

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
PERMITS IN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS
JULY 30, 2012
NRD-2012-0089
901 Congress Avenue
Congress Avenue

PROPOSAL

Demolish a 19th century building which was completely modified in 1946 and again in 1976.

RESEARCH

The building at the corner of 9th and Congress was originally constructed in 19th century – city directories only go as far back as 1879, so it is unknown at this time whether the building existed before that date. Early photographs and city directories indicate that there was a saloon at the corner of 9th and Congress through the turn of the 20th century. At 903 Congress, Raymond Renz had his tailor shop, as shown on early Sanborn maps and in city directories from the late 19th century until around 1921.

At the turn of the century, Horace Haldeman had a cigar and tobacco store at 901 Congress, replacing the earlier saloon. By 1906, the building housed the drug store of J.H. Maxwell and Oakley C. Spalding. The partnership appears in city directories until 1914, when only Spalding ran the drug store, and the name was changed to Spalding's. By 1917, Oakley was in partnership with Charles Spalding; the two ran their drug store here until around 1928. Capitol Pharmacy, owned by W.B. Ransom and Mrs. Robert Hagan, occupied the building from around 1928 to 1933; W.B. Ransom then became the sole proprietor and had Ransom's Drug Store No. 2 (No. 1 was at the Scarbrough Building) through the end of the 1930s. The building was Turner's Jewelers in the early 1940s, the Firm Foundation Publishing Company, publishers of religious materials, in the mid-1940s, and vacant in 1947. Goodfriend's, a prominent ladies' clothing store, occupied the building from around 1948 until the early 1970s, and completely remodeled the building, removing the corner of the building facing 9th and Congress, infilling all window and door openings, and constructing a new blank façade. The building was vacant again before being remodeled to its current appearance in 1976 by Capital Mortgage Bankers, which occupied the building until the law firm of Sneed, Vine, Wilkerson, Selman, and Perry moved in in the mid-1980s.

STAFF COMMENTS

Only the historic masonry walls of the building remain; all of the original windows and doors were infilled in the late 1940s and then new openings were made in the building walls in the mid-1970s when the building was remodeled to its current appearance.

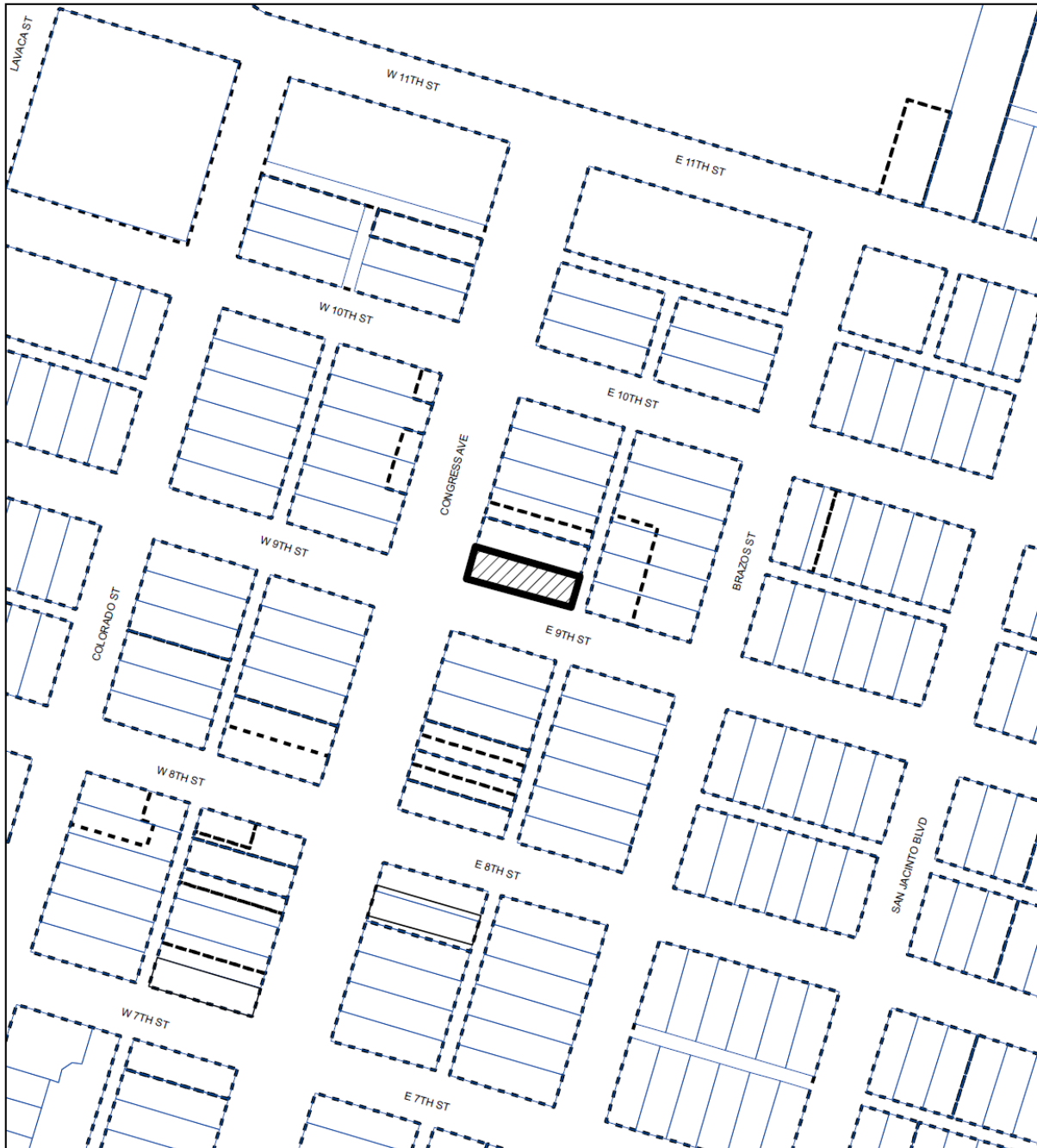
The current appearance of the building, while an attempt to re-create the historic appearance after the Goodfriend's remodeling, is approximate and did not restore the historic appearance of the building or use historic materials – the current façade is attached to the historic masonry walls. Because of the 1976 remodeling, the building is not contributing to the Congress Avenue National Register Historic District.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The applicant presented the case to the Certificate of Appropriateness Review Committee on July 16, 2012 to get a preliminary opinion on the proposed demolition of the building. The Committee members had a difference of opinion on the possibility of preserving the building. One committee member felt that it was important to retain the remaining historic fabric even if it had been compromised; another committee member felt that the modifications to the building over time had obliterated its historic integrity of materials and design of the building.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Release the demolition permit for 901 Congress Avenue; there are no plans to demolish the buildings at the rear of this building, facing 9th Street. This is a unique situation due to the total lack of integrity of the building – preservation of the historic fabric does not appear to serve any preservation purpose given the extent of the modifications to the building. Any attempt to create the historic façade of the building would be a reconstruction rather than a restoration or rehabilitation, and there does not appear to be sufficient historical significance to the building to warrant reconstruction. However, staff recommends that the applicant make every effort to design a new structure which complements the scale of the existing buildings in the 900 block of Congress Avenue to maintain the character of the streetscape.



SUBJECT TRACT



ZONING BOUNDARY

CASE#: NRD-2012-0089
LOCATION: 901 Congress Avenue



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These buildings facing E. 9th Street are not included in the application for demolition.

Congress Avenue Photos

Including 901 Congress Avenue



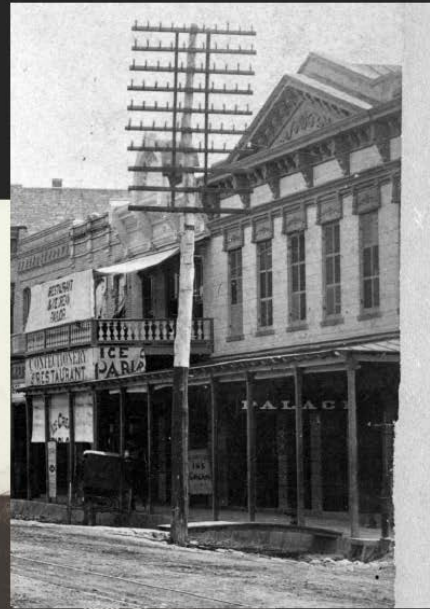
901 Congress Avenue

Est. 1879 - 1896





Capital Mortgage - 1976



Exterior – 9th Street under '76 plaster skin

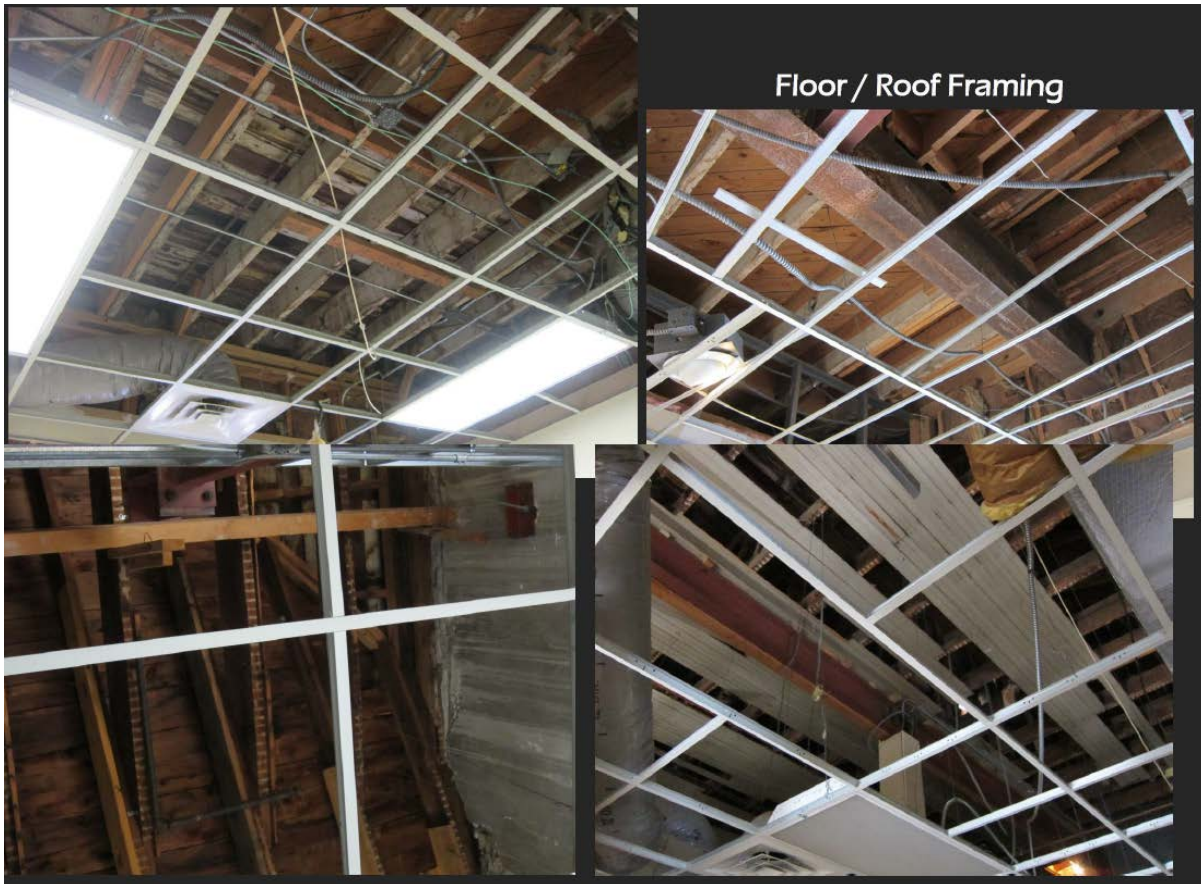


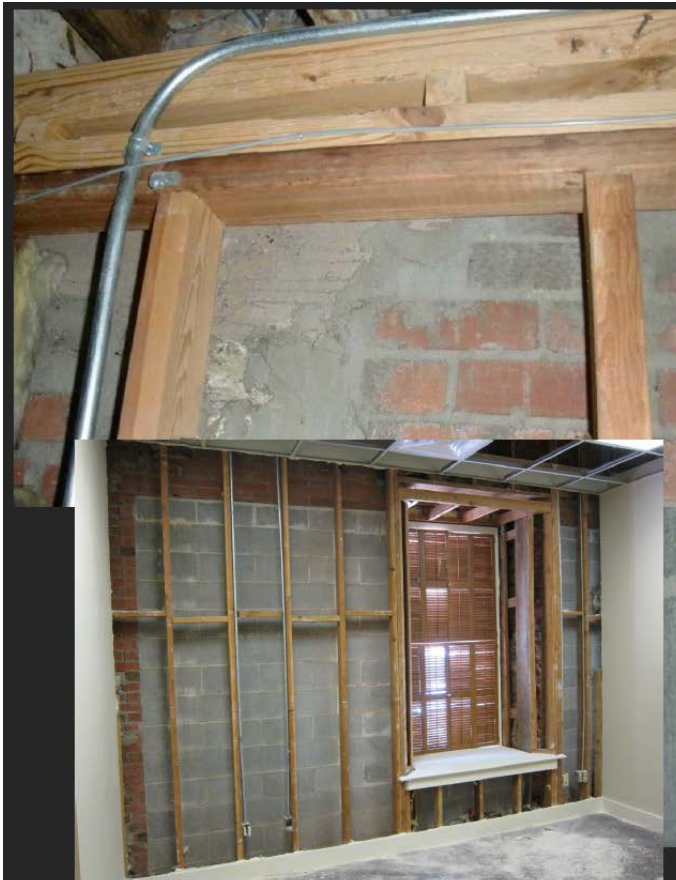
Exterior – Congress under '76 plaster skin



Exterior – Congress under '76 plaster skin







Wall infill materials



Congress wall inside





New Framing &
wall construction



Steel superstructure & patch framing

