

**CITY OF ST. LOUIS**  
**CULTURAL RESOURCES OFFICE**  
**PRESERVATION BOARD MINUTES**  
**JUNE 25, 2012**

Board Members Present

Richard Callow, Chairman

Anthony Robinson

Michael Killeen

Nathaniel Johnson

David Richardson

Melanie Fathman

Cultural Resources Office Staff Present

Betsy H. Bradley, Director

Jan Cameron, Preservation Administrator

Bob Bettis, Preservation Planner

Adona Buford, Administrative Assistant

Board Member Mike Killeen moved to approve the May 21, 2012 minutes.

David Richardson seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Mr. Killeen moved to approve the current agenda. Mr. Richardson seconded the motion. The current Agenda was approved.

As the Director's Report, Betsy Bradley provided updates on two properties recently considered for demolition. 3600 S. Jefferson has a new owner who plans a rehabilitation project and the conversion of 4260 Westminster into a residence is underway.

**SPECIAL AGENDA ITEM**

**A. Proposed Preservation Review Districts in Wards 4 and 21.**

**PROPOSAL:** Proposed Preservation Review Districts in Wards 4 and 21.

**PROCEEDINGS:** Bob Bettis presented a PowerPoint presentation illustrating the sites to be expanded as Preservation Review Districts.

**ACTION:** Mike Killeen moved to approve the proposed Preservation Review Districts in Wards 4 and 21. Ms. Fathman seconded that motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**PRELIMINARY REVIEWS**

**B. 2012.0875 3917 LINDELL BOULEVARD & 3930 McPHERSON AVENUE**

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Owner: Automobile Club of Missouri

Applicant: James A. Frederick - Attorney

**DEMOLITION PLAN:** Preliminary review to demolish the existing AAA building and garage to construct a new AAA Facility and CVS Pharmacy.

**PROCEEDINGS:** Cultural Resources Office Director Betsy H. Bradley made a PowerPoint presentation of the proposal, including the background of the project and reviewed the criteria to be used to consider a proposed demolition in a Preservation Review District. Ms. Bradley reported that she received a letter from 18<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman Terry Kennedy in opposition to the demolition and approximately 50 emails expressing the same opinion.

James A. Fredericks, representing both AAA and CVS, presented his clients views concerning the demolition criteria.

Steve Marion of Premier civil Engineering displayed images that compared a standard CVS design to the one proposed as subsequent new construction should the demolition be approved.

Craig Forgee, who also testified in support of the project representing Gershman Brown Crowley, Inc., the local developer working with CVS, noted the company's desire to be located on the Lindell corridor.

Steve Patterson, Andrew Weil, Randy Vines, Richard Henmi, Michael Allen and Alderman Scott Ogilvie spoke against the demolition of the AAA Building.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The Preservation Board found that:

- No redevelopment plan for this property had been approved by ordinance;
- The AAA Building is a High Merit structure as it meets three criteria to become a City Landmark and would be eligible for

listing in the National Register of Historic Places once it becomes 50 years of age;

- The garage has a more utilitarian and commercial appearance and is not considered to be a Merit or High Merit building;
- The presence of business, commercial, institutional and residential uses in the vicinity of the AAA property supports its continued use and re-use should AAA leave building and that no particular deterrent to the continued use of the AAA Building has been identified;
- the applicant has made no claim of economic hardship for the use of this property although the applicants state that it is not ideally suited to its current operation;
- the size of the AAA property is large enough to affect the character of the block and that the effect of the proposed demolition of the AAA Building would eliminate one of the most distinctive buildings in St. Louis and a notable aspect of the urban design of Lindell, although the loss of the garage would not have the same degree of loss or effect;
- the subsequent proposed construction includes two buildings, one for AAA at the west side of the property and one for CVS to its east, and that the site planning took into account the needs of building property owners;
- Although AAA and CVS representatives met with an 18<sup>th</sup> Ward Advisory Group several times to discuss the proposal, the plans presented for this review were not substantially different than those presented to the Planning Commission in July, 2011;
- the proposed AAA building would be a modest brick office/commercial building oriented to the parking on its east side;
- the proposal CVS Pharmacy would be a mostly brick building with a tower at its southeast corner where the entrance would be flanked with two bays of windows and that two rows of parking would be placed between Lindell and the new building;
- neither the AAA building nor CVS pharmacy, as proposed, would exhibit the high quality of design and special qualities that the AAA Building has as they appear to be variants of standard designs;

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- the proposed subsequent construction does not meet the criterion of being equal to or exceeding the quality of the building proposed for demolition;
- with regard to proposed subsequent construction, the proposed use does not comply with current zoning although the applicants have received approval from the Planning Commission for a pending change in zoning, which is not the purview of this Board;
- the applicants have stated that proposed construction would commence as soon as they were in receipt of all city permits and permissions;
- and that the criterion concerning commonly controlled property and accessory structures are not applicable to this review.

**ACTION:**

The Preservation Board concluded the AAA Building is a particularly fine example of 1970s architecture and a High Merit property. The proposed subsequent construction would include two buildings that would have the quality of being variations of standard plans and would be positioned in a suburban manner. The Board cannot conclude, therefore, that the quality of the proposed subsequent construction would equal or exceed the architectural contribution of the AAA Building in the integrity of the existing streetscape and block face, the ensemble of high-quality mid-century Modern design on Lindell, and the built environment of the City.

The Preservation Board did not approve the Preliminary Application for the demolition of the two buildings. David Richardson moved to deny approval of the preliminary application for the demolition of both the AAA Building and the garage because the proposal failed to meet the criteria in the Ordinance. Antonio French and Nate Johnson simultaneously seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion with six members voting.

**C.      2012.0706      4389 LINDELL BLVD.      CENTRAL WEST END HISTORIC DISTRICT**

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Owner: Archdiocese of St. Louis-Rosati-Kain High School

Applicant: M + H Architects

**DEMOLITION PLAN:**

Preliminary review to demolish a nuns' residence to construct a new wing on the existing Rosati-Kain High School.

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**PROCEEDINGS:** Jan Cameron presented a PowerPoint presentation regarding the property, the demolition and the proposed addition. Ms. Cameron recommended that the Preservation Board grant approval to the demolition and new construction as proposed. The proposed addition complies with all the requirements of the Central West End historic district standards and will be a handsome addition to Rosati-Kain. When weighing the loss of the residence and the benefits associated with the proposed addition, the Cultural Resources Office is willing to support the demolition of this Mid-century resource.

**FINDINGS OF FACTS:** The Preservation Board found that:

- the nun’s residence, constructed ca. 1965, was not considered a contributing building to the district when it was established;
- while of product of Mid-century Modern design, the residence is modest in detailing and presents little architectural significance;
- the residence also is not compatible in massing or scale to the buildings surrounding it.
- the proposed addition will provided greatly-needed classroom and library space for Rosati-Kain;
- the design of the addition is compatible in scale, design and exterior materials with Rosati-Kain and complies with all requirements for additions in the Central West End standards.

**ACTION:** It was the decision of the Preservation Board to grant preliminary approval for the demolition of the nuns’ residence and construct a new addition to the Rosati-Kain school as proposed. Board Member Nate Johnson motioned to approve the project. Ms. Fathman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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**D.      2012.0170      3719 TEXAS AVENUE      PRESERVATION REVIEW DISTRICT**

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**Owner/Applicant:** L.R.A. – Land Reutilization Authority

**DEMOLITION PLAN:** Preliminary review to demolish a one and a half-story frame flounder house.

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PROCEEDINGS:

Jan Cameron presented a PowerPoint presentation regarding the property and the demolition. She recommended that the Preservation Board withhold preliminary approval for the demolition the building. She stated that the building is considered to be a Merit structure, and is a contributing property in the Gravois-Jefferson Streetcar Suburb National Register Historic District. Historic tax credits would be available to assist in its rehabilitation. In addition, the house is sound under the ordinance definition, and has only recently come into the LRA Inventory; it has not yet been widely marketed.

Ms. Cameron also stated that the neighbor to the south would like to see the building demolished, as the roof of the flounder abuts his building and prevents maintenance of his north façade.

Alderman Craig Schmid testified on behalf of the demolition, stating that he was reluctant to be in support of the demolition of any building in his ward, but that this one had deteriorated for many years and because of its location so close to the neighboring building, its rehabilitation potential was limited.

Ryan Reed, of the Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc., testified against the demolition of the property, stating that frame flounders were a rapidly vanishing historic resource in the City.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The Preservation Board found that:

- 3719 Texas is a significant historic structure: a frame flounder house, which is a important and endangered vernacular property type;
- 3719 Texas Avenue is a contributing resource to the Gravois-Jefferson National Register district and therefore is eligible for State and Federal Historic Tax Credits;
- the building is sound in the definition of Ordinance No. 64832; however, its condition is deteriorated, and the roof is open to the weather so continuing water damage to the interior is likely;
- 3710 Texas has only recently come into the LRA inventory, and thus has not been marketed; and

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- that the likelihood of the building's rehabilitation is somewhat questionable, given its sitting within a foot of the property adjacent to the south.

**ACTION:**

It was the decision of the Preservation Board to deny preliminary approval of the demolition for six months to allow time for the LRA to market the building. Board Member David Richardson moved to deny the preliminary application with that condition. Alderman French seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**APPEALS OF DENIALS**

**E. 2012.0825 1027-37 RUSSELL BLVD. SOULARD HISTORIC DISTRICT**

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Owner: Robert Hiscox

Applicant: Heartland Alternative Energy

**COMMERCIAL PLAN:**

Appeal of the Director's denial of a building permit application to install solar panels on a street-facing roof.

**PROCEEDINGS:**

Cultural Resources Office Director Betsy H. Bradley made a PowerPoint presentation about the proposed installation, the pertinent criterion in the Soulard Historic District Standards, an analysis of the effect of the installation on the property, and how the site conditions do not allow the applicant to meet the district standards. She entered Enabling Ordinance #64689 and Soulard Ordinance #57078 into the record.

Robert Hiscox, owner of the property, requested that the Preservation Board grant a variance for his project and provided information about the increase of his utility expenses since 2000.

Dennis Heder spoke on behalf of Heartland Alternative Energy; he noted that the south-facing rear wing roof is the only place that Mr. Hiscox could install solar panels effectively.

**FINDINGS OF FACTS:**

The Preservation Board found that:

- the proposal was to install 32 panels on the south-facing slope of the rear wing roof;
- the proposed solar panels are black Suniva Optimus Monocrystalline units which would be placed on black shingles recently installed on the roof, a material chosen to reduce the contrast between the panels and roofing;

- the Soulard Historic District Standards state that solar panels cannot be visible from the street;
- the rear wing roof slope facing Russell, where the panels are proposed, is visible from some locations in the historic district;
- the property does not have any location where a solar panel installation could be placed and not be visible;
- the solar panels are proposed for a rear wing roof with less distinctive historic character than the roof of the front wing;
- the character-defining aspect of the roof of the rear wing of 1027 Russell is its steep slope and that slope would be perceivable and maintained by the solar panels placed parallel to it and close to it; and
- that the design of the proposed solar panel installation is as compatible as it could be in terms of slope, color, and arrangement.

**ACTION:**

It was the Preservation Board's decision to overturn the Director's denial and approve the application as a variance, based on the unique situation of the property. The applicant demonstrated that because of the unique way his property is located, he would be unable to use solar energy at all, which use of is not prohibited in Soulard, and still strictly comply with the standard on visibility. The applicant testified that he chose materials to allow him to use solar energy in as unobtrusive a way as possible.

Board Member Michael Killeen moved to grant a variance for this reason. Ms. Fathman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with six Board Members voting.

**F. 2012.0926 2355 HICKORY STREET LAFAYETTE SQUARE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

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Owner and Applicant: Askins Development Group LLC/Orlando Askins

**RESIDENTIAL PLAN:** Appeal of the Director's denial to construct a "garage-port" structure at the rear of a single-family house.

**ACTION:** *Application withdrawn by Applicant.*