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Title: Consider the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to demolish the 1962 addition to the structure located at 110 S. Washington Street (Old Nichols Library) - COA 17-5146.

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM

ACTION REQUESTED:

Consider the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to demolish the 1962 addition to the structure located at 110 S. Washington Street (Old Nichols Library) - COA 17-5146.

DEPARTMENT: Transportation, Engineering and Development

SUBMITTED BY: Gabrielle Mattingly

BOARD/COMMISSION REVIEW:

On September 19, 2017, the City Council passed Ordinance 17-141 designating 110 S. Washington Street (“Subject Property”) as a local landmark as provided in Section 6-11-3 of the Naperville Municipal Code.

BACKGROUND:

The Subject Property is generally located north of Jefferson Avenue and east of Washington Street and is zoned B4 (Downtown Core District). It is approximately 0.56 acres and is improved with the Old Nichols Library building, most recently occupied as a church. An Illinois Urban Architectural and Historical Survey was completed on the property in 2010 and identified the building as Richardsonian Romanesque with 1.5 stories. The survey noted that a 1-story south side addition was added to the building in 1962.

DISCUSSION:

COA Requirements

Per Section 6-11-6 of the Municipal Code, “property owners who seek to alter, construct, demolish or make a material change to landmark properties, or to properties located within an historic district, shall be required to obtain a certificate of appropriateness as provided herein. Per Section 6-11-7:1 (Certificate of Appropriateness Not Required), “a certificate of appropriateness is not required for any

work (e.g., addition, demolition, alteration or change in material) performed on the secondary or rear façade of the principal building or structure if such work will result in no change to the exterior architectural appearance of the building or structure as visible from a public street measured by a line of sign perpendicular to the primary façade(s). A public street shall not include alleys.”

Current COA Request

The owner of the Subject Property, Great Central Properties III, has petitioned for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to allow for the demolition of the 1962 addition as is visible from Washington Street. This single-story addition and basement were constructed to the south of the original Nichols Library in 1962. Per the landmark application submitted on June 6, 2017, the 1962 addition is considered a noncontributing resource of the historic property; staff concurs with this finding.

Section 6-11-8:5 of the City’s Code (Certificate of Appropriateness Required) establishes the factors for consideration of a COA application. Based on the factors and analysis below, staff recommends approval of the COA to allow for the demolition of the 1962 addition at 110 S. Washington Street.

Factors for Consideration of a Certificate of Appropriateness Application:

5.1. Compatibility With District Character: The Commission and Zoning Administrator shall consider the compatibility of the proposed improvement with the character of the historic district in terms of scale, style, exterior features, building placement and site access, as related to the primary facade (s), in rendering a decision to grant or deny a certificate of appropriateness.

Analysis: The 1962 addition has been noted through surveys and the landmark application as a non-contributing addition to the original Nichols Library.

5.2. Compatibility With Architectural Style: The Commission and Zoning Administrator shall consider the compatibility of the proposed improvement with the historic architectural style of the building or structure to be modified by the certificate of appropriateness request.

Analysis: In the opinion of the Zoning Administrator, the 1962 addition is not compatible with the historic architectural style of the original Nichols Library.

5.3. Economic Reasonableness: The Commission and the Zoning Administrator shall consider the economic reasonableness of any recommended changes determined to be necessary to bring the application into conformity with the character of the historic district.

Analysis: Permitting the property owner to demolish the 1962 addition does not present any unreasonable economic conditions.

5.4. Energy Conservation Effect: In making its determinations, the Commission and Zoning Administrator shall consider the effect that any recommended changes may have on energy conservation.

Analysis: The demolition of the 1962 addition will not result in any adverse impact on energy conservation at the Subject Property.

5.5. Application Of Regulations: The Commission and Zoning Administrator shall not impose specific regulations, limitations, or restrictions as to the height and bulk of buildings, or the area of yards or setbacks, or other open spaces, density of population, land use, or location of buildings designed for conditional uses except as applicable for compliance with the underlying zoning district.

5.5.1. The Commission however, may consider the height and bulk of buildings and area of yards or setbacks within the context of existing neighborhoods in making its determinations.

The Commission shall be permitted to deny a certificate of appropriateness on the basis of height and bulk of buildings and the area of yards or setbacks only upon finding that the approval of such a request would be detrimental to the existing or historical character of its surrounding neighborhood. The Commission may adopt procedural rules concerning the type of information that it considers necessary to make such a finding.

5.5.2. The Commission's consideration of height and bulk of buildings and area of yards or setbacks shall not exempt the applicant from compliance with the provisions of this [Title 6 <https://library.municode.com/il/naperville/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT6ZORE>](https://library.municode.com/il/naperville/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT6ZORE) (Zoning Regulations).

Analysis: As no new construction is proposed at this time, this Section is not applicable to the pending COA.

5.6. The City's Historic Building Design and Resource Manual may be used as a resource in consideration of the above.

Analysis: The City's Historic Building Design and Resource Manual provides no specific recommendations related to partial demolition.

Other Work Proposed - COA Not Required

In addition to the 1962 addition, the owner also plans to demolish the 1939 addition at the Subject Property. Per Section 6-11-7:1 (included above), since the 1939 addition is not visible from the public right-of-way, this portion of the demolition planned for by the owner does not require COA approval or HPC review.

Demolition/Maintenance of the Remaining Structure

While the process of demolition and the manner in which the landmarked building will be secured during and after demolition is not within the purview of the HPC, please be aware that all such work will be subject to review and approval by the City through the building permit process. Further, the City Code requires that neither the owner of, nor the person in charge of an improvement designated as a landmark, may permit a landmarked improvement to fall into a state of disrepair which may result in the deterioration of any exterior appurtenance or architectural feature of the improvement. (Section 6-11-9) Failure to comply with the City Code property maintenance provisions may result in enforcement by the City through ordinance violation proceedings brought in circuit court.

Future Construction

Any future improvements proposed for the Subject Property which are visible from Washington Street will require COA approval prior to construction.

Key Takeaways

- The petitioner is requesting approval of COA 17-5146 in order to demolish the 1962 addition at 110 S. Washington Street.
- The City of Naperville Municipal Code requires property owners to obtain a COA prior to any proposed alterations, construction, or demolition of landmarked properties as visible from the public right-of-way.
- Staff recommends approval of the COA to permit the demolition of the 1962 addition at 110 S. Washington Street based on the Factors For Consideration Of A Certificate Of Appropriateness Application, as provided in Section 6-11-8:5 of the Naperville Municipal Code.