



Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission

Report to the Committee

To: Cherokee Triangle Architectural Review Committee
Thru: Savannah Darr, Historic Preservation Officer
From: Bradley Fister, Senior Planner – Urban Design
Date: January 5, 2023 *SDF*

Case No: 23-COA-0069
Classification: Committee Review

GENERAL INFORMATION

Property Address: 2012 & 2014 Highland Ave.

Applicant: John Talbott
1000 N. Hurstbourne Parkway, Second Fl
Louisville, KY 40223
502-426-6688
john@bardlaw.net

Owner: The Mark A Thompson Living Trust
966 Cherokee Rd. Unit 201
Louisville, KY 40204

Estimated Project Cost: TBD

Description of proposed exterior alteration:

The applicant seeks approval to demolish a circa 1926, two-story, Cape Cod Revival style duplex determined to be contributing to the Cherokee Triangle Preservation District.

The applicant proposes a multi-stage plan:

- Stage 1: demolish the existing structure, and then grade and seed the lot
- Stage 2: construct a parking lot for the adjacent office building (circa 1908 former Carnegie Library that is also an Individual Landmark)
- Stage 3: construct a multi-story, multi-use structure, that would include underground parking

Communications with Applicant, Completion of Application

The application was received on March 31, 2023 and was determined to be incomplete and classified as requiring Committee Review on April 3, 2023. Staff

spoke to the applicant several times over the past few years about the proposed project prior to their submission. Staff met with the applicant June 12, 2023, and October 4, 2023.

A Cherokee Triangle Architectural Review Committee (ARC) meeting is scheduled for review of the proposal on Wednesday, January 10, 2023 at 4:30pm in room 101 of the Metro Development Center located at 444 S. 5th Street.

FINDINGS

Guidelines

The following design review guidelines, approved for the Cherokee Triangle Preservation District, are applicable to the proposed exterior alteration: **Demolition**. The report of the Commission Staff's findings of fact and conclusions with respect to these guidelines is included in this report.

The following additional findings are incorporated in this report:

Site Context/ Background

The site is located midblock on the northwest side of the alley that intersects Highland Ave, two lots south of Cherokee Rd., and five lots north of Bardstown Rd. The site contains a two-story, frame Cape Cod Revival style duplex. Cape Cod Revival style architecture is a subsect of the Colonial Revival architectural style. The duplex has a masonry foundation and is clad with cement asbestos board siding. The exact construction date of the house is not known. However, it first appeared in city directories in 1926. The 1892 and 1905 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (**Figure 1** and **Figure 2**) show a vacant lot. The 1928 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows the footprint and configuration of the current duplex on the site (**Figure 3**).

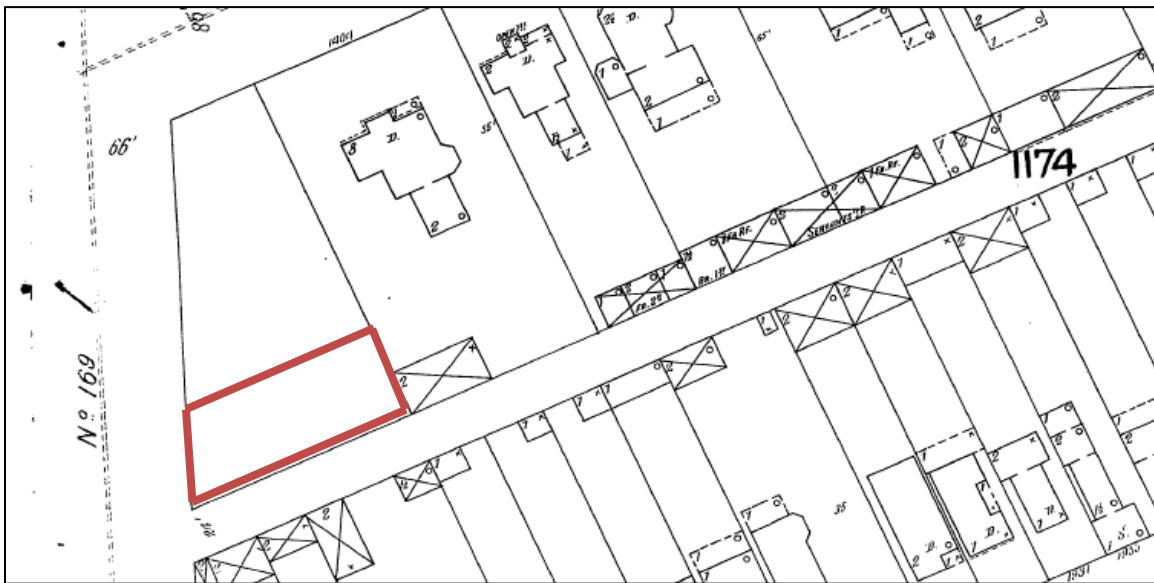


Figure 1. 1892 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Vol. 3, Sheet 170), showing the vacant lot at 2012 & 2014 Highland Ave.

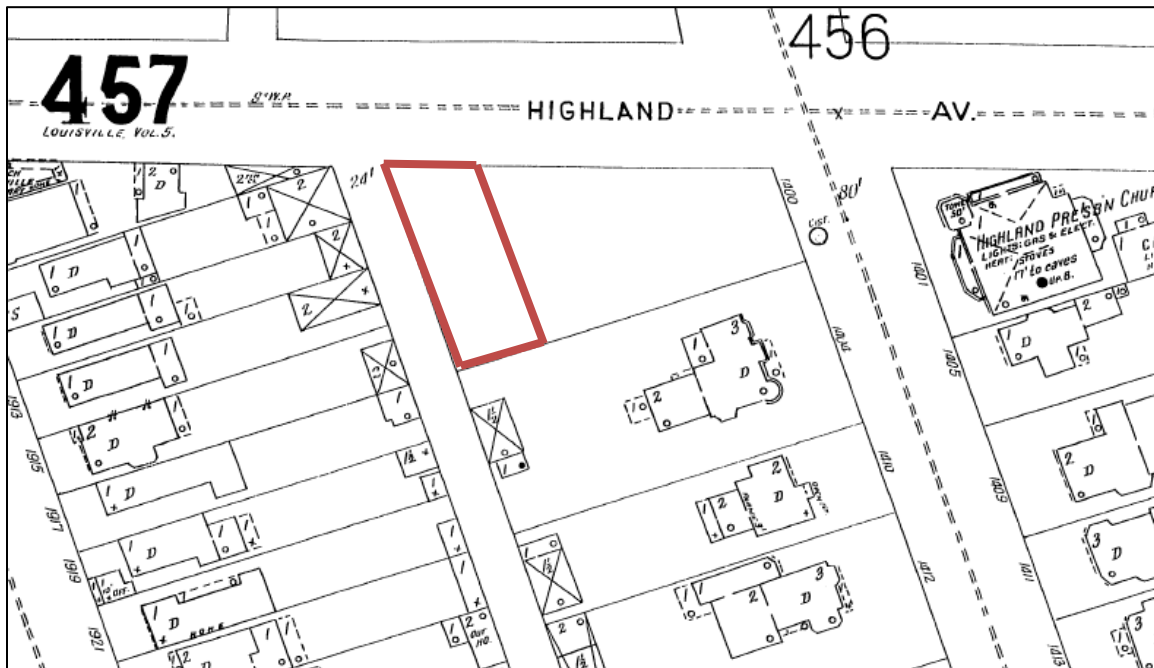


Figure 2. 1905 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Vol. 5, Sheet 457), showing the vacant lot at 2012 & 2014 Highland Ave.

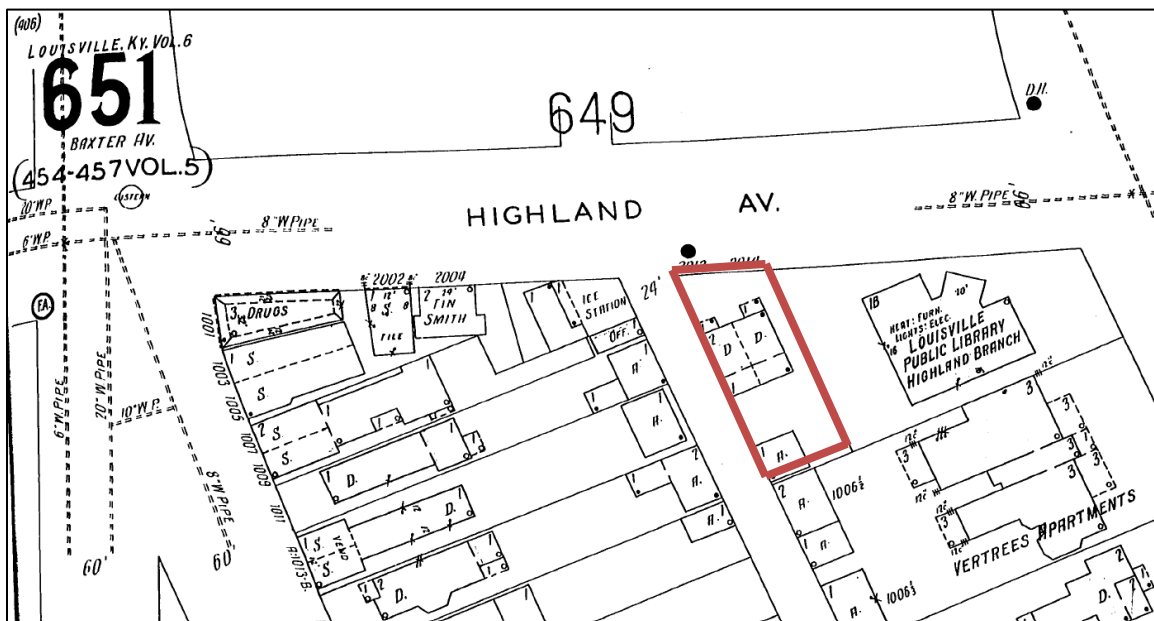


Figure 3. 1928 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Vol. 6, Sheet 651), showing the duplex at 2012 & 2014 Highland Ave.

A yard sale notice in the *Courier-Journal* from April 15, 1926, notes the items for sale are located at 2012 Highland Ave. (Figure 4). There is also an ad in the *Courier-Journal* from September 13, 1939 to rent the unit at 2014 Highland Ave. (Figure 5). No other maps or historic photographs other than the 1975 designation photo (Figure 6) could be found in further research.

PIANO, cornet, 9-piece dining suite, fireless
cooker, Napoleon bed, Rome couch, 6
walnut chairs, 9x12 rug, pictures, gas
heater, lawn mower, stepladder. 2012
Highland Ave.

Figure 4. April 15, 1926 *Courier-Journal* notice.

HIGHLAND AVE., 2014—5-room, modern
duplex; separate; garage. Apply 2012
Highland Ave., Highland 4288-W.

Figure 5. September 13, 1939 *Courier-Journal* notice.



Figure 6. 1975 Cherokee Triangle Historic Preservation District designation photo.

Conclusions

The Demolition Design Guidelines state, "Unless the City has determined that it poses an imminent threat to life or property, do not demolish any historic structure or part of a historic structure that contributes to the integrity of any historic district or individual landmark unless:

- 1) the demolition will not adversely affect the district's (or the landmark's) distinctive characteristics, taken as a whole, retained over time;
- 2) the demolition will not adversely affect the district's importance as a 'unified entity' composed of interrelated resources united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development; and
- 3) the proposed replacement structure and development will strengthen the viability of the district as a whole."

In its current condition, this building contributes to the Cherokee Triangle Preservation District. There is a large degree of historic integrity remaining in terms of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The building retains its Cape Cod Revival form, covered front porches, and some original materials such as windows and doors. While the building has cement asbestos board siding as a replacement siding and some new windows and doors, these changes are sympathetic to the architectural style of the building and do not take away from its integrity.

The overall structural integrity of the building also appears to be generally sound. The building has a masonry foundation that generally appears in good condition from the exterior. The walls and roof appear to be plumb and not in any major deterioration. These observations are from the exterior only, as Landmarks Staff has not been permitted to enter the building to date, and a structural engineer's report has not yet been submitted for review. Landmarks Staff did tour the building in 2017 prior to current ownership, and the building was in generally good condition with some needed repairs, which have yet to be addressed.

The Demolition Guidelines provide guidance to evaluate a proposed loss of an historic building. First, will the demolition adversely affect the district's (or the landmark's) distinctive characteristics, taken as a whole, retained over time? Second, will the demolition adversely affect the district's importance as a "unified entity" composed of interrelated resources united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development? The proposed demolition has the potential to adversely affect the developmental history of Cherokee Triangle. Surrounded by commercial buildings, this building speaks to the district's rich history of blocks mixed with residential and commercial properties, especially on the outer edges of the district. There are no other historic residential buildings on this block of Highland Ave. This was the only residence that was constructed in this transitional area between residential and commercial. Furthermore, the Cape Cod Revival style, which is a subset of the Colonial Revival architectural style, is unique with this duplex construction. The Cherokee Triangle District was developed over a number of decades to combine the amenities of both rural and city life. Thus, it is a mix of architectural styles and building materials, which makes the District distinctive. The scale within the entire District varies greatly, which is why each

block must be reviewed individually. The development of this building in this location is distinctive to the District. The demolition of this building would adversely affect this block within the District as it is the only historic residential building within this transition area.

Third, will the proposed development strengthen the viability of the district as a whole? Merriam-Webster defines viability as “the quality or state of being viable: such as (1) the ability to live, grow, and develop; (2) the ability to function adequately; and (3) the ability to succeed or be sustained.” While there is a proposed multi-stage plan, which ends with new construction, the immediate reuse of this site is a parking lot. There is no timeline for how long the parking lot will be in use, or for the new construction to begin. A parking lot on this site rather than housing or another development, does not strengthen the viability of the Cherokee Triangle Preservation District. For these reasons, staff recommends denial of the demolition.

RECOMMENDATION

On the basis of the information furnished by the applicant, staff recommends the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness be **denied**.

Bradley Fister

Bradley Fister
Senior Planner – Urban Design

1-5-2024

Date