A
    - (b) N/A
    - (c) In the case of exterior alteration or construction on any property located in a historic district, the proposed exterior alteration or construction meets the adopted standards and guidelines for that district.
    - (d) In the case of any exterior alteration or construction for which a certificate of appropriateness is required, the proposed work will not frustrate the public interest expressed in this ordinance for protecting, promoting, conserving, and using the City's historic resources.
  - (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    - (b) Whether a landmark's designation has been rescinded.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.

#### **41.23 THIRD LAKE RIDGE HISTORIC DISTRICT.**

- (6) Standards for New Structures in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District - Parcels Zoned for Mixed-Use and Commercial Use. Any new structures on parcels zoned for mixed-use and commercial use that are located within 200 feet of other historic resources shall be visually compatible with those historic resources in the following ways:
  - (a) Gross Volume
  - (b) Height
  - (c) The proportion and rhythm of solids to voids in the street facade(s)
  - (d) The materials used in the street facade(s)
  - (e) The design of the roof
  - (f) The rhythm of buildings masses and spaces

### **Analysis and Conclusion**

The previous property owner was issued a notice of Demolition by Neglect on August 14, 2015. The Landmarks Commission noticed a public hearing on the matter and the property owner requested that the item be referred to a future meeting to allow the sale of the property. The property was conveyed to Brandon Cook and the Demolition by Neglect issue was placed on hold. Building Inspection staff and the Landmarks Commission directed that if Mr Cook does not provide the City with a proposal for alteration, the Demolition by Neglect public hearing will be noticed and acted upon. Mr Cook is proposing the demolition of the existing structure and construction of a new structure in lieu of making alterations to the existing structure.

The property owner appeared before the Landmarks Commission on August 1, 2016 and at that time the Commission received an Informational Presentation about potential treatments for this site. The Landmarks Commission toured the existing building on August 10, 2016 to review the conditions of the site and the historic value of the existing structure. During the tour, provided by property owner Brandon Cook and historian Gary Tipler, there was general discussion about the chronology of the building campaigns as interpreted by existing physical evidence. The Applicant requested a public hearing on November 7, 2016 to discuss the possible

demolition of the existing structure. At that meeting, the Landmarks Commission discussed the possibility of demolition and the condition of the building when purchased by Mr Cook and referred the item to a future meeting for consideration of the Certificates of Appropriateness.

#### COA for Demolition

41.18(1)(d) The Landmarks Commission shall determine if the demolition of this property frustrates the public interest expressed in this ordinance for protecting, promoting, conserving, and using the City's historic resources. The Landmarks Commission is charged with protecting and enhancing the perpetuation of historic districts and the City's cultural heritage. The demolition of any period appropriate structure would be contrary to the purpose and intent of this Ordinance and the objectives of the preservation plan for the district. The integrity of the existing structure affects its ability to contribute to the historic character of the historic district.

A discussion of the demolition standards of 41.18(2) follows:

- (a) The existing structure is not of such architectural or historic significance that it meets the standards for landmark designation as the language of this standard suggests. Instead, with other vernacular structures in the district, this structure represents vernacular working class housing intermixed with commercial structures along Williamson Street that establishes the historic character and significance of the historic district.
- (b) N/A This property is not a landmark.
- (c) This vernacular building form contributes to the distinctive architectural and historic character of the historic district; however, the integrity of this specific structure affects its ability to contribute to the historic character of the historic district.
- (d) The Landmarks Commission is charged with protecting and enhancing the perpetuation of historic districts and the City's cultural heritage. The demolition of any period appropriate structure would be contrary to the purpose and intent of this Ordinance and the objectives of the preservation plan for the district. The Third Lake Ridge Historic District Plan states, "The Third Lake Ridge is a study in diversity, an agglomeration of many themes: ethnic settlement, railroad development, urbanization, civic improvement. Its architecture reflects this diversity of development and change." The integrity of the existing structure affects its ability to contribute to the historic character of the historic district.
- (e) The structure was originally constructed in 1884 (other research indicates 1874). The existing structure has been largely modified from the original. Existing floor framing and roof framing are not original and have been replaced with modern (nominal) members in numerous places. Some areas of the foundation appear to be original construction. The structure does not convey a traditional method of construction as this standard suggests and could be reproduced using standard construction materials.
- (f) The building does not meet the intent of this standard. However, the general welfare of the public is promoted by the retention of the City's cultural resources and historic identity.
- (g) The existing building is in poor condition. Mr Cook purchased the property in poor condition so the condition is not self-created or the result of his failure to maintain the property. The poor condition is the result of failure to maintain the property over time by many previous owners.
- (h) The proposed new structure is a three story mixed use building (commercial space on the first floor with 4 residential units above) with flat roof and brick exterior. The form and treatment are similar to a typical commercial structure of the 1900s. Similar typical commercial forms of similar height with flat roofs and/or brick exterior materials are found within the historic district and in the area of visual compatibility.

#### COA for New Construction

41.18(1)(c) Instructs the Landmarks Commission to use the standards of 41.23(6) to determine the appropriateness of the proposed new construction. The Visual Compatibility map is attached to this report. A discussion of the new construction standards of 41.23(6) follows:

- (a) The proposed building has a larger gross volume than the existing building, but the gross volume of the proposed building is compatible with the gross volume of other buildings in the historic district and within the immediate context of the subject site.
- (b) The proposed building is 3 stories tall. Other buildings in the general context are of similar height. The proposed building is taller than the adjacent 2 ½ story gabled roof building to the east, but is similar in height to the newer building across the street.
- (c) The proposed building has a proportion and rhythm of solids to voids in the street facades that are similar to other buildings in the historic district and within the immediate context of the subject site.
- (d) The proposed building has a brick exterior wall material. There is a projecting bay element on the side (facing Livingston Street) that is clad in fiber cement panel. A similar bay element is on the front elevation. There is fiber cement lap siding on the side. The brick and siding materials are common in the historic district and in the immediate context of the subject site. The fiber cement panel material is less common, but could be interpreted as similar to stucco or painted masonry and is compatible with many materials in the historic district. The Commission should discuss the bay element on the front elevation and numerous materials of the elevation that are not noted. In addition, the Commission should discuss the use of a utility brick on the side elevation instead of lap siding.
- (e) The proposed building has a flat roof which is similar to numerous buildings in the historic district and with buildings in the immediate context of the subject site.
- (f) The proposed building is larger than the existing building and takes up more of the site which changes the rhythm of building masses and spaces, but the proposed building creates a rhythm of masses and spaces that seems to be compatible with other patterns in the historic district and within the immediate context of the subject site.

#### **Recommendation**

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition may be met and recommends that the Landmarks Commission approve the request. If the Landmarks Commission does not believe the standards for granting the Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition are met, staff recommends the Landmarks Commission specifically describe those standards that are not met and refer the review of the demolition and the new construction to a future meeting.

Staff believes that the standards for granting the Certificate of Appropriateness for the new construction may be met and recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the new construction with the following conditions of approval:

1. The Applicant shall confirm the material of the storefront system, the brick size and color, the siding exposure, the window trim material, and the material and appearance of the corner column.
2. The Applicant shall confirm that windows will have head and jamb trim of similar width and that the stone lintel will extend past the masonry opening width by at least 4" on each side. The stone lintel shall be treated in a similar manner at doors and above the store front system on the front elevation.
3. The Applicant shall indicate the location of HVAC equipment.