



Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission

Certificate of Appropriateness Report of the Committee

To: Bob Rueff, Rueff Sign Company
Thru: Butchertown Architectural Review Committee
From: Bradley Fister, Historic Preservation Specialist
Date: December 16, 2020

Case No: 20-COA-0229
Classification: Committee Review

GENERAL INFORMATION

Property Address: 1530 Quincy Street

Applicant: Bob Rueff
Rueff Sign Company
1530 E. Washington St.
Louisville, KY 40206
502-582-1714
502-594-1979
bob@rueffsigns.com

Owner: same as applicant

Estimated Project Cost: \$36,000.00

Description of proposed exterior alteration:

The applicant seeks approval to demolish a circa 1884 shotgun-style building. The applicant wants to build a new warehouse in its place, but plans have not been submitted to date.

Communications with Applicant, Completion of Application

The application was received on October 15, 2020 and was determined to be incomplete and classified as requiring Committee Review on October 21, 2020. Staff contacted applicant to set up a site visit and to discuss the project further. A site visit was conducted, at the time staff asked the applicant to provide documentation from a structural engineer that the structure needed to be demolished, as well as information on what the applicant proposed to put in place of the building. Staff received a letter from an architect on behalf of the applicant

on November 17, 2020. The letter stated that he found the structure to be structurally unsafe and suggested demolition.

Staff scheduled a Butchertown Architectural Review Committee (ARC) meeting for Wednesday December 16, 2020 at 4:30pm via WebEx, at 444 S. 5th St. Rm 101.

The Butchertown Architectural Review Committee (ARC) met on December 16, 2020 at 4:30 pm, via WebEx video conference to discuss the case. Members present were Committee Chair Lindsey Stoughton, Amin Omidy, Tim Stephens, Tamika Jackson, and Dave Marchal, Deputy Director for Develop Louisville. Joseph Haberman, Cynthia Elmore and Bradley Fister, Landmarks Staff; and Bob Rueff the property owner ((1530 E. Washington St., Louisville, KY 40206).

Ms. Stoughton opened the meeting. Mr. Fister presented the case for the proposed site changes. He recommended approval of the project based on the findings in the staff report to the Committee, with the inclusion of 4 recommended conditions as listed in that report.

Mr. Rueff then spoke, stating he agreed with the recommended conditions and saw no issues with those changes and information that needs to be provided to staff. Mr. Rueff then explained the reasoning behind the proposed demolition, and that it is to improve the site and the district and allow for space for his business to expand and to protect costly equipment.

The case was opened for discussion. Mr. Marchal asked what the applicant planned to put in place of the existing structure. Mr. Rueff asked for everyone to look at the submitted application where he had included an image of what type of building he would be proposing. Mr. Marchal said that he felt it could be an opportunity to improve the street through the committee's involvement in what the applicant proposes for the site in the future. Ms. Stoughton echoed Mr. Marchal's statement and suggested that adding further conditions to the approval in the form of a timeline, and immediate screening through the form of a privacy fence in the interim. Mr. Rueff reiterated that he would be willing to do whatever the committee decided in efforts to improve the site and the district.

Ms. Stoughton asked if there was any public comment. There was none.

Mr. Stephens made a motion to approve the staff report and to add a condition that the applicant come back to the committee with plans within three months, and in the interim the applicant construct a privacy fence and stain it. Mr. Omidy seconded the motion. Ms. Stoughton asked if there was any further discussion. Mr. Marchal asked for clarification on the wording of the motion. Mr. Omidy and Mr. Stephens clarified that the applicant shall return to the committee with plans for the site within three months and the applicant shall construct a wood privacy fence not to exceed 7' in height that will be stained in the interim.

Ms. Stoughton asked for a roll call vote from Mr. Fister. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. The meeting was then adjourned at 5:25 pm.

FINDINGS

Guidelines

The following design review guidelines, approved for the Butchertown Preservation District, are applicable to the proposed exterior alteration: **Demolition**. The report of the Commission Staff's findings of fact and conclusions with respect to these guidelines is included in this report.

The following additional findings are incorporated in this report:

Site Context/ Background

The house is located on the east side of Quincy Street, six lots northeast of the corner of Quincy and Adams Streets and runs horizontally between Quincy St. and Washington St. The one-story shotgun-style house is set back slightly and located between modern commercial buildings. The house faces four other shotgun-style homes on the west side of Quincy Street.

According to city directories, this house was constructed circa 1884. The address was 1426 Calhoun originally, which changed to 1530 Calhoun and eventually to 1530 Quincy Street. The 1892 and 1905 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps are attached. The house features wood lap siding, 4/4 double-hung wood windows with arched muntins on the front façade, 6/6 double-hung wood windows on the side elevations, and ½ lite wood entry doors.

Conclusions

The building is labeled as contributing on the Butchertown Preservation District Map. While there is a moderate degree historic integrity in terms of material and design remaining, the overall structural integrity of the building is seriously degraded. The building appears to lack a sill plate and solid foundation, which has caused issues in the interior wall framing and roof framing. It appears that concrete was poured near the foundation many decades ago to help these issues, but it was not done adequately to do so. Much of the building's materials will have to be removed in order to fix these structural issues. Once those are removed and replaced, there will be little to no material integrity left. This building would become more reconstruction than rehabilitation.

This is technically a case of demolition by neglect, which is defined in the Demolition Design Guidelines as "The deteriorated condition of a historic building attributable to the owner's failure to provide proper maintenance over an extended period of time." The ARC does typically not approve cases of demolition by neglect, and demolition by neglect is not a factor considered when an applicant applies for economic hardship to demolish a structure. In this case, however, the unfortunate disrepair of this house is so severe that if left standing, it will likely become an emergency demolition within the next couple of years and have to be demolished.

The Demolition Design Guidelines state, "Unless the City has determined that it poses an imminent threat to life or property, do not demolish any historic structure

or part of a historic structure that contributes to the integrity of any historic district or individual landmark unless:

- 1) the demolition will not adversely affect the district's (or the landmark's) distinctive characteristics, taken as a whole, retained over time;
- 2) the demolition will not adversely affect the district's importance as a "unified entity" composed of interrelated resources united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development; and
- 3) the proposed replacement structure and development will strengthen the viability of the district as a whole."

In its current condition, this house does not contribute to the integrity of the Butchertown Preservation District. Surrounded by houses and warehouses in good condition, this house puts those in danger with its severe level of deterioration. There are no other vacant lots in this block of Quincy Street, thus the demolition of this house would not negatively impact the unity of the District as a whole. Furthermore, the owner will have to follow the New Construction Design Guidelines for the new construction, which would strengthen the District as a whole.

Staff does not take demolition of primary structures in a preservation district lightly. However, this particular building is in such a state of deterioration that any rehabilitation would be more like reconstruction. At that point, this building would no longer have any material or historic integrity. Furthermore, the work would be so intensive that there is a possibility the building might not survive as its full level of deterioration is not known until work begins. It is for these reasons that staff recommends approval of the application for demolition. However, this is not *carte blanche* for other property owners to follow suit with cases for demolition by neglect. The specific situation of this particular building is very different from other vacant properties in the District.

DECISION

On the basis of the information furnished by the applicant, the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness is **approved** with the following conditions:

- 1. The applicant shall have an Architectural Historian complete a state survey form to be submitted to the Kentucky Heritage Council to document the building prior to demolition.**
- 2. The demolition shall not disturb any of the adjacent buildings.**
- 3. During demolition, topography shall be made consistent with that of adjacent properties. The slope and grades of land left vacant after demolition shall continue and be consistent with those features on adjacent properties.**
- 4. If the scope of the project should change, the applicant shall contact staff prior to construction.**
- 5. The applicant shall construct and stain a wood privacy fence not to exceed 7'-0" in height, that shall set within the setback of the existing structure once said structure has been demolished.**
- 6. The applicant shall propose plans for new construction to the committee / update committee within 3 months of demolition.**

The foregoing information is hereby incorporated in the Certificate of Appropriateness as approved and is binding upon the applicant, his successors, heirs or assigns. This Certificate does not relieve the applicant of responsibility for obtaining the necessary permits and approvals required by other governing agencies or authorities.

approved via email
Lindsey Stoughton
Chair Butchertown ARC

12-16-2020
Date

DEMOLITION

Design Guideline Checklist From Economic Hardship Exemption

- + Meets Guidelines
- Does Not Meet Guidelines
- +/- Meets Guidelines with Conditions as Noted
- NA Not Applicable
- NSI Not Sufficient Information

Introduction

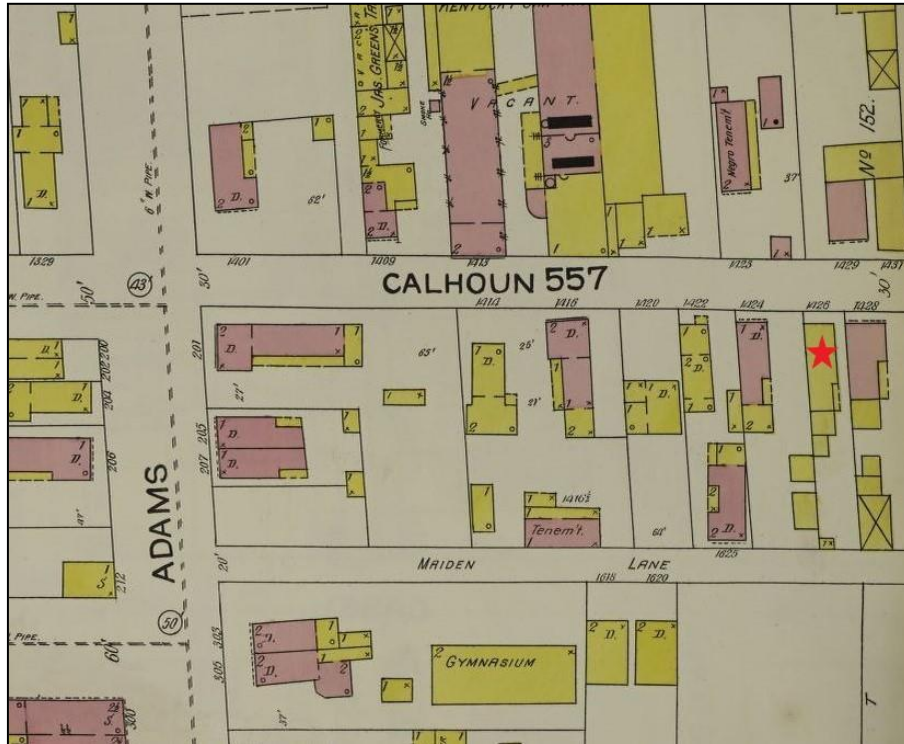
Unless the city has determined that it poses an imminent threat to life or property, do not demolish any historic structure or part of a historic structure that contributes to the integrity of any historic district, or any individual landmark or part of an individual landmark.

Demolition by Neglect

The deteriorated condition of a historic building attributable to the owner's failure to provide proper maintenance over an extended period of time will not be considered a mitigating circumstance in evaluations of economic hardship. Hardship that is attributable to a building's being allowed to deteriorate will be considered self-imposed; restoration costs incurred to remediate such neglect will not be considered.

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
DE1	Do not demolish existing non-contributing buildings and additions in a manner that will threaten the integrity of existing contributing structures.	NA	The structure is listed as contributing to the Butchertown Preservation District and Butchertown National Register District.
DE2	Do take steps to assure the integrity of a wall exposed to the elements by the removal of a non-historic addition.	NA	
DE3	Do remove non-historic interior finishes such as plaster, drywall, or paneling that may be exposed as a result of the removal of non-historic additions.	NA	
DE4	Do infill non-historic openings in historic walls, exposed as a result of the removal of the non-historic finishes.	NA	

DE5	Do landscape areas that are left vacant as the result of removals of non-contributing buildings and additions. Topography should be made consistent with that of adjacent properties. The slope and grades of land left vacant after demolition should continue and be consistent with those features on adjacent properties.	NSI	Once the building is demolished the applicant plans to construct a new building on the existing site; however, plans have not been submitted to date.
DE6	Do take measures to reestablish the street wall after demolition through the use of low fences, walls, and/or vegetation.	NSI	See comment above



1892 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Vol. 3, Sheet 151) showing the location of 1530 Quincy Street (red star).



1905 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Vol. 5, Sheet 412) showing the location of 1530 Quincy Street (red star).