

City of Dublin Architectural Review Board

Planning Report

Wednesday, July 27, 2016

30 S. High Street – Demolition

Case Summary

Agenda Item	2
Case Number	16-050ARB
Proposal	Demolition of an existing commercial structure within the Historic District.
Request	Review and approval of a demolition of a historic structure under the provisions of Code Section 153.070-.077 and the <i>Historic Dublin Design Guidelines</i> .
Site Location	30 S. High Street, located on the east side of South High Street, approximately 50 feet north of the Spring Hill Lane intersection.
Applicant	Jason Liu; represented by Tim Bass, Bass Studio Architects
Case Managers	Lori Burchett, AICP, Planner II (614) 410-4656 or lburchett@dublin.oh.us
Planning Recommendation	Disapproval Based on Planning's analysis, the proposed demolition does not meet the criteria of the <i>Historic Dublin Design Guidelines</i> and Zoning Code and disapproval is recommended.

Facts	
Site Description	5 acres
Zoning	BSD-HC, Historic Core District
Surrounding Zoning and Uses	North, South and West: BSD-HC, Historic Core District with commercial uses East: BSD-HR, Historic Residential District with single-family uses
Site Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two vernacular commercial structures located along street • Off-street parking, limited outbuildings, and historic stone wall in the rear • Commercial buildings are at higher elevations with a grade change sloping west to east • Hydrant from Dublin's original dry fire hydrant system between the two structures
Neighborhood Contact	The applicant reached out to and met with surrounding property owners on June 27, 2016 to discuss their conceptual plan. The applicant has provided a summary of this meeting. In reference to the building specifically the applicant states that: the neighbors supported both the proposed scale and use of the new construction; the neighbors recognized the historic aspect of the cabin, and are receptive to the idea of moving the cabin. There was considerable discussion of the historic cabin and its associated merits and condition; and all residents present appreciate the historic qualities of the cabin but are in amenable to the proposed site plan.
Consultant Review	The City enlisted the services of a preservation consultant, Christine Trebellas, to analyze the architectural and historic significance of the existing structure. Additionally, the City is currently undergoing a Historical and Cultural Assessment. The consultants conducting this assessment have provided a brief, preliminary assessment of the subject property. A copy of these reports included with the packet for review.

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Historical Background	<p>The subject property is listed on the Ohio Historic Inventory (OHI) through a City-sponsored initiative in March 2003. The inventory provides a brief description of the location, background, and architecture of a building, site, structure, or object of architectural or historical significance. Inclusion on the OHI is not a form of protection for a historic resource, nor does it provide owners with a list of restrictions.</p> <p>The inventory describes the existing structure as log construction with cement shingle siding and the log structure is visible in the attic. A lean-to addition is located at the rear and wall dormer is located on the west side. The inventory notes that the structure is one of the few remaining log buildings in Dublin and the building may date from the first half of the 19th</p>

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	century, and is on the National Register of Historic Places.	
Proposal	The proposal is a request to demolish the existing commercial structure for the future redevelopment of restaurant and patio at 30 and 32 S. High Street. The applicant has provided a conceptual proposal for reference along with an assessment of the existing building and site conditions. Any new structure or modifications require approval by the Architectural Review Board.	

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Process	<p>Section 153.070 of the Zoning Code identifies criteria for the review and approval of a Board Order for proposals within the Architectural Review District Boundaries (full text of criteria attached). Following is an analysis based on the applicable review criteria.</p> <p>The information provided by the applicant as part of the application materials describes that the Conditions for Demolition portion of the criteria and how they have been met. The following is an analysis on those Review Standards and the information provided by the applicant.</p>	
Review Standards		
§153.176 (A)(1)	<i>Structure contains no architectural and historic features significant to the character of the area.</i>	
Criterion not met	<p>Applicant The applicant asserts that although the original structure was built sometime around 1850, significant modifications to the structure, including the application of asbestos siding, a wood frame structure appearing to date to ca. 1900, and a lean-to addition to the rear of the structure, have diminished the character of the original log structure. The applicant notes that although the central log structure on 30 South High St. is of historic significance, it is hidden within later additions. The applicant contends the rough-hewn wood element is only a portion of the structure and it is entirely buried in additions, new cladding, and veneered stone construction at the base. The applicant notes that these later additions are not of the same significance as the log cabin portion and that revealing the central log structure would require a significant demolition in its own right and would result in a one room structure approximately 20' x 20'.</p> <p>Consultant The City enlisted the services of a preservation consultant, Christine Trebellas, to analyze the architectural and historic significance of the existing structure. Ms. Trebellas disagrees with the applicant's assessment that the existing structure displays minimal features of architectural or</p>	

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historical significance to the character of the area with the exception of its age. The structure is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Dublin High Street Historic District. This locally significant historic district runs along both sides of High Street from 6 High Street to 126 High Street and contains approximately 18 contributing structures.

Ms. Trebellas further states that “despite several additions and alterations, it still retains the log structure under the exterior siding as well as several character-defining features which reflect the growth of the historic High Street area over the years.” Ms. Trebellas notes that some of the exterior alterations, such as the shed-roof front dormer, rear shed roof addition, and standing seam metal roof, contribute to the character of the historic district and represent the growth of the area from early exploration to early 20th-century commerce. Based on current information and would still consider the building a contributing structure to the National Register-listed historic district.

Staff

Staff finds that features of architectural and historic significance do exist, including the layers of historic development in the building and in the District. Additionally, the Ohio Historic Inventory states that this structure is one of the few remaining log buildings in Dublin and may date from the first half of the 19th century and features of the structure contribute to the Dublin Historic District. As noted by the consultant, “even though it has lost some integrity of materials and workmanship as a result of the asbestos siding, it still has good integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association. Its status as one of the few remaining log cabins in Dublin further contributes to its importance to the area.” Staff finds the significance of this structure to be such that every effort should be made to retain it.

§153.176 (A)(2)

No reasonable economic use for the structure as it exists or as it might be restored, and no feasible and prudent alternative to demolition exists.

Criterion not met

Applicant

The applicant states maintaining the log structure would severely restrict the size and type of spaces, interior continuity, and street presence for this property. The character of the construction of the log component makes opening that space up to make a larger space structurally infeasible as well as antithetical to the idea of preserving the structure as an historic artifact. Additionally, the structure is encumbered by low ceilings integral to the log construction. Since the log component is one room, extensive addition and modification would be required to allow for economic use of this element. As noted previously, this cost and effort would still result in a

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severely restricted development potential.

The applicant enlisted the services of Jezerinac, Geers, and Associates, Inc. to assess the structure. In a report prepared by Darren Cook, P.E. states that the structure is in "satisfactory to poor condition overall." Further, the amount of work needed to restore the basement to a sound condition would be extensive and invasive to the point that it may call into question the stability of the cabin above. From a use perspective, it is likely that extensive reinforcement will be needed as existing framing load capacities are likely to be below what would be considered suitable in present day buildings. The report concludes that *"it does appear that renovation can be satisfactorily accomplished provided attention to the damaged sections is given in an appropriate manner."*

Consultant

In a report provided by the preservation consultant, Ms. Trebellas recommends that the applicant provide additional analysis on how the structure may be developed in other ways, citing examples such as a small dining or gather room. Ms. Trebellas recommends further exploration of suitable uses. The report further states that "although the structure may be in poor condition by today's standards, it is unclear from the information presented if the building can be renovated to an inhabitable level and/or can have a practical use." Ms. Trebellas argues that just because the property is not suitable for the proposed development plan does not mean that the property has no potential for development.

Staff

It does not appear that sufficient information regarding how the structure may be re-developed was provided as part of this application. The engineering report provided by the applicant notes that the renovation of structure can be satisfactorily accomplished. An additional analysis regarding cost estimates should be provided in order to make a compelling case. Staff finds the documentation submitted insufficient to demonstrate that demolition is the only alternative. The building has been identified as contributing to the historic character of the District. The loss of any demonstrably historic structure is irreversible and every effort should be made to ensure preservation and protection.

§153.176 (A)(3)

Deterioration has progressed where it is not economically feasible to restore the structure and such neglect has not been willful.

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Criterion not met	<p>Applicant</p> <p>The applicant enlisted the services of Darren Cook, PE at Jezerinac, Geers, and Associates, Inc., to conduct a structural assessment of the property to document its current structural conditions and to identify the rehabilitation efforts necessary to improve the structure to a sound condition.</p> <p>The structural assessment noted that the structure is in satisfactory to poor condition overall. It notes that the walls and floors exhibit a fair amount of movement and shifting in that they are noticeably not plumb nor level; and the basement walls are in poor condition with a significant amount of erosion and shifting being present. The report further states that “unfortunately, the structure may not be able to be fully reused in any renovation due to the condition of the basement and how it is intertwined with the log cabin framing above from a practical perspective.”</p> <p>The report states that the structure at 30 S. High may not be able to be fully reused in any renovation due to: the condition of the basement and how it is intertwined with the log cabin framing above from a practical perspective; the amount of work needed to restore the basement to a sound condition would be extensive and invasive to the point that it may call into question the stability of the cabin above; and additional concerns about the lack of direct observations of portions presently covered by finishes.</p> <p>The applicant states that the following would need to be remediated in order to reuse the structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Entirely remove and rebuild the foundation• Abate asbestos siding and interior walls• Reset the shifted log component, which may cause new structural concerns• Re-chink of all the logs <p>The consultant states that from a use perspective, it is likely that extensive reinforcement will be needed as existing framing load capacities are likely to be below what would be considered suitable in present day buildings.</p> <p>Overall, it is the applicant’s opinion that renovating the existing structure is not a viable economic option.</p> <p>Consultant</p> <p>In review of Criteria 3, Ms. Trebellas states that neither report fully addresses the economic feasibility of the restoring the log structure. Many of the issues noted in the applicant’s engineering reports are common and not unusual considering the age of the structure. It is recommended that</p>

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	<p>the applicant provide an analysis of how this structure could be restored and the costs associated with it. Further noting that ideally a consultant with expertise in log cabin construction techniques and restoration should examine the building. A thorough cost analysis should be prepared to determine the economic feasibility of restoring one of the few remaining log structures in Dublin.</p> <p>Additional, the consultant notes that the applicant's engineering report does not state that the log structure is not sound or at risk for structural failure. Nor has the building been condemned by a government authority. Based on this report, it is unclear if it can be restored or needs to be demolished. The consultant contends "that until more information is provided by a contractor or other consultant familiar with historic log cabin construction and renovations, we cannot fully determine the economic feasibility of renovating the structure."</p> <p>Staff Although any deterioration that has occurred on the property is not due to willful neglect by the current applicant, the materials submitted by the applicant do not fully address the overall economic feasibility of restoring the structure. Staff is not convinced the information provided demonstrates the deterioration has progressed to the point where it is not feasible to restore the structure. The applicant has not presented a thorough analysis to prove this point and no alternatives were offered other than demolition.</p>
§153.176 (A)(4)	<p><i>The location of the structure impedes the orderly development, substantially interferes with the Purposes of the District, or detracts from the historical character of its immediate vicinity;</i> Or, <i>The proposed construction to replace the demolition significantly improves the overall quality of the Architectural Review District without diminishing the historic value of the vicinity or the District.</i></p>
Criterion not met	<p>Applicant With respect to the first component, the applicant states that contributing additions over the years have diluted the original structure's historic significance and does not presently add to the architectural or historic character of the area. The applicant contends that the significant and contributing portion of the structure is the log cabin component that is woven into the frame of the existing structure.</p> <p>If the existing structure were to remain, its location would not be an impediment to orderly development, as no redevelopment is contemplated for this area of the District in the City's adopted plans. The Purposes of the District are outlined in several adopted plans, including the Bridge Street</p>

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Vision Report and the recently adopted Dublin Community Plan, both of which emphasize the preservation and enhancement of the historic district.

In the applicant's opinion, a new commercial structure would enhance the character and value of the neighborhood, while respecting the historic village scale and architectural character. The applicant has provided conceptual drawings of the proposed construction to replace the demolition. The proposed restaurant would include complete renovation of the adjoining 32 S. High Street structure with an addition to the side-year, and a patio fronting High Street.

The applicant argues that:

1. The log component of the structure occupies a significant street location on the threshold of the historic Bridge Street Corridor. The character of the log component, with the small windows and no door, prevents the development of a street presence befitting this location.
2. The proposed concept plan saves and repurposes the building to the south, 32 South High Street; the street facade will remain largely unchanged. The site strategy salvages the stone wall at the rear between the two properties, as well as the mature tree line.
3. Maintaining the log component will isolate the space behind it (east) on the site. The log element is not large enough to be a kitchen or bar and is not sensible as a contemporary dining space (low ceiling heights and limited openings).
4. Demolishing the existing 30 South high building will allow us to create a patio space, bounded by the historic 32 building and new kitchen, on the 30 site, that is of similar scale.
5. The patio will be complementary to the patio across the street. The two patios will create an interesting, active pedestrian space and vibrant threshold to the Bridge street corridor. The log structure offers no activation of, or interaction with, the street.

Consultant

In the Historic Preservation Assessment, Christine Trebellas states that demolishing one of the few remaining log structures in Dublin would have an adverse effect and diminish the overall historic value of the district; and that the proposed patio would create a void, barren space along the street in winter months and not contribute to the overall quality of the district. Ms. Trebellas notes that the applicant as not presented a thorough analysis for economically viable options and cost estimates and income forecasts should be presented. Additionally, Ms. Trebellas states that demolishing the structure and replacing it with a new structure would detract from the historic district and reduce the overall quality of the district. She contends that "it would be replacing an original with a

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	<p>substitute and provide a false sense of history.”</p> <p>Staff</p> <p>While staff supports the applicant’s statements of the vibrancy created by a restaurant, the existing structure in its location would not impede on orderly development in the Historic District, nor does it detract from the historic value of the vicinity. The structure is considering a contributing feature of the Historic District and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The consultant’s assessment is that demolishing the structure and replacing it with a new structure would detract from the historic district and reduce the overall quality of the district. Staff finds the proposed demolition would remove a significant historic structure and diminish the unique historic character of the surrounding area.</p>

Recommendation	Disapproval
Recommendation	Planning has reviewed the proposed demolition with respect to the Zoning Code as well as the <i>Historic Dublin Design Guidelines</i> and recommends <i>disapproval</i> of the proposed demolition as the review criteria have not been satisfied.