

Gaudette, Angela

From: Vivien Geneser [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, November 13, 2020 4:39 PM
To: PAZ Preservation; Gaudette, Angela
Subject: Historic Landmark Commission Meeting on November 16

*** External Email - Exercise Caution ***

Dear HLC,
Please allow me to speak at the meeting on November 16, 2020 in regard to the proposed demolition of my nineteenth century era home on Eleventh Street. Allow me to request a postponement of the decision by HLC.

Vivien Geneser, owner of property at 815 West Eleventh Street
[REDACTED]

AGAINST demo permit for 815 West Eleventh Street

Thanks!

Sincerely,
Vivien Geneser

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Memo

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ARCHITECTURE • PRESERVATION • PLANNING

To: Historic Landmark Commission
From: Donna D. Carter, FAIA
CC: Square One Consultants
Date: 15 November 2020
Re: Item D.9 HDP-2020-0410
Demolition of 815 W. 11th St.

I am one of the owners of the property to the west of this house (817 W. 11th St) where I have had my architectural office since 1985. I am opposed to the demolition of the approximately 100 year old home at 815 W. 11th St. The immediate block is mostly businesses that have successfully adapted the sites to accommodate their office use, while retaining the historic structures and feel of the neighborhood. The sole exception on our block, even at three stories, is an unwelcome intrusion on the rhythm, scale, articulations that make up the feel of the street. Unlike 815, at least the 1980s building is towards the end of the block and allows the historic vista to remain looking south or east.

I sympathize with the potential buyers, however, I would ask for a postponement to allow us to work with the applicant to come up with compromise that is acceptable to the applicant, the city and the immediate neighbors on the alley.

The current development code requirements provide no leeway or incentives to keep the existing structure when compared to other requirements of the code. Our design firm has looked at several development options that provide for the +/- 4500 sf development that a vacant lot would allow under the current entitlements. However, options would require some accommodation for parking, impervious cover or protected trees. The current code prioritizes these issues over the retention of the structure. I would like time to present solutions that balance the requirements among these issues more equitably.

The structure can be recognized for its age and as an example of vernacular architecture of its time. There have been some changes over time, but not to the general form. The changes that have been made are all reversible. Unfortunately, none of this rises to the level of individual historic landmark recognition. However, its value is as part of a strong collection of structures that illustrate the evolution of residential styles over time. It also chronicles an original city neighborhood, relationships of a neighborhood to the school system, and a window into an early 20th century vibrant residential neighborhood. Our city will not have many areas where streetscapes can remain intact and retain the scale and feeling of the heritage streetscape.

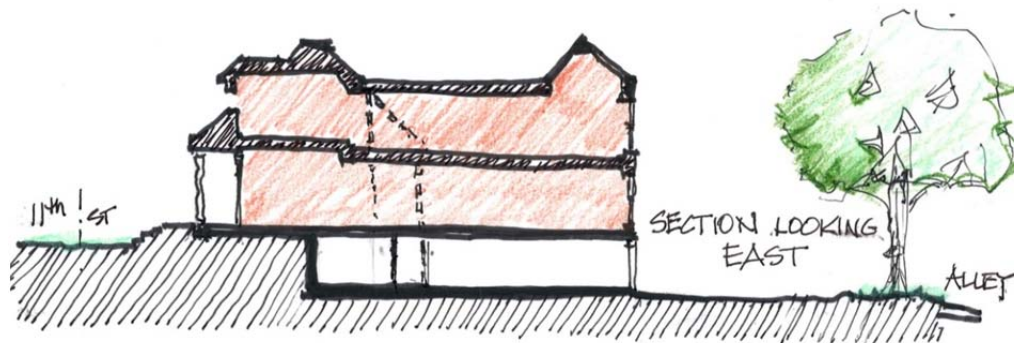
Demolition without a site plan is also problematic. There may be other reasons the proposed development may not be feasible as currently envisioned. 817 W. 11th has an approved application for solar installation. The building of a 40 foot building potentially blocks one of the better solar exposures and we will certainly be requesting accommodation to allow for a viable solar installation through the site plan process. The attached picture shows flooding in the alley along the south property line of the subject property. The city is aware of the drainage problem, but has not been able to offer a solution to the properties that border this area. With new development, the other property Owners on the alley

would expect this problem to be solved. Finally there is only one public way in and out of the Alley. Our driveway is often used as another point of entry. We do not restrict this, but increased traffic may require a different approach.



With time, I think other creative solutions are possible. We have an initial sketch that involves raising the existing structure to allow parking underneath an addition that connects directly to the attic level. A quick solution provides for 8 parking spaces on site, but it is a start. Another solution which I have shared with the applicant includes an easement to use our driveway to allow more parking on their lot should that be absolutely required for their use.

As I have offered, solutions may involve easements, visitor parking on the street or other solutions that have neighborhood implications. However, working through the solutions that would allow the area to transition from downtown with the nuanced DMU code envisioned by the Downtown plan, while fleshing out how Preservation can be part of this development.



It is ironic this is being discussed in the same meeting Design Guidelines are on the agenda. The guidelines are a welcome update, beautifully illustrated and easy to understand. However, they compartmentalize the issues. The commercial section is about main street typology, the residential guidelines are just that. There is no discussion of adaptive re-use in transitional areas. There is an admonition not to demolish the structure, yet no real guidance on how to avoid it. There is no discussion on how to weigh the value of parking, impervious cover, protected and even heritage trees. There is a discussion of the value of streetscapes, but a "scape" is presented as a detailed parts, not the sum of the whole, nor is it evaluated holistically.

The landmark commission has been complicit in allowing demolition one non-landmark worthy yet potentially historic district structure at a time, devastating the fabric and the possibility of having intact historic districts. The action leaves neighborhoods snaggle-toothed and pockmarked by the loss of fabric only realizing the voids when it is too late. The result becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy of missing context, areas with not enough left to preserve and historic structures relegated to gems devoid of context. A library of documentation packages is but a one dimensional representation of our community and the admonition to try to reuse, try to relocate are just hollow words recited by rote.