



# MEMO

To: Nichole Martin, AICP  
Planner I, City of Dublin

From: Christine Trebellas, AICP, LEED Green Associate  
Historic Preservation Consultant

Date: November 11, 2019

Re: Review for COHATCH new construction at 25 North Street

## INTRODUCTION

The applicant proposes to demolish the existing ca. 1960 commercial building at 25 North Street and replace it with a 10,000 SF co-work and event space. The existing structure consists of a gable-roof two-story rectangular structure built into a hillside and clad in stucco and wood shingles. To the west of the structure lies a stone retaining wall as well as ca. 1890 Queen-Anne style house at 56 N. High Street. The property at 25 North Street has little integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It was surveyed as part of the 2017 City of Dublin Historical and Cultural Assessment and recommended non-contributing to the local district and non-contributing to the recommended Dublin High Street Historic District boundary increase. This reviewer agrees with that recommendation and demolition maybe a suitable option for the non-contributing structure at 25 North Street.

As such, this review will focus on the suitability of the proposed new construction and its compatibility with structures in the historic district. It is based upon this reviewer's understanding of the City of Dublin Bridge Street District (BSD) Zoning Districts, and the Preservation, Rehabilitation, and New Construction Guidelines of the Historic Dublin Design Guidelines. These comments are based on the reviewer's professional experience and judgment regarding historic architecture and preservation projects. However, these comments do not (and cannot) identify every issue that may be of concern to the City of Dublin and its various review boards. As always, the final determination of these issues lies with the City of Dublin.

## THOUGHTS on the NEW CONSTRUCTION at 25 NORTH STREET (COHATCH)

The new two-and-a-half-story commercial structure at 25 North street will consist of 10,000 SF co-work and event space with offices and a brewhouse. The building is divided into three volumes: the shed-roof, one-and-a-half-story brewhouse to the west, the two-and-a-half-story asymmetrical gable-roof office/event space in the middle, and the two-and-a-half-story asymmetrical gable-roof office area overhanging the ground floor along Blacksmith Lane. Materials include a rusticated stone lower level, vertical board-and-batten fiber cement siding, and seam metal roofs. Entry to the lower level will be on Blacksmith Lane while the first floor can be accessed from North Street through several storefront entries or a glass and metal frame garage door to the brewery. Windows appear to be storefront windows with a black finish or large direct-set windows with metal frames in a dark grey finish. Landscaping includes a vertical plank wood fence to the south to screen utilities from the neighbors as well as a concrete and limestone gravel courtyard to connect the historic building along High Street and the new commercial

structure to the rear. Hornbeam trees and switchgrass provide additional screening and soften the edges of the patio/courtyard.

While the design of the building is modern, it has many traditional details such as the stone foundation, the gable and shed roofs, and the seam metal roof material. However, the mass and scale of the new commercial building completely overpower the neighboring historic buildings. The roof is a massive block from above and the asymmetrical gables and large plate glass windows do little to break up the mass. The roofline should be lower than the neighboring historic structure at 56 N. High Street, especially since they share a lot. And the almost 41' high mass of the building along Blacksmith Lane is much larger than that of the simple, one-story cottages, garages, and outbuildings in the area. In addition, the elevations of the new structure are disjointed—they do not read as a cohesive whole and are at odds with the neighboring buildings in the historic district. The various uneven rooflines, the large windows with no pattern in their placement, the large rows of storefront windows, and the first-floor overhang along Blacksmith Lane create an uneasy composition. The new commercial building fails to satisfy many of the criteria for new construction in the historic district and does not take design cues from the neighboring buildings. The scale, proportion, massing, building forms, and numerous asymmetrical gable rooflines do not match those of the surrounding homes and commercial buildings and will detract from the historic district. The design should be revised to be simpler and more symmetrical in character to create a building more suitable to the style, scale, massing, and proportion of the historic district. Areas that should be addressed include:

#### NORTH STREET (North) Elevation

- The elevation is disjointed and does not read as a cohesive whole.
- The overall height and mass of the building is too large for the neighboring structures of the historic district and overpowers them. Consider lowering the roofline so that it matches or is below that of the neighboring structure on N. High Street. In addition, consider reducing the overall size of the building so that it does not overpower the smaller residences in the area.
- The stone foundation of the lower level looks good. I would suggest using a variety of siding types on the upper floors to help reduce the mass. And while board-and-batten siding is very popular now, it may look dated in years to come. I would suggest using a combination of horizontal and vertical boards to clad the building much like in some of the early inspiration images.
- The front-gable roofs have different slopes and are not centered on the mass of the building below. They appeared disjointed and do not read as a cohesive whole. They should match or mimic the gable of the neighboring historic building and be centered. Or at least the gables should match like the sawtooth roofs of early factory buildings.
- The saltbox roof over the brewery section of the building does not read properly. The two-story part should be centered over the gable and the one-story part a continuous lean-to or shed roof.
- Overall, the windows are too large with no divisions. Consider dividing the storefront windows into small sections of three and providing additional mullions or using divided lights. Color and material are appropriate for a modern storefront window in a commercial building.
- The windows on the upper floors also need to be articulated and placed in a pattern—they are disjointed in the current rendering. I would suggest dividing them into double or triple sash or casement or fixed windows with mullions and/or divided lights so they blend better with those in the surrounding historic district. Color is appropriate for a modern commercial building.

- Remove the rear overhang along Blacksmith Lane. It does not read structurally—the thin columns do not appear like they can support the massive two-story structure above. Overhangs may have appeared in historic buildings, but not to this extent.

#### BLACKSMITH LANE (East) Elevation

- The elevation is disjointed and does not read as a cohesive whole.
- The upper two floors are massive and do not appear like they can be supported by five thin columns. And the mass and scale are at odds with the neighboring one-story cottages, garages, and outbuildings.
- The rhythm of the windows on the upper floors do not align with one another or with the lower level. Consider dividing the gables of the top floor into groups of two with mullions and/or divided lights. The windows on the middle floor should also more closely resemble residential windows with mullions and divided lights. Color is appropriate for a modern commercial structure.
- Again, the stone foundation of the lower level looks good, but get rid of the thin columns. Maybe just have a small canopy over the doors similar to the west elevation.

#### PROPERTY LINE (South) Elevation

- Like the north elevation, the gables roofs have different slopes and are not centered on the mass of the building below. They appear disjointed and do not read as a cohesive whole. Either center the gable on the mass below, and/or have the gable slopes match.
- Like the other elevations, the windows appear to be randomly sized and placed. They should be the same size and have the same head and sill height so they read as a cohesive whole.
- And the windows on the top floor should be divided into smaller units with mullions and/or divided lights to better relate to the neighboring residential structures. Color is appropriate for a modern commercial structure.

#### HIGH STREET / HISTORIC BUILDING (West) Elevation

- Like the other elevations, the windows and storefronts appear randomly sized and placed. On the lower floor, the plate glass window to the right of the storefront does not relate to the storefront. The line of transoms should run across all the storefront windows as well as this window. Consider dividing the large plate glass window into smaller units to better relate to the neighboring historic structure.
- And on the upper floor, the pattern of windows does not follow that of the lower level or one another. Consider dividing the large plate glass window to the right into two smaller units with mullions and/or divided lights.

Overall, I would **not recommend approval** of the current design proposal since the scale and portions of the building still do not complement others in the historic district. While the use of materials may be appropriate, the various asymmetrical rooflines and massive forms, and incompatible building elements (windows, storefronts, thin columns, etc.) create an incoherent look that does not blend with the surroundings. The design should be revised to simplify forms and elements, so the structure appears less massive, more harmonious, and reads as a balanced whole.

## **PHOTOGRAPHS and SKETCHES**



**1. 56 N. High Street. The wood-frame building was originally a dwelling dating to ca. 1890. The building is on the National Register as part of the Washington Township MRA. It is also recommended contributing to the City of Dublin's Historic District and the Dublin High Street Historic District National Register boundary increase. New construction in the area should match the scale, massing, and proportions of existing historic structures such as this.**



**2. Corner of North Street and N. High Street. The new construction will replace the two-story commercial structure. It will be located on the same lot as the historic building at 56 N. High Street.**



**3. 25 North Street. The ca. 1960 commercial building will be demolished and replaced with new construction.**



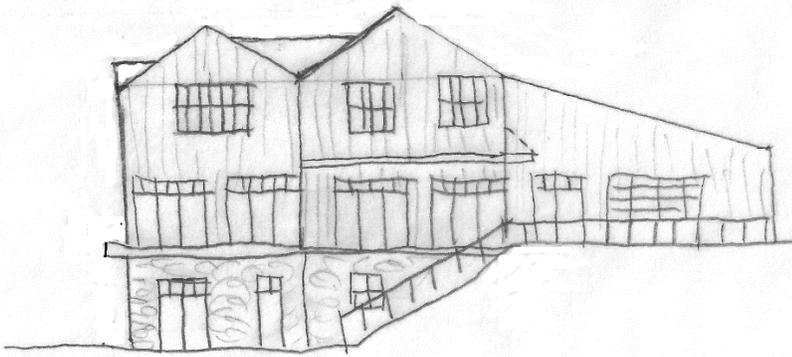
4. Property across the street on Blacksmith Lane. It is a simple, one-story gable-front cottage with a one-story wood frame garage. The new commercial structure needs to take these small, simple dwellings into account in terms of size, scale, and massing or the nature of the historic district will be negatively impacted.



5. Property along Blacksmith Lane. Like its neighbor, it is a simple, one-story gable-front cottage with a one-story wood frame garage. The new commercial structure needs to take these small, simple dwellings into account in terms of size, scale, and massing or the nature of the historic district will be negatively impacted.



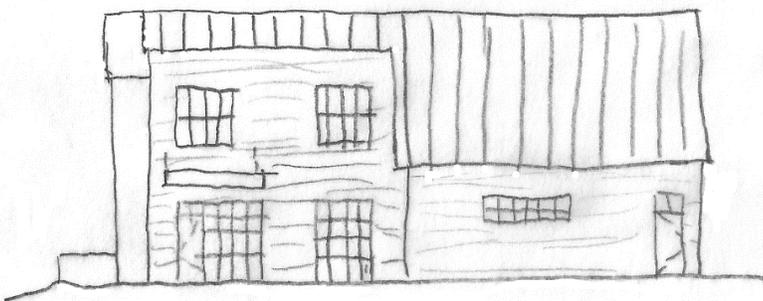
6. Property along Blacksmith Lane. It is a simple, one-story gable-front cottage with a one-story wood frame garage and a wood-frame outbuilding. The character of the historic district could be negatively impacted if new construction is not scaled appropriately.



8. Sketch of the front (north) elevation on North Street. The overhang and thin metal columns have been removed and replaced with a canopy covering the entry doors. The windows now relate to one another and have divided lights and mullions to reflect neighboring residential structures. The gables roofs now have the same slope and are centered over the mass of that portion of the building.



8. Sketch of the rear (east) elevation on Blacksmith Lane. The overhang has been removed and the windows now relate to one another. The windows now have divided lights and mullions to reflect neighboring residential structures.



9. Sketch of the west elevation facing the historic building at 56 N. High Street. The windows have been modified with mullions and divided lights.



10. Design inspiration from the 08-27-2019 submittal. Both buildings use traditional, vernacular materials but are clearly modern. The windows in the building on the left are residential in style with divided lights and read as a cohesive whole. The large window to the right has divided lights and is centered under the gable. The building on the left also has a symmetrical gable with the window centered under it.



11. Traditional saltbox-style buildings with symmetrical gables and windows centered in the gables.



12. A modern saltbox-style dwelling to the left. Again, the gable is symmetrical and the windows are spaced evenly under the gable to read as a cohesive whole. The right, the sawtooth roof of a former Shamrock Mill building in Winston-Salem, NC. (Photo by Jerrye & Roy Klotz). The pattern of the gables is repeated through the building and the windows are arranged symmetrically under the gable to create a balanced composition.