

Historic Preservation Design Review

February 26, 2015

HP-15-06, 10 N. Main St. (City)

I. THE REQUEST

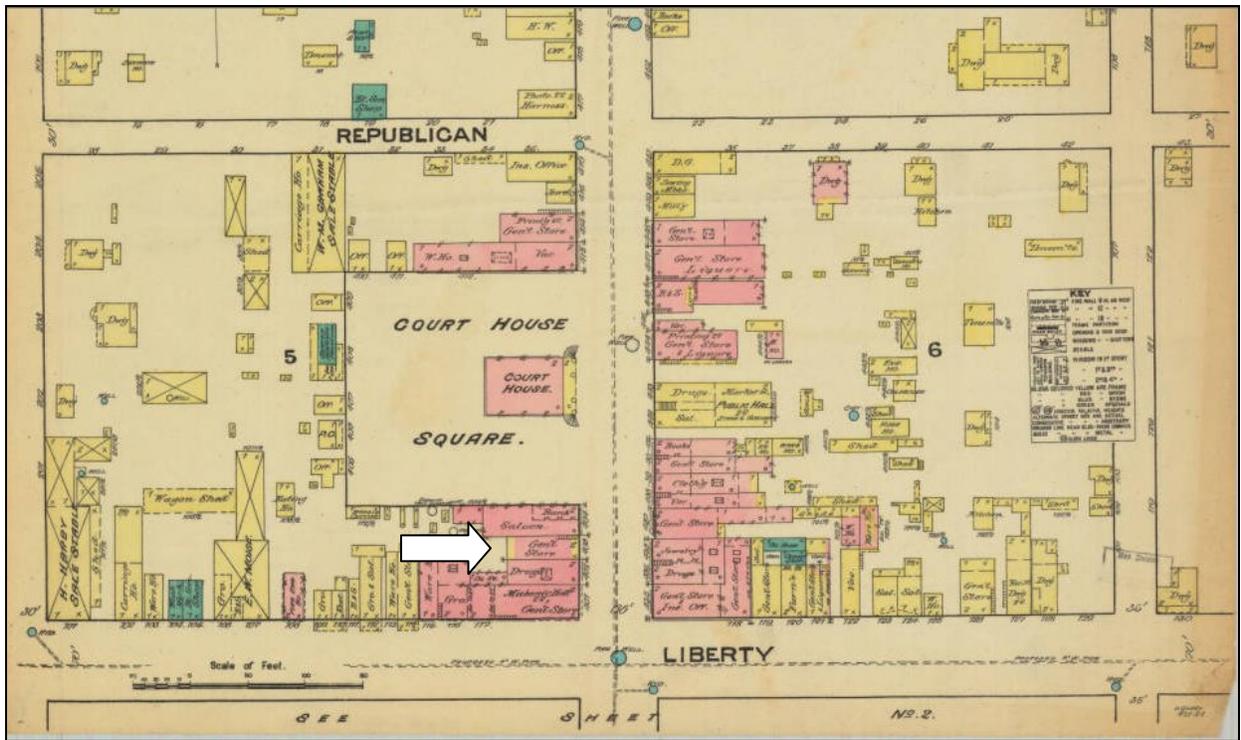
Applicant:	City of Sumter
Status of the Applicant:	Property Owner
Request:	Demolition approval for the structure located at 10 N. Main St.
Location:	10 N. Main St.
Present Use/Zoning:	Vacant Commercial/CBD
Tax Map Reference:	228-12-04-067
Adjacent Property Land Use and Zoning:	North – Open Space/CBD South – Commercial Building/CBD East – Commercial Building/CBD West – Parking Lot/CBD

II. BACKGROUND

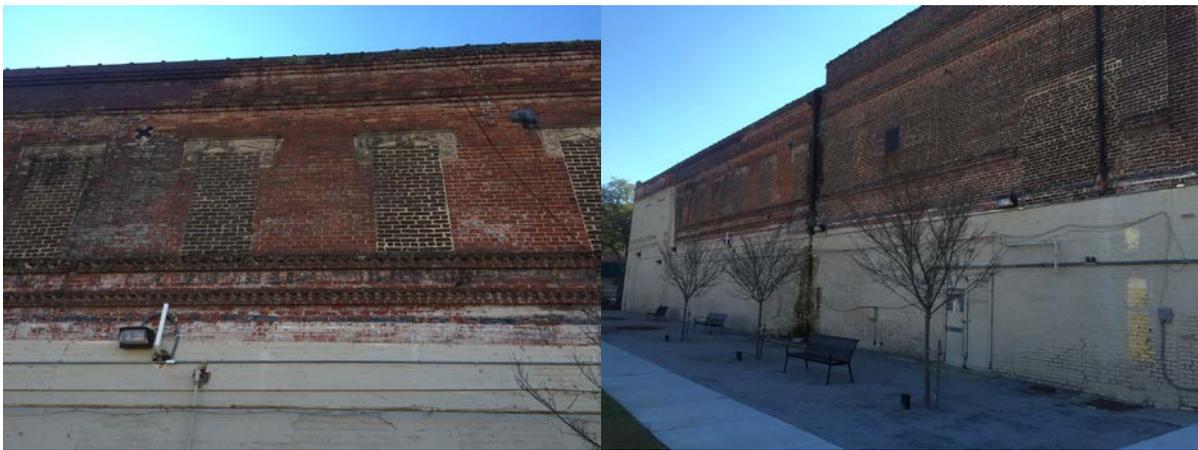


The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for a Demolition Permit to remove a 7,910 sq.ft. commercial structure located at 10 N. Main St. It is currently vacant and formerly the site of Mr. Fried Rice, among other past users. The City plans the demolition of this structure and its neighbor 8. N. Main St. (commonly referred to as the Covington Credit building). The City anticipates redevelopment to follow in this prime location next to the future hotel.

Based on the 1985 Main Street Sumter Survey, the building sited at 10 N. Main St. was constructed circa 1868 and housed one of the first jewelers in Sumter. A structure is shown on the Sanborn Maps of 1884:



S.C. Archives and History records suggest that after a fire in 1913, the façade was replaced along with interior renovations. The structure offers a rectangular plan, two stories, glass storefront, brick facades, with decorative window details. The north building façade shows signs of this window detail, yet the windows have been enclosed by brick. The building interior is in especially poor condition; the structure at 10 N. Main essentially a shell building. Nonetheless, the building has been contributing structure to the Downtown Historic District.



North Side Elevation

The structure also was subject of front façade alterations and renovations in 2002 (HP 01-12).

Design review approval is required prior to being issued a demolition permit. When reviewing a demolition request, the Zoning Ordinance and the Design Review Guidelines Manual both speak to general review criteria.

The *City of Sumter Zoning & Development Standards Ordinance* states:

1.o.4. Where a request for a demolition permit is involved in an application for a certificate of appropriateness, the Design Review Board may postpone the issuance of a demolition permit for one hundred twenty (120) days pending a thorough review of the matter. An extension of an additional one hundred twenty (120) days may be authorized when the Design Review Board is reasonably certain that an alternative to demolition can be achieved during the additional time period. The Design Review Board shall provide a recommendation to the Mayor and City Council when it is in the public interest to save vulnerable architectural, cultural, and/or archaeological resources which would be damaged or lost by the demolition or partial demolition or the moving of a building or structure.

Section 1.o.4. gives the Board the option of postponing the issuance of a COA for 120 days, with an optional 120 day extension, in order to protect a vulnerable historic property.

The *Design Review Guidelines Manual* states:

#97) HISTORIC BUILDINGS SHOULD NOT BE DEMOLISHED

Normally Required

a. Historic buildings in Sumter's districts should not be demolished. Demolition may only be approved if one or more of the following conditions are met:

— **Where the public safety and welfare requires the removal of a structure or building.**

Fire Chief Karl Ford has submitted a letter testifying that the structure is unsafe and recommends demolition.

— **Where economic hardship has been demonstrated, proven, and accepted by the Board of Historical Review.**

The City estimates the cost of rehabilitation to be upwards of \$1.6 million or more. This value is significant and cost prohibitive for the City at this time.

— **Where the structural instability or deterioration of a property is demonstrated through a report by a structural engineer or architect. Such a report must clearly detail the property's physical condition, reasons why rehabilitation is not feasible, and cost estimates for rehabilitation versus demolition. In addition to this report there should be a separate report that details future action on the site.**

The Applicant has submitted a preliminary observation of structural issues prepared by Motley Structural Design, dated February 17, 2015. The structural analysis states that the

building today is “essentially a shell space.” Areas of concern raised in the structural report include:

- Unbraced two story building
- Absence of an original second floor
- Roof condition-visible roof openings and water damage due to exposure
- Truss deterioration
- First floor debris

The Structural consultant called these factors “significant hurdles” when contemplating potential renovation.

— **Where buildings have lost their original architectural integrity and no longer contribute to the character of the district.**

Based on the 1985 Main Street Sumter Survey Report, this structure is has been a contributing structure to the Historic District, estimated construction date around 1868.

After a 120-day waiting period imposed by the Historic Preservation Design Review Committee to determine if the building could be saved by others.

The 120 day waiting period is meant to give others the opportunity to save historic buildings.

Section 1.k.2 of the City Zoning Ordinance speaks to the intent of the Downtown Historic District Overlay. Based on 1.k.2, the overlay district is intended to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public by providing a mechanism for the identification, recognition, preservation, maintenance, protection and enhancement of existing historic and architecturally valuable structure, properties, and neighborhoods which serve as a visible reminder of the social, cultural, economic, political, and/or architectural history of the City of Sumter.

When a demolition request for a structure within the overlay district is brought forward, it is both the Planning Department Staff and the Design Review Committee’s responsibility to understand the impact that granting such a request will have on the district and the community as a whole. In addition to the demolition review conditions outlined in the Design Review Guidelines Manual, other issues to consider should include how the structure’s site and setting impact its practical future and the architectural and historic significance of the structure to the community.

Site and Situation:

The building is sited on the west side of N. Main St. +/-60 ft. north of the intersection of N. Main St. and W. Liberty St. The structure is in a prominent location on Main Street and has contributed to the character of the district. The site is primed for redevelopment as it lies next to the future downtown hotel.

Architectural & Historic Significance:

Based on all available records the structure was erected in 1868.

III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the request to demolish 10 N. Main St. The Applicant has met one or more of the conditions for demolition as set forth in the Design Review Guidelines Manual:

- **Public Safety:** The Fire Chief has submitted a letter recommending demolition due to the buildings structural condition and potential for fire safety hazard.
- **Structural Instability and Deterioration:** The Applicant has submitted a structural report detailing structural deficiencies and signs of deterioration. The Applicant also documented \$1.6 million in estimated costs of renovation as prohibitive.

IV. DRAFT MOTION

I move that the Historic Preservation Design Review Board approve HP 15-06 based on the Staff Recommendation.

or

I move an alternate motion.

V. HISTORIC PRESERVATION – FEBRUARY 26, 2015

The Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review Board at its meeting on Thursday, February 26, 2015, approved this request for demolition of the structure at 10 N. Main St.