

**CITY OF ST. LOUIS
CULTURAL RESOURCES OFFICE
PRESERVATION BOARD MINUTES
DECEMBER 18, 2017**

Board Members Present

Richard Callow – Chairman
Anthony Robinson
David Richardson
Randy Vines
David Visintainer
Tiffany Hamilton
Ald. Terry Kennedy
Mike Killeen

Cultural Resources Office Staff Present

Dan Krasnoff, Director
Jan Cameron, Preservation Administrator
Andrea Gagen, Preservation Planner
Bob Bettis, Preservation Planner
Adona Buford, Administrative Assistant

Legal Counsel

Barbara Birkicht

PRELIMINARY REVIEWS

A. 2017.1776 215 YORK AVENUE CENTRAL WEST END HISTORIC DIST

Owner: Andy Holloran
Applicant: JNS Designs - Kay Galligan

COMMERCIAL PLAN: Preliminary review to demolish former television facility and construct a seven-story hotel.

PROCEEDINGS: On December 18, 2017, the Preservation Board of the City of St. Louis met, pursuant to Ordinance #64689 of the City Code, to consider a Preliminary Application to construct a seven-story hotel at 215 York Avenue, in the Central West End Local Historic District. The application was submitted by Kay Galligan of INS Design, the project architects, on behalf of the developer, Andy Holloran. Consideration of this application had been deferred from the Board's Meeting of November 27, 2017, at the request of the applicant, in order to allow an opportunity to consult with the 28th Ward Alderman and the Central West End Neighborhood Association.

Board members Richard Callow (Chair); David Richardson; Michael Killeen; Randy Vines; David Visintainer; Alderman Kennedy; Tiffany Hamilton and Board member Anthony Robinson, who

entered during the Applicant's presentation, were present for the testimony and discussion for this agenda item.

Jan Cameron of the Cultural Resources Office made a presentation that examined the sections of City Ordinance #69423, which sets forth the standards for new construction in the Central West End Local District. She indicated that the existing building on the site, a 1951 warehouse later converted to a studio, was a non-contributing resource to the district and therefore its demolition would be inconsequential to the district's historic fabric. Ms. Cameron exhibited renderings of the proposed hotel, stating that the staff recommended approval of the design, but had concerns about the materials of the front façade and recommended additional brick or other upgrades to the proposed materials, samples of which she presented to the Board. She also submitted a letter from Jim Dwyer, Chair of the Central West End Planning and Development Committee, stating the Committee's support of the project, with the understanding that exterior materials would receive further consideration.

28th Ward Alderman Heather Navarro testified her strong support for the project.

Sam Kopljar, one of the developers of the project, introduced the design architect, Tobias Strohe of INS Design of Denver, Colorado.

Mr. Strohe testified to the varied context of the street with different building scales and materials and that the proposed finish materials for the hotel were selected so as not to compete with adjacent buildings but still create a different color palette; and would create a visual impact at the future entry point of the hotel. Mr. Strohe noted that they were not completely satisfied with the finish of the material samples that had been submitted and were intending to wait to choose final colors and finishes until a field mockup could be done.

FINDINGS OF FACTS:

The Preservation Board found that:

- 215 York Avenue is located in the Central West End Local Historic District.
- The existing building at 215 York is a non-contributing resource to the Central West End Historic District and its

demolition would have no adverse effect upon the district's significance.

- The design of the proposed hotel generally complies with the requirement of the Central West End Standards for New Construction that new buildings replicate the siting, massing, scale, and street rhythm of adjacent buildings.
- The design deviates from the Standards in the area of building height: however, its height is a story less than the adjacent York House and therefore does not represent an intrusive change to the streetscape.
- The design also deviates from the Standards in the area of façade material: there is a relatively small proportion of brick on the front elevation. While the composite panel system is intended to reference terra cotta and limestone trim of historic buildings in the district, terra cotta was generally used for decorative details and not as the primary building material of the front façade.

BOARD DECISION:

It was the decision of the Preservation Board to grant preliminary approval of the proposal for construction of a seven-story hotel, with the condition that additional brick be added to the front façade and exterior details and materials be reviewed and approved by the Cultural Resources Office staff. The motion was made by Board Member David Richardson and seconded by Board Members Hamilton and Vines. The motion passed with all Board Members voting in favor and none opposed.

B. 2017.1879 300 SOUTH BROADWAY PRESERVATION REVIEW DISTRICT

Owner: St. Louis Community College

Applicant: HDAI Architects – John Holleran Jr.

COMMERCIAL PLAN:

Preliminary review to demolish six-story building and construct a 33-story high-rise.

PROCEEDINGS:

On December 18, 2017 the Preservation Board of the City of St. Louis met, pursuant to Ordinance #64689 of the City Code, to consider a Preliminary Review request to demolish the office building at 300 South Broadway.

Board members Richard Callow (Chairman), Tiffany Hamilton, Michael Killeen, Alderman Terry Kennedy, David Richardson, Anthony Robinson, David Visintainer and Randy Vines were present for the testimony for this agenda item.

Daniel Krasnoff of the Cultural Resources Office made a presentation that examined the sections of City Ordinance #64689, #64832, which delineate criteria for the review of demolition proposals for properties in Preservation Review Districts. He entered into the record letters of support from the 7th Ward Alderman Jack Coatar and the Downtown Residents Association and letters of opposition from Missouri Preservation and from the public.

Mr. Krasnoff evaluated the demolition in regards to the criteria in the ordinances and identified the reasons for the Cultural Resources Office's recommendation in support of the proposed demolition. He identified the building as one of High Merit due to its designer, Isaac Taylor, and its associations with the coffee and pharmaceutical industries. He also discussed two key components of the criteria: whether or not there were "unusual circumstances" that justify the demolition and whether or not the proposed new construction was "of equal or greater architectural value," when compared to the existing building.

Regarding "unusual circumstances" that justified demolition, Mr. Krasnoff said that the thirty-three story, 265-unit apartment building was vital to the continued revitalization of downtown. Additionally, glass curtain wall of the Broadway façade would complement the residential glass tower under construction at the opposite corner of Broadway and Clark Avenue, in Ballpark Village.

He also said that the value of the building proposed for demolition was diminished due to the lack of context and inappropriate alterations to the windows and storefronts of the existing building. Mr. Krasnoff said it is difficult to compare the value of contemporary architecture and buildings constructed more than 100 years ago. He said the buildings proposed for demolition and proposed new construction have good design qualities and they both are representative of buildings of "their time." Therefore, the two structures are equivalent in design.

Mr. Krasnoff concluded by stating that the Cultural Resources Office recommendation for approval included stipulations that, prior to approval of a demolition permit, a building permit be

secured in accordance with the design shown to the Preservation Board and that the developer demonstrate financing for the project.

Chairman Callow asked what evidence of financing should be required. Mr. Krasnoff said a letter showing sources for both equity and construction financing would need to be produced for the Cultural Resources Office.

Board Member Killeen asked if the office had considered a solution that allowed for the preservation of the existing building's façade while constructing the new tower above it. Mr. Krasnoff said that had been considered, but that such a design would not be successful because there was not space to properly set the new building back from the existing building's façade and because the new building's height would dwarf the existing structure.

Mr. Killeen asked if review of the final design was within the Preservation Board's purview. Mr. Krasnoff said he did not think that was appropriate. Chairman Callow agreed that the design would not be back to the Preservation Board for review.

Board Member Randy Vines asked where the existing tenants would go if the demolition took place. Mr. Krasnoff said they may be housed on the Community College campus, but, he was not sure.

Chairman Callow asked if the building was occupied. Mr. Krasnoff said he thought it was.

Board Member David Richardson asked if the project was on the Land Clearance and Redevelopment Authority agenda the next day for preparation for blighting and the adoption of a redevelopment plan. Mr. Krasnoff said he thought that was true but was unaware of details.

Mr. Richardson asked if there was a minimal height for the new building that created the "unusual circumstances" that justified the demolition of the High Merit building. Mr. Krasnoff said the scale of the redevelopment proposal created the "unusual circumstance" justifying the demolition. He also noted that there had been very few new-construction high-rise proposals in downtown St Louis since 1970. This project was important and that justified the demolition.

Mr. Vines asked about the desirability of keeping the façade of the existing building and incorporating it into the design of the tower. Mr. Krasnoff said successful façade projects set back the new building a substantial amount from the street facades and are not more than a few stories taller than the existing structure. None of these design elements could be implemented at 300 South Broadway.

Jim Fredericks of the Law Firm Armstrong Teasdale was the first spokesperson for the development team. He said the members of the team, Mark Carlie, of BDO USA, Jack Holleran, of HDA Associates and Fred Lafser, President of Lafser and Associates, a development consulting firm, were present to discuss the proposal.

Fred Lafser testified that the architectural integrity of the 300 S. Broadway Building was compromised by a variety of inappropriate alterations including: a large addition to the south of the building that replicated the original design; the gutting of the original interior of the historic portion of the building; and the “wrapping” of the rear of the structure with new brick. He said it was questionable whether or not the building would be eligible for the National Register. He also said the demolition of all but the façade of the current building and the construction of a tower above would render the building ineligible for the National Register.

Mr. Richardson asked for a classification of the building based upon Ordinances 64689 and Ordinance 64832. Mr. Lafser said the building had been compromised and he would classify it as “Merit,” not “High Merit.”

Jim Fredericks testified that the two story limestone base was a later addition, and was not original, as well as the cornice and windows.

Mr. Richardson asked about the date of the alterations. Mr. Fredericks said those changes date to the 1980’s.

Jack Holleran was the architect for the project. He described the proposal for the tower featuring a lobby with retail space; parking entrances/exits off Clark Street; enclosed parking levels above ground floor with 24 stories apartments; and an amenity level at the top of the building.

Mr. Killeen asked about the ability to use the façade of the existing building as the wall for the parking structure. Mr.

Holleran said the engineer was skeptical about the ability to complete the necessary work below grade and still keep the original structure. Mr. Killeen asked if the requirement to use the façade of the historic building might make the project infeasible. Mr. Holleran said the added cost would likely make it financially inviable.

Board Member Hamilton asked about residential demand for the project. Mr. Holleran said consultants worked with CBRE staff in St. Louis and determined there is unmet demand for the type of project proposed. Ms. Hamilton asked how many three bedroom units might be included in the project. Mr. Holleran said 10-12 such units would be added.

Mr. Vines asked if other sites were considered. Mr. Holleran said the nearby lots and garages are not for sale. He also said the site chosen is the optimal site for this development.

Ms. Hamilton asked about the state of financing for the project. Mr. Fredericks answered that he had no concerns about gaining financing for the project.

Lucy Hannegan urged the Preservation Board to deny demolition of the existing 300 South Broadway Building. She said too many buildings were being demolished and the City's heritage was being diminished in the process.

Andrew Weil, Director of the Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc., spoke in opposition to the demolition, stating that while he liked the proposed design, he did not think it warranted an "unusual circumstance" to justify demolition of the extant building. He also said there was no way to ensure that what the development team proposed to the Preservation Board would be built. He also said there is a risk in losing the architectural context for the recently built, historicist, Busch Stadium.

Mr. Killeen asked about the proposal to retain the façade of the building built in the 1890's and have the tower built within and above it. Andrew Weil said he generally did not like this approach, but in this case it would be a step in the right direction.

Jared Opsel, Executive Director of the Downtown Residents Association, spoke in favor of the project. His organization supports greater residential density that will add more people to help improve downtown St. Louis. He added that the project development team had been responsive to the Association's concerns.

Imran Hanafi spoke in opposition to the demolition. He said the building proposed for demolition was “quintessentially St. Louis.” He expressed environmental concerns about the impact of demolition. He agreed with the preservation of the historic façade if that was the only form of preservation of the building that was possible.

Alderman Jack Coatar spoke in favor of the proposal. He said downtown needed the proposed project and that none of the adjacent sites are available for development at this time. He also said he agreed with the Office’s stipulations regarding permit applications and financing.

Mr. Vines asked if Alderman Coatar could show that the Stadium Garage and/or the surface parking lot to the south of the site were not available for sale. The Alderman replied that he was familiar with the owners of those lots/garages and they are not available for sale at this time.

Mr. Richardson asked if the redevelopment plan to be considered by the Land Clearance and Redevelopment Authority would include the design of the building as presented and the demolition of the existing structure. Alderman Coatar said it would.

Chairman Callow asked Mr. Krasnoff to respond to questions. Mr. Callow asked Mr. Krasnoff why the Office identified the existing structure as a “High Merit Building,” and to clarify the history of the building’s construction. Mr. Krasnoff said he considers the building “High Merit,” due to its designer and association with the coffee and pharmaceutical industries. Mr. Krasnoff explained what portions of the building were altered since the original construction of the structure. Despite a number of changes to the building, he said the original portion is still intact to the point that it merits being considered a “High Merit” structure.

Mr. Callow asked Mr. Krasnoff to clarify the stipulations in the staff recommendation. Mr. Krasnoff said he felt that the stipulations were strong enough to ensure that the existing building would not be demolished without the new structure being constructed.

FINDINGS OF FACTS:

The Preservation Board found that:

- 300 South Broadway is located within a Preservation Review District.
- The north façade and northern half of the west facade were constructed in the mid 1890’s.

- The building proposed for demolition is “High Merit” in terms of the ordinances.
- Due to unusual circumstances, partial demolition of the 300 South Broadway Building is justified. The proposal to construct a high-rise apartment building has merit.

BOARD DECISION:

It was the decision of the Preservation Board to grant preliminary approval of the Preliminary Review Application for the demolition of 300 S. Broadway with the following stipulations:

- The new building be constructed incorporating the north façade and the portion of the west facade constructed during the mid-1890’s;
- All facades of the new tower be at least 75% glass surface;
- The final design and materials be approved by the Preservation Board;
- The demolition is withheld until the building permit is approved and acquired.

The motion was made by Board Member Mike Killeen and was seconded by Board Member Vines. The motion passed with Board Members Killeen, Vines, Hamilton and Visintainer in favor and Board Members Alderman Kennedy, Richardson and Robinson opposed. The motion passed 4 to 3.