

TO: Historic Preservation Board **Item Number: 4**

FROM: Planning & Development Services Department **DATE: February 3, 2015**
 Staff

SUBJECT: Petition HP-15-02. Causseaux, Hewett, & Walpole, Inc., agent for RBL Parcel D, LLC. Demolish a single-family dwelling. Located at 1227 NW 4th Avenue. This building is contributing to the University Heights Historic District North.

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of Petition HP-15-02 with two conditions:

1. The existing and/or proposed PUD and PD ordinance conditions concerning this historic structure be amended to include allowing demolition consistent with the provisions of Land Development Code Section 112; and,
2. The owner/developer recycle salvageable materials from the structure, to the extent feasible.



Project Description

The applicant is proposing to demolish a vacant existing single-family dwelling that is a contributing structure in the University Heights North Historic District.

Property Information

The property is located at 1227 NW 4th Avenue. The contributing building was built in 1933 according to the Alachua County Property Appraisers Office. The property is zoned PD (Planned development), has a PUD (Planned unit development) land use, and is approximately 0.31 acres in size. The building is a contributing residential building in the University Heights North Historic District. The entire PD development site is located within the Traditional City Special Area Plan and the Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street Redevelopment Area. The house is a common bond brick house period revival cottage with classical elements. Exhibit 1 is the Florida Master Site File site inventory form for this property. The building was used as a student rental property until the house was vacated.

Exhibit 2 is a pair of reports from the City Code Enforcement Division, the first in 2009 concerning a complaint from the Gainesville Police Department (GPD) about garbage, construction debris, and tree debris found on the vacant parcel. There was a Notice of Violation issued and the items were eventually cleared and the case was closed. The second report was done in 2012 and stated that GPD inspected an unsecure and vacant residence and found graffiti, trash, and nomadic people who were temporarily occupying the building, which had become well known to nomadic people who utilized the building as a temporary shelter. Much of the graffiti was code indicating the house was a good place to stay for a while before moving on.

Background Information

The subject property is part of the proposed development area for the Gainesville Mixed Use on NW 13th Street project, which is a mixed-use infill project that would allow for residential, commercial, and office uses. The property is one of two parcels within the development area that are located within the University Heights North Historic District.

The PUD land use and PD zoning designations were applied to the subject property and two other parcels that made up the proposed development site for the development in 2011. The PUD/PD was put in place to allow a compact, urban infill development with a mix of uses that would promote redevelopment along the NW 13th Street corridor. The PUD land use designation includes conditions on the proposed development to improve compatibility and harmony with the residential area and historic district to the east. Ordinance 100896 (see Exhibit 3) established the PUD land use and Condition 5 directly concerns the subject property, stating that:

The historic contributing structure located on the property shall not be removed prior to final development plan approval. The owner/developer shall relocate the structure within the University Heights North Historic District or to a site in another historic district within the City as approved by the Historic Preservation Planner during development plan review.

Petition HP-15-02
February 3, 2015

The associated PD conditions in Ordinance 100897 (see Exhibit 4) focus on the allowed uses in the development and some specific development standards for the project, including a condition to save the 56-inch diameter heritage Live Oak tree that is located on the subject property.

In 2013, applications were submitted to the City with a request to amend the existing PUD and the existing PD to add an additional property located at 1226 NW 3rd Avenue. This property is within the University Heights North Historic District and is developed with a single-family dwelling, a chert house that is designated as a contributing structure in the district. This additional property increased the acreage of the overall development site from 1.53 acres to 1.67 acres. The proposed amendments to the PUD would reduce the maximum building height limit, increase the allowable residential units, clarify provisions for nonresidential square footage, and allow for the maximum building height to extend further to the east. Additionally, the proposed PD amendments remove the requirements to preserve the existing 56-inch heritage Live Oak tree, revise the building elevations, and remove certain exterior building material requirements.

Petition PB-13-86 LUC was approved by the City Plan Board on October 24, 2013. The City Commission held a public hearing and approved the petition on the PUD amendments on January 16, 2014. Both the PUD and the PD draft ordinances are awaiting ordinance reading and approval from the City Commission. Related Petition DB-13-113 SPL was a development plan associated with the PUD and PD petitions that has not gone through the complete development plan review process.

Concerning the historic structure, condition 5 in the draft PUD ordinance (see Exhibit 5) states that the structure shall be relocated to another location within the University Heights North Historic District or to a site in another historic district as approved by the Historic Preservation Planner. Condition 20 of the draft PD ordinance (see Exhibit 6) says that the removal and relocation of either of the historic houses shall require approval from the Historic Preservation Board.

On January 7, 2014, the Historic Preservation Board approved with conditions a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for new construction on the two lots with the contributing structures associated with the Gainesville Mixed Use on NW 13th Street project. The conditions are:

1. To deter unauthorized access to the 15' landscape buffer area along the site's eastern boundary;
2. Taper down the proposed sidewalks along NW 3rd Ave and NW 4th Ave to a residential scale as they approach the adjacent neighborhood (along the garage portion of the project) and extend into the neighborhood where feasible (6' wide) in consultation and accordance with the Community Redevelopment Agency streetscape standards;
3. Utilize a textured (brushed) finish on the garage floors to reduce tire noise; and
4. Prohibit further intrusion/expansion into the adjacent University Heights Historic District-South.

Finally on December 22, 2014, the City of Gainesville approved a House Bill 7023 2-year extension for the Gainesville Mixed Use on NW 13th Street project Certificate of Appropriateness (Petition HP-13-81). The extension is for exactly 2 years from the expiration date that was granted under the COA, which was January 7, 2015. The new expiration date is January 7, 2017.

Proposed Project and Guidelines

Approval of this COA application would allow demolition of the house instead of moving it to another property. A portion of the proposed parking garage for the Gainesville Mixed Use on NW 13th Street project would be located on this property, requiring the removal of the existing building.

Attached to this staff report in Exhibit 7 is a structural assessment of the house by Southard Engineering Inc., conducted in 2014. The recommendation is that the building be demolished because: the cost of making the building habitable would exceed the value of the building and possibly the cost of building an entirely new building, the current structure is a health hazard and that the building is not suitable for relocation. Photographs of the interior condition of the house are included within the assessment. The report discusses mold remediation needed to eliminate mold and mildew. There is damage to all of the major building component systems including structural, plumbing, electrical and mechanical (HVAC). The damage is due to water intrusion and high humidity levels. Electrical and mechanical systems must be replaced due to moisture damage and vandalism. The floor system is damaged due to water intrusion into the crawl space. There is also concern that water has damaged the brick ties that keep the brick on the walls, making house relocation questionable (see Exhibit 8 concerning house moving cost estimates). Staff from Planning and Development Services has also visited the site and taken pictures, primarily of the exterior conditions of the building and the property.

The rehabilitation guidelines for demolition indicate that historic or contributing structures in an advanced state of deterioration can be demolished if evidence is presented showing that rehabilitation is unfeasible.

Consideration of a Certificate of Appropriateness application is pursuant to Section 30-112 of the Land Development Code and the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation which serves as the basis for the City of Gainesville's *Historic Preservation Rehabilitation and Design Guidelines*. The Historic Preservation Board shall adhere to the preservation principles of maintaining historic fabric and compatibility with surrounding properties.

The recommendation for the approval of the demolition of the building is based on the structural assessment of the house provided by Southard Engineering Inc., the staff site visit to the property and the provisions of Section 30-112.

Within the City of Gainesville Land Development Code, Section 30-112 (d) (6) (c) indicates that the Historic Preservation Board will consider certain factors related to the issue of demolition. The applicant has responded to each of these factors in the Certificate of Appropriateness Report (see Exhibit 10, pages 3-5).

Petition HP-15-02
February 3, 2015

- c. *Demolition.* A decision by the historic preservation board approving or denying a certificate of appropriateness for the demolition of buildings, structures or objects other than those in the Pleasant Street Historic District shall be guided by:
1. The historic or architectural significance of the building, structure or object;
 2. The importance of the building, structure or object to the ambience of a district;
 3. The difficulty or the impossibility of reproducing such a building, structure or object because of its design, texture, material, detail or unique location;
 4. Whether the building, structure or object is one of the last remaining examples of its kind in the neighborhood, the county or the region;
 5. Whether there are definite plans for reuse of the property if the proposed demolition is carried out, and what the effect of those plans on the character of the surrounding area would be;
 6. Whether reasonable measures can be taken to save the building, structure or object from collapse; and
 7. Whether the building, structure or object is capable of earning reasonable economic return on its value.

Exhibit 11 provides a copy of the relevant guidelines concerning demolition from the Secretary of Interior rehabilitation and design guidelines.

The structure contains components such as bricks, original tiles, original faucets, original windows and doors that have historic value and can be re-used/recycled. Exhibit 12 is a list of Florida companies that either salvage materials or accept salvaged materials from historic structures. To the extent feasible, components should be salvaged from the structure prior to or during the demolition process.

Respectfully submitted,



Onelia Lazzari
Principal Planner

Prepared by:



Jason Simmons

Petition HP-15-02
February 3, 2015

List of Exhibits

- Exhibit 1** Florida Master Site File
- Exhibit 2** Code Enforcement Public Records Reports from 2009 and 2012
- Exhibit 3** Existing PUD Ordinance 100896
- Exhibit 4** Existing PD Ordinance 100897
- Exhibit 5** Draft PUD Ordinance 130514
- Exhibit 6** Draft PD Ordinance 130515
- Exhibit 7** Structural Assessment of House at 1227 NW 4th Avenue
- Exhibit 8** House Moving Cost Estimates and Property Appraiser Information
on property
- Exhibit 9** Application and Affidavit
- Exhibit 10** Applicant's Certificate of Appropriateness Report
- Exhibit 11** Historic Preservation Rehabilitation and Design Guidelines
- Exhibit 12** List of Florida demolition/salvage companies