



Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission

Report to the Committee

To: West Main Street Architectural Review Committee
Thru: Cynthia Elmore, Historic Preservation Officer
From: Katherine Groskreutz, Historic Preservation Specialist
Date: January 28, 2022

Case No: 21-COA-0262
Classification: Committee Review

GENERAL INFORMATION

Property Addresses: 811, 813, 815, 819, 821 and 823 W. Main St.

Applicant: Alex Marks
Royal Investments, LLC
2000 Mallory Ln., Suite 130-144
Franklin, TN 37067
alexmarks@royalinv.com

Owners: Dominick A. Pagano (811-819 W. Main St.)
C&P Real Estate
PO Box 83
Harrods Creek, KY 40027

Andy Treinen (821-823 W. Main St.)
Owsley Brown Frazier Historic Arms Museum Foundation
829 W. Main St.
Louisville, KY 40202
502-753-1692
atreinen@fraziermuseum.org

Estimated Project Cost: TBD

Description of proposed exterior alteration:

The applicant requests approval to demolish the majority of six buildings located over six contiguous parcels, addressed 811 through 823 W. Main Street to construct a new hotel with interior courtyard and rear tower.

The approximate portions to be demolished at each building address are as follows:

- **811 W. Main St:** Approximately 90% of the west side wall and the north (rear) wall will be demolished. The east side wall from the basement level to the third floor will remain where it connects to the adjoining building at 809 W. Main. However, on the fourth floor, the entire east wall is to be demolished and about 25% of the wall will be reconstructed with salvaged brick. All but about 5% of the south facing interior of the building will be demolished. The front façade will be retained.
- **813 - 821 W. Main St:** The east and west side walls and north (rear) wall, and all but about 5% of the south facing interior of the building will be demolished. Between 815 and 819 W. Main, a middle section of the wall between the two will be rebuilt with salvaged brick on levels one through four. No portion of the fifth-floor structure will be rebuilt behind the front façade section retained at 815 W. Main. That section will remain exposed to the rooftop event space and pool located behind it. The front façades will be retained.
- **823 W. Main St:** The east side wall, north (rear) wall, and all but about 5% of the south facing interior of the building will be demolished. The west side wall will be retained on the basement level and demolished up to the front corner for levels one through four. About 20% of the south portion of these walls will be reconstructed with salvaged brick on levels one through four. The front façade will be retained.

The applicant is also proposing the new construction of a 169-key hotel with first floor commercial restaurant and/or bar space, a rooftop pool and event space, interior courtyard, and basement level parking garage accessed from W. Washington Street. The historic front facades will be shored from the street side with a new post-tensioned concrete structure and foundation behind. The new construction will occur immediately behind the facades and will integrate them.

The front third of the building will be the same approximate height of the four-story buildings of 811-813 and 819-823 W. Main Street (between 59'-4" and 63'-11"). The middle third will be five stories on the east side (81'-10") and will be open to a street level interior courtyard on the west side. On the back third, the building will be 9- to 10-stories tall (133'-10" and 156'-10") where it is adjacent to the elevated highway (I-64).

The proposal for the new construction is conceptual at the point, so this ARC meeting will focus on the demolition request and the compatibility, scale, massing, and general setbacks of the new construction. The outcome of the meeting will dictate future review processes.

Communications with Applicant, Completion of Application

Landmarks Staff meet with the applicant team to review the preliminary proposal on September 13, 2021 and provided initial feedback. The applicant met with Landmarks Staff and other Metro departments multiple times over the next few months. A site visit to view the buildings and interiors was conducted with PDS staff and the Historic Preservation Officer on November 16, 2021.

The COA application package was submitted on November 22, 2021 and was determined to require ARC level review. Staff requested further documentation on December 14, 2021. Some of those documents were provided on December 23, 2021 at which time the application was considered complete. Staff requested additional documentation and clarification on January 11, 2022, which was provided same day and on January 12, 2022.

A hearing of the West Main Street Architectural Review Committee was scheduled for 5:30pm on January 19, 2022. The applicant requested a continuance for their case prior to the hearing on January 18, 2022. The meeting has been rescheduled for Wednesday, February 2, 2022 via WebEx videoconference, with in person public comment opportunity available at 444 S. 5th St. - Conference Room 101.

FINDINGS

Guidelines

The following design review guidelines, approved for the West Main Street Preservation District, are applicable to the proposed project: **Demolition** and **New Construction - Commercial**. The report of the staff's findings of fact and conclusions with respect to these guidelines is attached to this report.

The following additional findings are incorporated in this report:

Site Context/ Background

The six parcels are zoned C3 and within the Downtown Form District between N. 8th and 9th Streets. The six buildings are considered contributing structures not only within the West Main Street Historic Preservation District, but also the West Main Street National Register District (both established in 1974), and the Downtown Development Review Overlay District. West Main Street, particularly the sections between 6th and 9th Streets, are also nationally recognized by the American Planners Association as a "Great Places in America – Street" for its level of historic structures, cast iron storefronts, and the West Main Street Cultural Arts District. <https://www.planning.org/greatplaces/streets/2008/westmainstreet.htm>

811-813 W. Main Street: Constructed circa 1865, these two, four-story, stone façade Italianate style buildings have cast iron storefronts. 811 still retains a simple, one-story, cast iron storefront surround on the rear facing Washington Street. The buildings were used to store iron for river trade. In 1881, they became home to the Todd-Donigan Iron Company, which remained in the buildings for decades, which at the time also included 809 W. Main Street.

815 W. Main Street: Constructed circa 1890, this five-story, masonry Richardsonian Romanesque style building has a cast iron storefront on the front, and retains two simple, one-story, cast iron storefront surrounds on the rear facing Washington Street. A later addition to the block, it was constructed for the jeans clothing manufacturing firm of Tapp, Leathers and Company. Three small spires extend above the roof. The left one notes the building's construction start year of

1888. The center one says, "Tapp" for the building owner, and the right one notes the construction end year of 1890.

819-823 W. Main Street: Constructed circa 1865, these three, almost identical, four-story, stone façade Italianate style buildings have cast iron storefronts. All three still retain decorative, two-story tall cast iron storefront surrounds on the rear facing Washington Street. The buildings were owned by John Bull, a prominent patent medicine manufacturer. By the 1880s, 823 W. Main Street housed a store that still sold Bull's medicines, while the other two were occupied by J.W. Morrill and Company, dealers in wholesale saddlery and saddlery hardware, and Ingall's and Company, boot wholesalers.

These historic buildings are surrounded by a mix of other 19th century commercial buildings and some modern infill to the south across Main Street, and an elevated highway (I-64) to the north. This section of the West Main Preservation District currently remains one of the most contiguously intact blocks of historic commercial buildings within the District, with very little demolition, modern infill, or modifications as seen in other blocks along West Main Street.

CONCLUSIONS - Demolition

The proposed project calls for total demolition of the 19th century historic commercial buildings save the masonry portions of the front facades. The National Park Service, which oversees national-level historic preservation, has a Technical Preservation Services area that publishes guidance on preservation work. Preservation Brief 14 "New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns" (<https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/14-exterior-additions.htm#additions>), which is the most applicable in this instance, states that for projects to meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, "a property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment." It also states "...a new addition to a historic building has the potential to change its historic character as well as to damage and destroy significant historic materials and features," and "...preservation of historic buildings inherently implies minimal change to primary or "public" elevations and, of course, interior features as well." This Preservation Brief provides context in overall preservation principles and also serves as a tool from which some of our local Design Guidelines were derived, such as the Demolition and New Construction guidelines.

The Introduction of the **Demolition Design Guidelines** states as its fundamental basis, "*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.*" Furthermore, New Construction Guideline **NC2** states, "*Do not demolish contributing structures in a historic district to make way for new or large-scale construction.*" Information provided by the applicant, including a Property Condition Assessment Report that reviews buildings 811, 813 and 815 W. Main, has not demonstrated that these buildings, which are contributing to the Preservation District and the National Register District, are an imminent threat to

life or property. The proposed demolition of almost all of these structures will severely diminish the historic fabric of each building and will adversely impact their historic integrity. Thus, the buildings will no longer be contributing to the Preservation District or the National Register District. A solution that adaptively reuses substantially more of the extant historic structures, would improve compliance with the Demolition Design Guidelines and could be supported. As the proposed demolition does not meet the fundamental intent and basis for the West Main Street Design Guidelines for **Demolition (DE1 – DE5) nor NC2**, Staff recommends denial of the project as currently proposed.

CONCLUSIONS – New Construction

While the currently proposed scope of demolition does not meet the design guidelines, the proposal for the new tower addition generally meets the applicable design guidelines for **New Construction**. For the current ARC review, only the conceptual form, scale, massing, and setbacks are being examined, rather than specific design details and materials. The new construction and rear tower addition are generally sympathetic to the forms of the historic buildings. Overall, the existing setbacks are primarily maintained on all sides. The scale of the rear tower is much taller than any building within the district and will change the spatial organization of buildings along Washington Street. However, it is deeply setback from W. Main Street and will be only partially visible from that street and will not negatively impact any established views or vistas. The tower elevation is also directly adjacent to the elevated I-64 highway, and this section of Washington Street does not experience high pedestrian traffic unlike other sections of the street in downtown. Thus, the tower is an appropriate addition on this portion of W. Main Street.

Maintaining the existing heights of the front facades, the deep front setback of the new tower, and modern design elements that make it easily discernible between what is historic and what is new are creative design features and do generally follow preservation best practices.

CONCLUSIONS – Overall

In summary, the amount of demolition currently proposed by the applicant does not meet the Demolition Design Guidelines. However, the conceptual form, scale, massing, and setbacks of the new construction does meet the New Construction Design Guidelines. The information provided by the applicant does not sufficiently demonstrate that the existing buildings cannot be more fully incorporated into the project. Thus, Staff recommends the applicant modify the demolition plan to better reflect increased re-use and renovation of the historic structures for this project. Retention solely of the front façades and rebuilding a small portion of the side walls is not sufficient preservation as intended by the Demolition Guidelines and goals of the District. There have been other projects on W. Main Street that have been successful at this and still met their code requirements. Examples include, but are not limited to, 21C Museum Hotel, Grady Hotel, Frazier History Museum, Michter's Distillery, SAR Genealogical Research Library, Humana's buildings (500 block), Old Forester, and 111 Whiskey Row. These projects were able to find creative solutions on the building interiors to adaptively reuse historic structures with similar circumstances as 811-823 W. Main Street. With a new demolition plan that saves

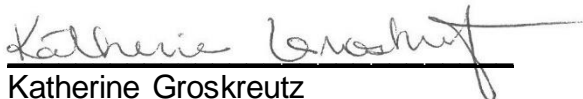
more of the historic structures and only demolishes what is absolutely necessary, this application could substantially comply with the applicable Design Guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION

On the basis of the information furnished by the applicant, including the structural report and level of demolition proposed, staff recommends the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow the requested demolition of all of the buildings except the façades from 811 W. Main St. through 823 W. Main St. for the new construction be **denied**.

However, in the event the West Main ARC or Landmarks Commission (on appeal or approval of an Economic Hardship Exemption) approves the requested demolition based on their analysis of the Design Guidelines and information furnished by the applicant, staff recommends the **following conditions of approval**:

1. **The applicant shall return to ARC for additional review and final approval of the design details and materials of the new construction**
2. **All front facades details, including windows and doors and other historic materials, shall be retained.**
3. **No demolition shall occur nor shall any wrecking permits be issued until the New Construction has been fully approved and permits issued for its construction.**
4. **The applicant shall provide a detailed structural plan demonstrating how the existing facades will be supported and maintained throughout the demolition and construction process.**
5. **Any reclaimed brick used in rebuilding of exterior walls shall be brick made specifically to be exposed to the outdoors, rather than reclaimed from interior brick walls which may not have the same composition and strength for exterior exposure.**
6. **Adjacent buildings shall be protected from damage during demolition and all new construction activities. Newly exposed walls of buildings to remain shall be protected and stabilized as necessary**


Katherine Groskreutz
Planning and Design Coordinator

01/28/2021

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	All buildings are intact and contributing to the Local Preservation District as well as the 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	This application is for demolition of contributing buildings.
DE3	Do remove non-historic interior finishes such as plaster, dry wall, or paneling that may be exposed as a result of the removal of non-historic additions.	NA	This application is for demolition of contributing buildings
DE4	Do infill non-historic openings in historic walls, exposed as a result of the removal of the non-historic finishes.	TBD	This level of detail is not being reviewed at this time.
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.	NA	No areas are proposed to be left vacant
DE6	Do take measures to reestablish the street wall after demolition through the use of low fences, walls, and/or vegetation.	+	While this is not applicable to the Main Street side, the Washington Street side will be reestablished through new building construction

NC7	Have new construction reinforce the human scale of historic districts by emphasizing the base of the building where this is a character-defining feature.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC8	Design infill construction that enhances the pedestrian-oriented character of historic commercial districts. Commercial buildings should have a well-defined base at the pedestrian level with details conveying a sense of horizontality and progression along the sidewalk.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC9	Design new construction in such a way that it does not disrupt important public views and vistas.	+	The deep setback of the tower is unlikely to disrupt views and vistas from street level, particularly from pedestrian vantages along W. Main Street
NC10	Plant canopy trees in front of any large-scale new construction to provide a visual sense of consistency along a streetscape.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC11	Reinforce existing patterns of open space and enclosure, created by circulation routes, fences, walls, lawns, and allees of trees, in designs for new construction.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC12	Design infill construction that reinforces the spatial organization established by surrounding buildings. The character of historic streetscapes relies heavily on the visual continuity established by the repetition of similarly-designed facades.	+/-	The new construction is proposed to begin behind the historic facades; however, by only keeping the historic façades, the character of the streetscape is changed as the visual depth of the building and its reconstructed side walls will be different as the side wall of 811, 823, and the upper story side walls of 815 are clearly visible from the street. If more of the historic buildings was retained, then this could be better met.
NC13	Design infill construction in such a way that the façade's organization closely relates to surrounding buildings. Window and door openings should be similar in size to their historic counterparts, as should the proportion of window to wall space. Cornice lines, columns, and storefronts are other important character-defining facade elements.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC14	Design new construction so that the building mass has a similar sense of lightness or weightiness as surrounding historic structures. Mass is determined by the proportion of solid surfaces (walls) to voids (window and door openings).	+	The proposed tower addition will have more voids and appear lighter than the surrounding masonry buildings; however, this distinguishes it as new construction.
NC15	Maintain historic patterns of window and door proportion and placement in designs for new construction.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC16	Develop designs for new construction using windows that are sympathetic to the window patterns of surrounding buildings. Use of comparable frame dimensions, proportions, and muntin configurations is encouraged.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC17	Develop designs for new construction using front doors that are sympathetic to the door patterns of surrounding buildings. Use of comparable frame dimensions, proportion, and panel and light configuration is encouraged.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC18	Design new construction so that the orientation of the main entrance is the same as the majority of other buildings on the street.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time

NC19	Retain the character-defining features of a historic building when undertaking accessibility code-required work.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC20	Investigate removable or portable ramps as options to providing barrier-free access.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC21	Locate handicapped access ramps on secondary elevations wherever possible. If locating a ramp on the primary façade is required, it should be installed in a way that does not damage historic fabric and is as unobtrusive as possible.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC22	Design infill construction so that it is compatible with the average height and width of surrounding buildings. The rhythm of the façade should also reflect the characteristic rhythm of existing buildings on the street. Vertical elements (doors, columns, and storefronts) should be spaced approximately every 20 to 40 feet at the pedestrian level.	+	The rhythm of the W. Main Street facades will remain the same as they are to be retained. While the Washington Street side will be new and taller than the surrounding buildings, it is appropriate for this location.
NC23	Design new construction to have a floor-to-floor height that is within 10 percent of adjacent historic construction where the floor-to-floor height is relatively consistent, and a character-defining feature.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC24	Incorporate set-back upper stories into designs for new construction that exceed the established cornice line.	+	
NC25	Maintain the historic rhythm of the streetscape. The space between new construction and existing structures should fall within 20 percent of the average spacing for the block. New construction should be built out to the property lines where this is a character-defining feature.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC26	Historic commercial properties have long been anchors in Louisville's preservation districts. Construction of commercial properties on vacant corner lots should preferably be built to the corner with an entrance oriented to the corner.	NA	This is not a corner lot.
NC27	Maintain historic setback patterns. In order to maintain the continuity of the streetscape, setbacks for new construction should either match that of adjacent buildings where all share the same setback or be within 20 percent of neighboring structures in areas with varied setbacks.	+	
NC28	Ensure that the roofs of new buildings relate to those of neighboring historic structures in pitch, complexity, and visual appearance of materials.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC29	Follow the precedent set by adjacent buildings when designing rooflines for infill construction. Where the predominate form is flat, built-up roofs are preferred. Where the predominate form is complex and steeply pitched, that is preferred. In blocks characterized by shallow-pitched roofs and pronounced overhangs with exposed rafters, these elements should be incorporated.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC30	Design new construction so that the orientation of the main roof form is parallel with the majority of other roofs on the street where roof forms are relatively consistent and a character-defining feature.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC31	Design new construction to emphasize the existing cornice line on each block where this is a character-defining feature.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC32	Integrate mechanical systems into new construction in such a way that rooftops remain uncluttered.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC33	Make provisions for screening and storage of trash receptacles when designing new construction.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time

NC34	Use an exterior sheathing that is similar to those of other surrounding historic buildings.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC35	Use masonry types and mortars that are similar to surrounding buildings in designs for new construction.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC36	Do not use modern "antiqued" brick in new construction.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC37	Design parking garages so that they relate closely to adjacent structures. Their facades should reflect the hierarchical organization and design elements seen on surrounding buildings.	+	30 valet parking spots located on the basement level accessed from W. Washington St.
NC38	Design new construction so that access to off-street parking is off alleys or secondary streets wherever possible.	+	30 valet parking spots located on the basement level accessed from W. Washington St.
NC39	Generally, leave at least 20 percent of a parking lot's surface area unpaved and planted. All parking lots must meet the minimum requirements of the city's Development Code. Perimeter landscaping, fencing, colonnades, or other construction that visually continues the building line along open sidewalks is encouraged.	NA	Underground parking garage
NC40	Generally speaking, parking should be located in the rear.	+	
NC41	Design required new parking in such a way that it is as unobtrusive as possible and minimizes the impact on the historic setting. Shared parking areas among groups of businesses is encouraged.	+	
NC42	Do not build additional surface parking lots within the West Main Preservation District.	+	
NC43	Incorporate storm-water management provisions into the design of new construction, so that any related runoff will not adversely impact nearby historic resources.	TBD	Not being reviewed by ARC at this time
NC44	Do not create additional open space within the West Main Historic District.	+	Interior open courtyard where building space is currently located; however, it is not street facing and interior courtyards are not uncommon in historic commercial buildings