

Minutes
HISTORIC RESOURCES BOARD
City Commission Room, City Hall
1101 Poyntz Avenue
Monday, September 27, 2021
4:00 p.m.

Member	Present	Absent
Kevin West	X	
Phil Anderson	X	
Jana Fallin, Chair	X	
Tom Hanson	X	
Troy Henningson		X
Tanner James		X
Bethany Pingel	X	

Staff Present: Ben Chmiel, Planner; John Adam, Planner.

Public Present: Trent Jones, Applicant; Kathy Dzewaltowski, Public; Linda Glasgow, M/RCPA President; Callie Marks, Owner/Applicant; Brett Ballou, Schultz Construction President; Emily Koenig, Applicant/Project Architect.

1. MEETING OPENING

Fallin called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. Staff performed roll call and confirmed a quorum. There were no public comments.

Anderson moved to approve the minutes from the August 23, 2021 meeting. Pingel seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

2.1. MAJOR REVIEW: 212 S. 5th Street (Edward Wurst House) Demolition

Chmiel presented the [staff report](#). The Boys and Girls Club was requesting approval to demolish an existing noncontributing house and garage at 212 S. 5th Street in the Houston-Pierre Street Historic District and use the property as a green space for youth development programming. Chmiel explained that the primary reason the structure (built in 1927) is considered noncontributing is the existence of asbestos shingles. If the shingles were removed and the original cladding were to be intact underneath, the structure could be considered contributing. The detached garage, built after 1955, was classified as noncontributing.

Staff recommended denial of the request to demolish the existing structures based on failure to meet the Secretary of Interior Standards #1, #2, #3, #5, #6, #7, #9, and #10.

Anderson asked if the residential structure were to be renovated, whether it would be required to meet modern code standards. Chmiel explained that many features may be grandfathered in, but major renovations/alterations could lead to requirements to meet current code standards.

Anderson stated that the properties adjacent to the property in question are not historic in nature. He also stated that the cost to renovate the property may significantly outweigh its value. Anderson also suggested that the existing structure could be given away and moved to a new location.

West asked if the Boys and Girls Club currently owned the property. Chmiel stated that the club does not currently own the property explaining that obtaining the demolition permit was a condition of sale.

Fallin opened the public hearing.

Trent Jones, the Executive Director of the Boys and Girls Club of Manhattan, offered to answer any questions.

Pingel asked for clarification on the location of features included in the plan for the space. Jones stated the current plan has seating where the garage is located and open space where the house is located. He also stated they would be flexible where features are to be located and are happy to work with the City to determine their best locations.

Anderson asked whether the club had considered renting out the property rather than demolishing it to raise funds for the club. Jones said it had been discussed but it would be too great a divergence from standard operations to manage the property in that way. Jones further discussed the amount of damage and the safety issues involved with the property as it currently exists.

Kathy Dzewaltowski expressed her opinion that the proposal did not meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards. She also stated that justifying demolition based on neglect of a property should be discouraged.

Linda Glasgow, President of the Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance, also recommended denial based on the Secretary of the Interior Standards.

Fallin closed the public hearing and started board discussion.

Anderson recommended tabling the discussion that a more thorough assessment of the condition of the house, including the cost of renovation, may be obtained.

Hanson believed the demolition would set a bad precedent of demolition in the area and allowing demolition through neglect. Hanson recommended a vote be completed at the current meeting.

Pingel believed there to be a lot of potential in restoring the property and would be disappointed were the property be demolished.

Anderson again suggested tabling the item pending an assessment of the condition. Fallin agreed that a further assessment of the viability of rehabilitation of the property could be beneficial. Chmiel warned that making a decision based on the cost of rehabilitation would likely fall outside of the scope of the board's decision-making capabilities, not based on the standards.

West moved to recommend denial of the request to demolish the structures located at 212 S. 5th Street. Hanson seconded. Motion carried 4-1-0. Anderson opposing.

2.2. MAJOR REVIEW: 111 N. 4th Street (Charlson & Wilson Abstract Co.) Renovation

Anderson recused himself from item 2.2.

Chmiel presented the [staff report](#). The building, located in the Downtown Historic District, was originally constructed in 1955. The applicant was requesting a permit to comprehensively remodel the building, which included extensive modifications to the façade, to create a more comfortable work environment with natural light and updated finishes. At the recommendation of staff, the applicant produced two proposals for the Board to review. Proposal A included two large windows on the front façade of the building and a conference room/flex enclosed by an aluminum-framed glazing system. The entryway would be widened and further recessed to allow for improved accessibility. The new windows would be in line with the existing pattern of the brick on the façade. Proposal B was similar to A but reduced the changes to the front façade of the building with smaller windows, no visible conference room, and little change to the entryway. Both proposals include changes to the organization of the interior of the building. Chmiel explained that the applicant preferred Proposal A, but proposal B addressed concerns brought up by staff in relation to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Staff recommended denial of Proposal A based on standards #2, #5, #9, and #10. However, staff recommended approval of Proposal B. Chmiel noted that the Board would need to make two separate motions, one for each proposal.

Fallin asked if the recessed entryway in Proposal A was a weather consideration to provide shelter as individuals were entering the building. Chmiel stated that this was not mentioned as a major consideration.

Fallin opened the public hearing.

Callie Marks, co-owner of Charlson and Wilson, gave a presentation on the company, building, and proposals. Marks stated that the original structure was built in 1955 and an addition was added in 1972 that doubled the size of the building's footprint. Charlson and Wilson owned the building since it was originally constructed. Marks argued against the notion that a significant amount of the original material was being removed and stated that a significant amount of the original character of the building was being preserved through the proposals. Marks also made arguments for the proposals based on increased curb appeal and the natural light entering the building. She further stated that to stay relevant and competitive, a more modern and comfortable building is necessary. She presented other instances where buildings in the downtown area have gone through similar improvements. Marks stated that Proposal A is far superior to Proposal B and hoped that the board would approve Proposal A.

West asked for clarification about the location of the 1972 addition. Marks clarified that the area south of the entrance was part of the 1972 addition.

Brett Ballou, President of Schultz Construction, spoke in favor of Proposal A citing the need to update the building to stay relevant and the willingness of Charlson and Wilson to invest in improvements.

Hanson asked if skylights were considered as a method for getting daylight into the building. Ballou stated that there are difficulties associated with putting new openings in a roof to accommodate skylights and there is risk of leaking.

Hanson stated if an owner of the property wanted to remove the windows in the future, there would be no way to exactly match the existing brick unless all of the removed brick was kept. Ballou again pointed out the subjectivity involved in determining whether a substantial amount of the character defining materials. Ballou stated his belief that Proposal A preserves a substantial amount of the history of the building.

West asked if the building were to have a new tenant, if they would have the same issues with the building as it exists. Ballou stated that would likely be seen as an issue for any tenant of the property. West said he agreed it was important for the future viability of the building.

Pingel stated that she preferred Proposal A to Proposal B, as Proposal A's windows are in line with the existing control joints. She stated that the smaller windows in Proposal B are distracting and seem out of place with the pattern of the building. Pingel asked if there had been any consideration of using the windows from Proposal A while leaving the existing entryway. Ballou stated it had not been considered but said significant focus had been put into aligning the windows to the control joints to preserve the character of the building. Ballou further expressed that the intent of the conference room is to create a welcoming and open space for clients.

Project Architect, Emily Koenig explained the process of aligning the windows to the control joints of the building and the thought that went into adding the glazing in the conference room. She further stated that, though a skylight could be beneficial, there are often issues that arise with maintaining skylights to prevent leaking. Koenig explained that the primary purpose for the depth and width of the entry was for improved accessibility.

West asked if the existing concrete was being left unaltered. Koenig confirmed that this was the case.

West stated though he understands the purpose of the Secretary of Interior standards, he believes that the broader perspective of the building's viability should be considered. West stated his belief that the impact of Proposal A is not significantly greater than the Proposal B.

Dzewaltowski, representing the Manhattan Riley County Preservation Alliance, said they did not support Proposal A as presented. They understood the need to update the building, but the National Parks Service guidance on rehabilitation said that character defining features should be worked around when retrofitting for accessibility. She explained that the alliance found Proposal B to be slightly more acceptable as it seemed to be more in-line with the Standards while accomplishing the goals of the applicant.

Glasgow said that the Board should be focusing of the Standards. Glasgow contemplated the incentives and disincentives of being in a district depending on contributing status, explaining that it's the applicant's prerogative to accomplish their goals, but the Board's to assess the project on the Standards.

Fallin closed the public hearing and started board discussion.

Fallin stated her opinion that it is important to provide daylight to the employees working in the building. She stated that allowing the renovation would not be a denial of the historical significance of the building. Fallin stated her support for Proposal A.

There was some discussion as to whether the item should be tabled pending additional information on the 1972 addition.

Pingel expressed support for putting windows in the 1972 addition but did not support the altered entryway in Proposal A. She stated the verticality is not preserved in the entryway in Proposal A. She expressed a desire to table the discussion pending additional information of the addition.

Hanson did not support Proposal A based on the change of the character of the building caused by the conference room and altered entryway. Hanson believed the Secretary of the Interior Standards should be the primary consideration for approval/denial.

Hanson asked if there was any consideration of adding windows on the north side of the building. Koenig stated that the option was considered but that there would be less ambient light and it would present less of a connection to the community since the view would be to a wall on the other side of an alley.

West believed the building would gain character through Proposal A that might enhance its historical significance down the line. Pingel countered with concerns that the building would no longer be considered contributing if alterations were made to the portion built in 1955.

West asked if there had been any consideration for putting the conference room and entryway on the 1972 addition and locating the windows on the north half. Koenig said that had not been considered.

Ballou asked whether it would make a difference if the beams on the glazing system lined up with the control joints. Pingel said it would lessen her concerns. West asked if it could be a condition of approval to line up the beams with the control joints. Chmiel said yes, and the applicant could reapply with the new design, which would be reviewed administratively. Ballou said the applicant would likely not be able to provide more information on the 1972 addition should the discussion be tabled.

West suggested a condition of approval could be that the original brick be stored in order to preserve the potential for reusing the material.

West moved that the Board found that Proposal A met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Property as reviewed in accordance with K.S.A. 75-2724 and would not damage or destroy any historically significant property or historic character-defining features. Hanson seconded. Motion failed 2-2-0, Hanson and Pingel opposing.

Koenig stated that it would be beneficial to get an approval for Proposal B so that construction can begin on the interior of the building. She stated that they would be willing to return with an updated application for the exterior.

Pingel suggested approving Proposal B with the option of using the window design from Proposal A.

Hanson moved that the Board found that proposal B met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Property as reviewed in accordance with K.S.A. 75-2724 and would not damage or destroy any historically significant property or historic character-defining features. Pingel seconded. Motion carried 3-1-0, Fallin opposing.

3.1. WORK SESSION: Local Register Amendments

There were no new comments about the amendments to the local register as they appear in the draft Manhattan Development Code (MDC). Chmiel noted that the final draft would be published that week and sent to the Planning Board and City Commission for adoption.

3.2. WORK SESSION: Board Priorities

The Board agreed to table the discussion on board priorities until the October 25, 2021 meeting.

4. MINOR REVIEWS

Chmiel presented a minor review for 423 Poyntz Avenue for a wall sign on the façade. The Board had no comments.

5. UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The work session on board priorities was moved to the next meeting.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Fallin adjourned the meeting at 6:10 pm. The next regular meeting would be held October 25, 2021 in City Hall.