

PLANNING REPORT

Architectural Review Board

Wednesday, December 18, 2024

72 and 84 N. High Street, 20 North Street 24-145INF

<https://dublinohiousa.gov/arb/24-145>

Case Summary

Addresses	72 and 84 N. High Street, 20 North Street, Dublin, OH 43017
Proposal	Informal review and feedback for renovation at three properties in the Historic District. The 0.71-acre site is zoned Historic District-HC, Historic Core, and is located northeast of the intersection of N. High Street and North Street.
Request	Non-binding review and feedback for future development applications.
Zoning	HD-HC, Historic Core District
Planning Recommendation	<u>Consideration of the Discussion Questions</u>
Next Steps	Subsequent to informal review and feedback, the applicant may apply for a Minor Project Review (MPR) with the Architectural Review Board.
Applicant	Stage Capital Partners, Owner Tim Bass, Bass Studio Architects
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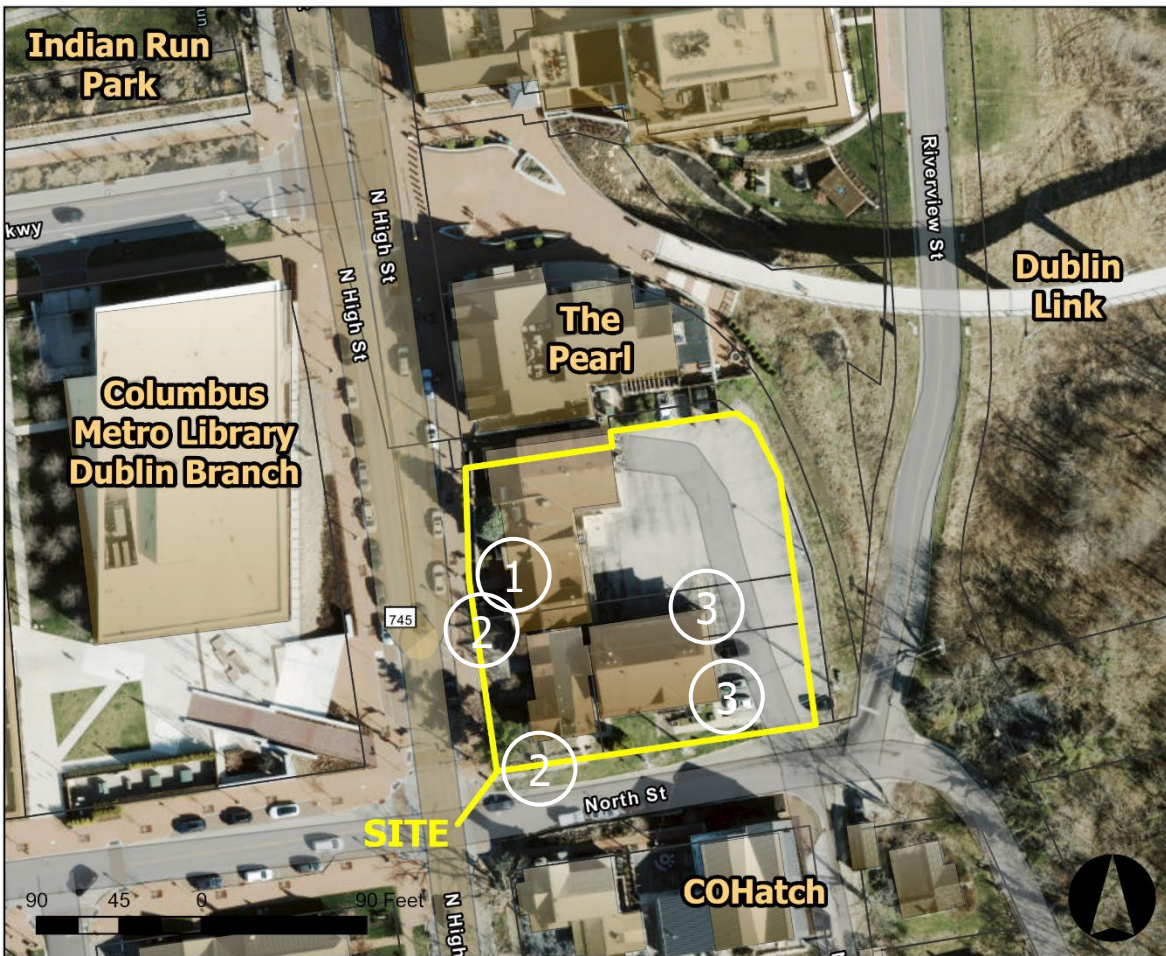
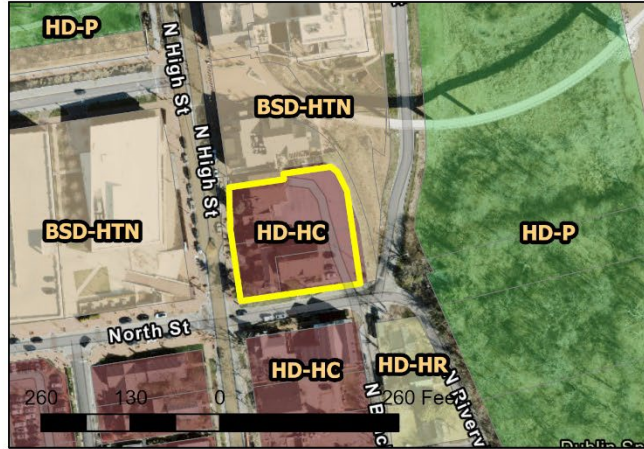
Site Location Map

24-145INF - 84 N. High St, 72 N. High St, 20 North St



Site Features

- 1 Historic Gable/Box Bay Window
- 2 Historic Walls
- 3 Stone Arches



1. Background

Site Summary

The three lots/addresses have been informally referred to as the “old Oscar’s Restaurant site”, located at the northeast corner of N. High Street and North Street. The combined site is just under 31,000 square feet and zoned HD-HC, Historic Core District. It sits at the northern end of the Historic District, with Bridge Street District - Historic Transition Neighborhood directly to the north at The Pearl Restaurant. The site is highly visible from N. High Street, North Street, the Dublin Library, and the Link Pedestrian Bridge.

The 72/84 N. High Street structure is identified as a 1930 building, with the south portion being “Queen Anne” and the north portion being post-modern according to the 2017 Historic and Cultural Assessment (HCA). The building was noted as having poor integrity due to multiple additions and renovations. In the 1963 ODOT aerial map, attached, both 72/84 N. High Street are seen as single family houses; these structures were expanded and joined together over subsequent years, with the final configuration built ca. 2010. 72 N. High Street has distinctly Victorian details, suggesting that the original building is much older. 20 North Street did not appear until approximately 1989 on the ODOT aerial maps; it is not noted in the HCA. All three addresses are Background on the *Historic Design Guidelines* Map.

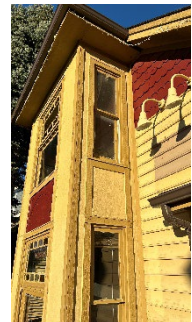
The last major development was in 2009 (Case 09-002, attached), including variances by the Board of Zoning Appeals in December of 2009 (attached) for building setbacks for 72 and 84, maximum lot coverage, and parking, making the status of the development legal. 1987 variances by the BZA waived parking requirements and parking lot interior landscaping. The scope of these proposed property upgrades do not change the status of these approvals; however, staff has worked with the representatives to encourage modern improvements, as described herein.

Signage and maintenance cases were processed in 2008 and 2010. A proposal to redevelop the site in its entirety (attached) was discussed in 2019-2020 and did not move forward.

Signature Features

Even though the property is Background, Staff believes there are some signature features that should be kept to reinforce District character. These include:

- The gable and box bay window combination on 72 and 84. The northernmost one is original per the 1963 aerial photo (attached) and matches the existing form at North High Brewery, the middle one is a replica, and the southern one is an interpretation of that form. Per initial examination, it appears that the northern box bay is overlain with modern siding; there may be original materials and details underneath that could be exposed, repaired, and copied on the other bays. Staff suspects there may be Stick Style elements/details underneath.
- The historic stone walls on the site. 84 has an original wall and pillar perpendicular to N. High Street, and there are remnants of one parallel to North Street. These are not noted in the HCA; however, historic photos show them.
- The stone arches at the southeast and northeast corners of 20 North Street, which have segmented arch and keystone details. While not historic, they provide interesting pedestrian elements along the right-of-way and use traditional stone.



The Board is requested to confirm the preservation of these signature features, as the project moves into MPR.

2. Zoning Code

Historic District – Historic Core District

The intent of the Historic Core is to ensure sensitive infill development and provide an improved environment for walking while accommodating vehicles.

Historic Design Guidelines

The Phase II Guidelines update has implications for Background buildings and became effective on November 18, 2024. New sections suggest using adjacent Landmark buildings to guide Background building details: this will apply at MPR.

Process

The next step before the ARB is a Minor Project Review (MPR). The updated Code, effective on December 18, 2024, permits administrative changes to Background buildings that do not change the building envelope. Both staff and the applicant agree this project is too significant for administrative approval, so it will be escalated to the Board per new Code language.

3. Project

Description

New owners purchased the property approximately a year ago, and they desire to update the exteriors and interiors of the buildings. The envelopes of the buildings will not change, and minor site work is proposed. Interior uses for 72 and 84 N. High Street include office and retail, with retail being at the High Street level (second floor on the plans), and office on the first floor walkout on the east side. The third floor will largely be vacant, allowing some vaulted ceilings for the retail spaces. 20 North Street will remain office. Lot coverage, setbacks, and parking counts will largely remain the same.

Scale, Mass, and Height

These elements are fundamentally unaffected by this request, as the project involves cosmetic upgrades described below. The overall scale, mass, and height of this building would likely not be approved per current Code if they were proposed today, yet judicious use of architectural details and materials may help mitigate current conditions.

The right side of the east elevation's gable and shed roof forms are not original, based on historic photos. The 3rd floor plan (Sheet A1.11) shows more of the original hipped roof: there may be an opportunity to remove the current shed/gable roof configuration to improve massing and height as seen from the Link Bridge and N. Riverview Street.

Architectural Details

72/84 N. High Street

The applicants state that they are taking architectural cues from COhatch (approved under the previous Bridge Street District Code and the Historic Dublin Design Guidelines in effect at that time) and The Pearl (Bridge Street District project and zoning), providing a more modern interpretation of the buildings. Conversely, staff sees this location as the northernmost threshold of the Historic District, visible from both High Street and the Link Bridge, adjacent to North High Brewing (individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places [NRHP]) and

the future renovations of 53 and 62 N. Riverview (Landmark buildings). Staff believes that this introduction to the District should be notable and distinct, setting the character as one moves south down High Street. The Board is asked to comment.

Proposed West Elevation/N. High Street

This building is separated into three distinct subareas, essentially broken by firewalls that are visible on the roof. The roof is simplified by removal of skylights and a center chimney flue. New windows and a storefront system are shown on the left side. Storefront entries are meant to be emphasized per Code, using roofs, windows, additional molding, or other features.

The center section, between the firewalls, contains 84's original gable and box bay window element, plus the later connection between 84 and 72. The left portion of this section has the stone cladding removed, in favor of horizontal siding. Staff believes that the stone cladding might be worth retaining, as it demarcates the historic edge of 84. The center section is reworked to provide angled storefront entries and larger windows. The box bay windows are reconfigured and widened to remove the existing windows with colored top sashes. Staff does not support this, based on the significant feature analysis, historic photos, and the change in window-to-siding proportions. New windows are generally grouped together in twos, with off-set sashes, which is an untraditional form. The windows are quite wide, compared to their height: historic proportions should be maintained to meet the Guidelines better. The Board is asked to comment.

The right section is shown with similar fenestration as the existing condition, although with new windows and doors in slightly different patterns. Windows are shown with the off-centered sash. As with the left side, the storefront door should have prominence. The interpretation of the original gable and box bay window is appropriately simplified: details and cross sections should be supplied at MPR.

Proposed South and North Elevations

The south elevation faces North Street and currently has utilities/mechanicals, vertical siding, and a variety of modern roof pitches. No substantial changes are proposed, other than siding and window replacement. The screening of utilities here, and for the entire project, should be addressed at MPR.

The north elevation faces The Pearl and will also be minimally changed. It is not highly visible, based on the proximity of The Pearl building.

Proposed East Elevation

The east elevation faces the Scioto River and the Link Bridge and is highly visible as part of the pedestrian entry to the Historic District. Analyzing the building by firewall locations again, the left portion essentially retains its fenestration, with only an upper level door changed to a window. The existing window openings are very modern in nature and are difficult to adapt to something new; however, the applicant shows modest lintel details. This portion of the building is largely hidden by 20 North Street.

The centermost portion of this elevation is enhanced by removal of the inappropriate arched windows and addition of windows to capture river views. These should take arrangement, proportion, and detail cues from historic examples.

The right area's windows here are balanced by the addition of two new window bays, at staff's request. Two new windows are added to the third floor gable. All windows here are shown taller and thinner, more closely matching the traditional window forms espoused by the Guidelines. The doorway has a new shed roof with brackets to emphasize it. Existing air conditioning units on the far right side will be removed; their relocation and screening should be carefully considered.

20 North Street

The existing building has a stone base on the lowest level with the previously-noted signature arches, decks facing North Street and the river, and stairs from the deck to North Street. Currently, a paved area addresses North Street; however, this location is also used for mechanical equipment. Overall, the existing windows are not historically proportioned, yet they are regularly arranged. Noting that this is a modern building, there are opportunities for some more contemporary forms and materials; however, the Guidelines for New Construction (Chapter 5) apply. They note avoiding the extreme of modern architecture and that continuity and compatibility are most important in design.

Proposed South Elevation/North Street

Major changes here include new windows and window arrangements, removal of the gable feature, replacement of decking and railing, and revised stairs to North Street. The window forms and placement are modern, without sills, lintels, and trim. These elements are required by Code, necessitating a Waiver at MPR, and the Board is requested to comment.

Staff appreciates the removal of the off-center gable to simplify the façade. The decking, railing design, and materials are modern in character; reference the previous discussion. Staff also appreciates the continued physical connection between the second floor and North Street, creating more pedestrian activity in this location. The new stairs will need to be carefully coordinated with the right-of-way improvements. The signature feature stone arches are kept, at staff's request. A doorway in the southeast corner of the lowest level is not prominent; this needs to be addressed at MPR. At MPR, the location and screening of mechanical equipment facing North Street needs to be carefully considered.

Proposed East and West Elevations

The east elevation shows a loosely irregular arrangement of modern-style windows without sills, trim, or lintels. Emphasis is placed on corner windows, wrapping around the building. A new railing is shown at the base of the building.

The west elevation is essentially hidden adjacent to the back of 72 N. High Street. A shed roof is being replaced by more stairs to allow upper-level access.

Proposed North Elevation

The north elevation faces the parking lot, interior to the site. The views to and from the Link Bridge should be highlighted and improved. New window arrangements match those previously described, and the existing lower-level storefronts are replaced by a continuous band of windows and/or doors. Pedestrian entries should be prominent. The signature arched stone details remain. Replacement decks and railings are shown.

Materials

Materials are preliminarily indicated on the elevations; no color choices are indicated at this early stage. Inspirational images are provided.

72/84 N. High Street

Existing stone and horizontal siding of varying reveals, at staff's request, are indicated for the three sections of the building. New trim boards are proposed as well, in a variety of locations. Some Boral-type product is indicated at the foundation, requiring a Waiver at MPR, which has previously been approved in appropriate locations. Staff supports the use of a stone water table instead for material balance and durability.

Staff appreciates breaking the mass of the building into three more separate sections by the use of differing types of horizontal siding. We would like to see greater preservation of the box bay windows and gable forms and details in the front center of the building, including restoring, and replicating, any stylistic elements evidenced beneath the modern cladding. Since this is the historic portion of the building, we suggest using the traditional 4-inch lap siding on the center section, with the 7-inch reveal on the new, right side. If the original 84 portion is found to be Stick Style, a variety of details and colors might be used.

The mechanical equipment screen on the east elevation, facing the Link Bridge, will need special consideration to make it appear as an integral part of the building. On the right side, the gable's rectangular trim boards will be removed, and staff supports retaining wood shingles to provide some interest in this gable, unless these roof forms are removed entirely as previously noted.

Deck railings for the entire project are shown on the 20 North Street's elevations (Sheet A2.3.2), but not shown on the old 72/84 elevations; these need to be shown with the new design for accurate evaluation at MPR. There is debate about their character overall: traditional in detail versus modern to minimize their appearance. Previous commercial deck projects have maintained a traditional appearance (30-32 and 114 S. High Street); however, those buildings are Landmark. Here, we have Background buildings of varying ages, and the railing can be a unifying element for the entire property: the Board is requested to comment.

20 North Street

This building is to be clad in board and batten fiber cement board. Decks have painted metal railing, with the attendant question from above. Decking material will require a Waiver, if Trex or similar, is proposed. No information is yet provided about window details.

Staff is also concerned about the use of vertical siding/board and batten on this tall building. Some horizontal materials/elements could be used to help break up the visual mass. The bank of commercial windows and doors at the lowest level might consider using a stone water table to maintain some historic character and repeat this material.

4. Site Improvements

Minimal changes are being proposed to the site at this point; this is logical as the City works to finalize the North Street/Riverview Village streetscape and alignment details. Improvements along N. High Street are independent of Riverview Village and will be an impactful opportunity.

These buildings sit back farther from the street than typical (see Sheets A1.3 and A1.4), and there is an opportunity to close that gap with landscaping and streetscape improvements. There are already stone walls and an iron fence along some of the N. High Street edge, which help to enclose the space, but are not visually coordinated. Street trees are present in the right-of-way. 72 currently has open lawn and an indirect, modern deck to the front door, losing the sense of on-street engagement. This entire edge could be greatly enhanced with additional canopy trees, hedges, a consistent fence/stone wall, or other techniques to reach out to pedestrians and frame the architecture. Without a proposed restaurant use, the front patio area and grape arbor could be upgraded to a public gathering area, outdoor display space, or some other kind of activity. The applicant proposes to remove overgrown trees that hide the building, which is positive. Historic walls shall be preserved and repaired.

Similarly, the North Street frontage has an opportunity to improve street connectivity, at the proper time. Staff is aware that AEP will have transformer locations in lieu of overhead lines, and construction of new sidewalk will require retaining walls along North Street, enhancing this frontage substantially. This may conflict with the proposed relocated stairway. The existing patio space should be reimagined into something notable. The arched stone signature elements are now preserved as part of the plan, and they should be celebrated with full integration into the site's design. Remnants of the historic stone wall shall be preserved and repaired.

Site-wide, there may be encroachments (sidewalk, pergola, parking) into N. High Street right-of-way; the applicant shall provide any encroachments previously granted at MPR. Any necessary lot line adjustments for Building Code may be done administratively through the Planning office. Lighting improvements should be considered during MPR, as well as a Master Sign Plan. Unused planters throughout the site should be removed, and different patio paving and fencing/railing types could be consolidated. These updates are valuable for the property and the District as a whole.

5. Access, Utilities, and Parking

Any improvements made within rights-of-way or easements shall be per the Historic District Section of the City of Dublin's Bridge Street District Streetscape Character Guidelines or as amended by the City during the Riverview Village design development activities.

Staff notes that any utility connections/relocations shall be shown on the plan sheets at MPR. Staff also notes that any disturbance or replacement of sanitary and/or water connections will require permits.

Parking is noted as legal per the 2009 Variance. The removal of the large restaurant improves this situation significantly: restaurants have the highest parking requirements. Initial calculations indicate that 72 spaces are required and 44 are provided.

At least one parking space is currently located in the right-of-way; this will need to be removed. It is also likely that a few additional parking spaces will be affected by the reconfiguration of the North Street/N. Riverview intersection. Staff has requested that the new owner make reasonable improvements to screen the parking lot from public view on the east and south sides. The trash dumpster could be upgraded to have self-closing gates and perhaps be in a less visible location, fully on this site. This will be evaluated at MPR, along with the timing for the installation of such improvements.

If this project were built today, bike parking would be required at the rate of one space per 10 required vehicle spaces equating to eight spaces. The City has a policy of improving bike and pedestrian facilities whenever possible, so staff requests inclusion of these at MPR. Bike racks were to be relocated in 2009, yet none are seen today. Placing them along N. High Street could help activate that edge.

6. Discussion Questions

- 1) Does the Board support the use of COhatch and the Pearl as architectural cues or should the project focus on N. High Brewing, 53 and 62 N. Riverview, and the rest of the District?
- 2) Does the Board agree with the preservation and emphasis of the identified signature features?
- 3) What is the Board's opinion about the streetscape opportunities along N. High and North Streets?
- 4) Does the Board support the window openings as shown? Would the Board support a Waiver for lack of sills, lintels, and trim on 20 North Street?
- 5) What is the Board's opinion of the proposed deck railings?
- 6) Other considerations by the Board.