



Downtown Development Review Overlay (DDRO) District

MEMORANDUM

To: Downtown Development Review Overlay District Committee
From: Kat Groskreutz, Planning & Design Coordinator
Thru: Joseph Haberman, AICP, Urban Design Administrator
Date: April 28, 2023

Case No: 22-OVERLAY-0018

Property Address: 720 W. Muhammad Ali Blvd., formerly Greyhound bus station

Case History

The DDRO Committee met on September 28, 2022 to review case 22-OVERLAY-0018, which was for the demolition of the existing building and construction of a new building. Members present were Committee Chair Monica Brown, Emily Liu, Ashlyn Ackerman, Marlene Men, Kelli Jones, Jim Tutt, and George Timmering. After the staff report presentation, applicant presentation, and public testimony, the Committee accepted the staff report as the report of the Committee and approved the request for demolition and new construction with conditions.

A condition of approval for demolition was as follows:

- 1. A wrecking permit shall not be applied for until construction permits for the new construction are ready to be issued. This site would qualify for a 30-day hold per LMCO 150.110.**

At the hearing, the applicant did not contest this condition of approval.

Condition of Approval Removal Request Summary

On April 21, 2023, Clifford Ashburner, attorney representative for the property owner, submitted a request for the previously approved condition of approval be removed from the Overlay Permit regarding the demolition approval (see attached).

Staff has recommended this condition of approval to demolition requests due to multiple previous sites having buildings demolished in advance of projects that were ultimately not completed. Such instances include, but are not limited to:

- 700 E. Main St - "Service Tanks" site in NuLu where multiple contributing signs have now been misplaced or lost after the previous warehouse buildings were demolished by the past owner, and the approved plan not constructed.

- 133 W. Market St. – a previous row of three structures, built to the corner and street face, were demolished then left vacant by the previous owner.
- 418 E. Main St. - a large historic building was demolished in the mid-2000s for a new apartment building but abandoned after demolition. It has been a surface parking lot since.

Concerned about the establishment of a vacant lot and loss of a historic building without replacement, staff only recommends removal of this condition if the applicant/developer can provide assurances that the project will move forward in a timely manner after demolition. Absent of such assurances, staff recommends the condition of approval for demolition remain as written to help prevent loss of street wall, contributing structures or features to the District, and avoid the potential for long standing vacant lots.



Legal Counsel.

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April 21, 2023

Savannah Darr, Historic Preservation Officer
444 S. 5th St., Suite 300
Louisville, KY 40202

Re: 720 W. Muhammad Ali Blvd.

Dear Savannah:

I am writing on behalf of LDG Land Holdings, LLC, the applicant under a recently approved Overlay Permit for the property at 720 W. Muhammad Ali. LDG has been working diligently to activate the property for an affordable housing development, including purchasing the property, engaging design professionals for the construction plans, and seeking various financing means. However, LDG is concerned that the soon-to-be vacant Greyhound buildings, shown as “to be removed” on the approved plans, are likely to become a detriment to the property and the area once vacated due to their age and condition.

LDG requests that the Committee approve the demolition of the two buildings on site without the requirement that building permits have been issued for the construction of the new building. The removal of the existing buildings will allow the site to be secured more effectively while the remaining steps toward vertical construction are undertaken. If approved, LDG plans to plant grass covering most of the site and leave a small parking area for use during potential temporary pop-up events, while we continue to work through construction plans and financing for the development.

Very truly yours,

Clifford H. Ashburner

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