

City of Sumter Historic Preservation Design Review

September 26, 2024

HP-24-09, 219 W. Calhoun St. (City)

I. THE REQUEST

Applicant:	Talmadge Tobias
Status of the Applicant:	Authorized Agent for Property Owner
Request:	Design Review Approval to demolish a +/- 1,000 sq. ft. residential structure located on Grace Baptist Church's property.
Location:	219 W. Calhoun St.
Present Use/Zoning:	Church / Residential-6 (R-6)
Tax Map Reference:	228-05-05-026
Adjacent Property Land Use and Zoning:	North –Residential / Residential-6 (R-6) South –Residential / Residential-6, (R-6) East – Residential / Residential-6 (R-6) West – Residential / Residential-6 (R-6)

II. BACKGROUND

219 W. Calhoun St. is a large property in the Hampton Park Historic District currently used by Grace Baptist Church as a combined day school and worship facility.

The property includes several locations that were formerly occupied by residential structures, all but one of which has been demolished at various times in the past 50 years. The single residential structure remaining is located immediately behind 218 Church St., and is proposed for demolition by the church.



ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORIC CONTEXT:

219 W. Calhoun St. formerly served as the site of McLaurin Junior High School, constructed circa 1907. The site functioned as an educational facility until the 1975-76 school term. The McLaurin Junior High School building was torn down during the early 1980s, and Grace Baptist Church purchased the property and constructed a Greek Revival Style domed sanctuary and offices, along with a connected gymnasium and two classroom buildings, all located behind the sanctuary and offices.



Figure 1 – 1957 Aerial Imagery of Site while used as McLaurin Jr. High School. (Location of subject structure marked in red.)

The Church's property is identified as site #195 in the 1980 Historic Resources Survey that catalogued the structures in the downtown, though the buildings on this property that were evaluated in that Survey have since been demolished. The property and its buildings are recognized as landmarks within the Hampton Park Historic District, and the architectural style, particularly of the church sanctuary, is unique.

The structure proposed for demolition was not evaluated as part of the 1980 Historic Resources Survey, ostensibly because it was, at that time, serving as a residential accessory structure to the home at 218 Church St. and the 1980 survey focused on principal structures. However, it is marked on Sanborn Fire Insurance Rate Maps prepared by the Sanborn Map Company for Sumter in 1912, 1915 and 1923. 1912 was the first year in which the Sanborn Maps included the 200 block of W. Calhoun St., and 1923 is the final year in which the Sanborn Maps were updated in Sumter.

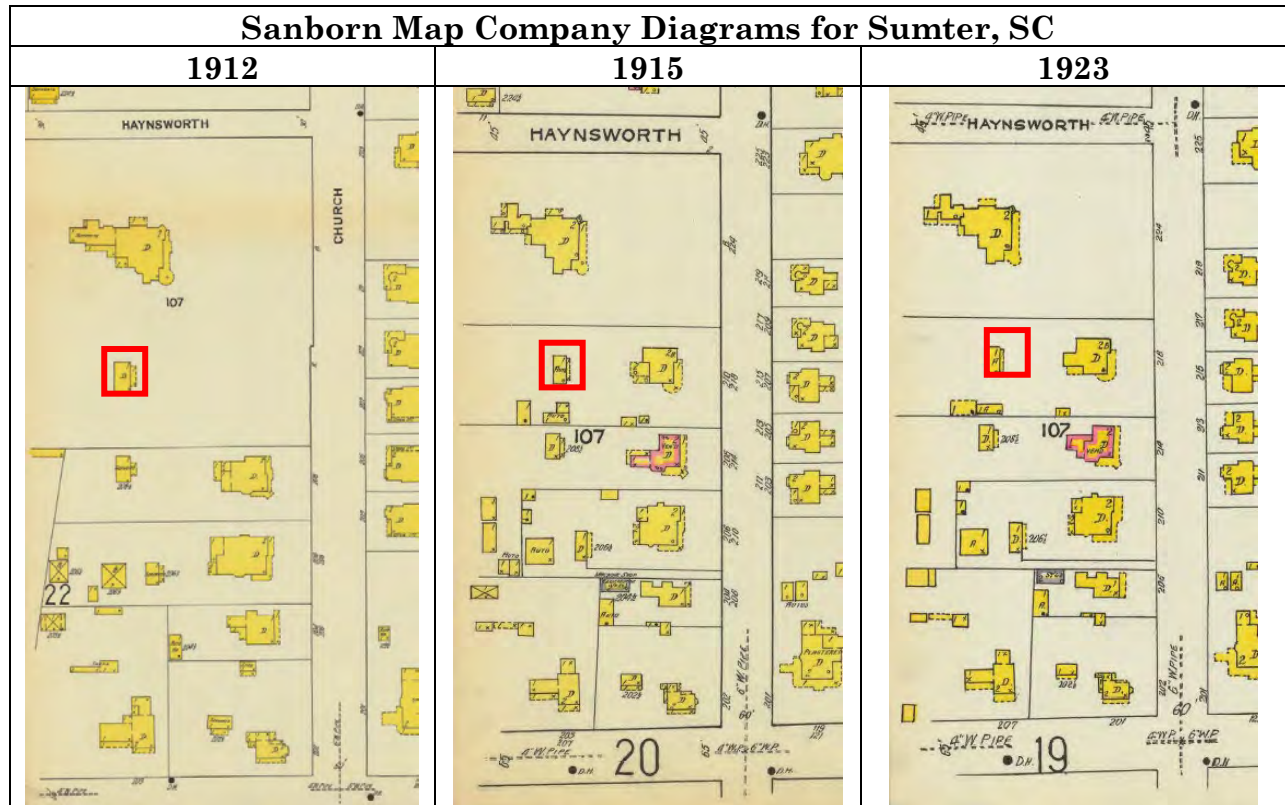
The building was originally an accessory residential structure for household staff for the since-demolished "Harby House", which was located at the corner of Haynsworth St. and Church St. After 1912 and before 1915, construction of the home now located at 218 Church St. resulted in the subject structure becoming part of that lot, where it appears to have



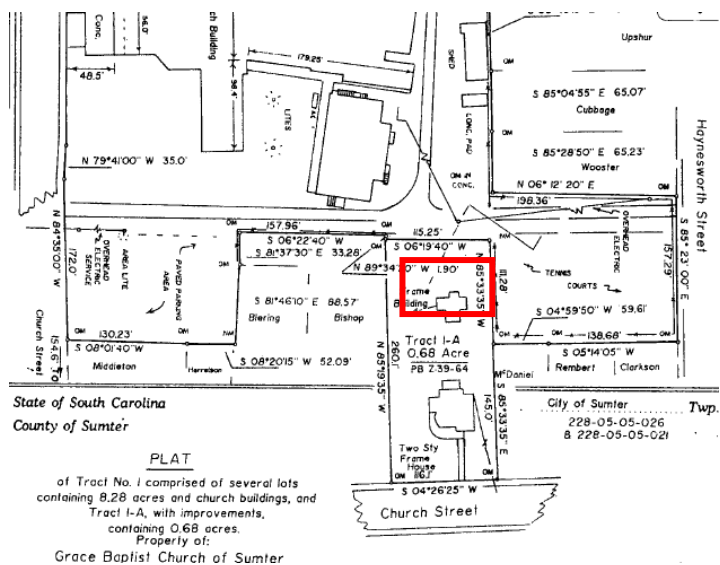
Figure 2 - Former Residence at Corner of Church and Haynsworth Streets

then served as a similar accessory residential function.

While not evaluated during the 1980 Historic Resources Survey, the structure's age and context do make it a contributing structure to the fabric of the Hampton Park Historic District.



In 1991, the structure was identified as "Frame Building" on a plat prepared for Grace Baptist Church by Allen-Makela Surveyors. At that time, the building was part of Tract 1-A, which included the residence at 218 Church St. In 1993, a subdivision plat was recorded to separate the residence at 218 Church St. from the building, which was then combined with the Church's larger tract.



SCOPE OF WORK:

The scope of work for this request proposes the complete demolition and removal of the structure.

The following photographs show the current exterior conditions of the building.



Above: South-facing Building Elevation



Above: West-facing Building Elevation



Above: East-facing Building Elevation



Above: North-facing Building Elevation



Figure 4 -Aerial Map Showing Current Location of Building Proposed for Removal

DESIGN REVIEW:

Design review approval is required prior to the proposed work. The *Design Review Guidelines Manual* states:

7.2 Demolition

A. *Demolish a historic building only after all alternatives have been exhausted.*

- *Provide an explanation of alternatives that were explored and the reasons why they were not feasible options.*
- *Prepare a detailed plan for the development of the site that includes a budget for both the demolition and the new construction, as well as a timetable.*
- *Document the building prior to demolition to include measured drawings, photographs, and a detailed history of the property.*

Requirements for Demolition: *Demolition may only be approved if one or more of the following conditions are met:*

- *Public Safety Hazard – When the local building official has determined that the physical condition of the building constitutes a hazard to the safety and welfare of the public.*
- *Loss of Architectural Integrity – When a building has lost its original architectural integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to a point that it no longer contributes to the historic character of the district.*
- *Loss of Structural Integrity – When a building has deteriorated and is structurally unstable. This condition must be demonstrated in a report by a licensed architect or structural engineer*

that fully documents the building's physical condition, provides a reasonable cost estimate for the necessary repairs, and justifies why such repairs are not feasible.

- *Economic Hardship – When economic hardship has been demonstrated and proven by the property owner and such hardship is accepted by the HPDRC. A detailed report should be provided that includes a reasonable estimate of rehabilitation costs and evidence that the potential value of the property cannot produce a financial return on such investment.*

Staff Analysis:

The Design Review Guidelines for demolition are intended to ensure that the full cultural, historic, and architectural character of a structure is considered and evaluated before it is irrevocably removed. The Guidelines specify that demolition may only be approved if at least one of four specific conditions are met. Those conditions are 1) Public Safety Hazard, 2) Loss of Architectural Integrity, 3) Loss of Structural Integrity, and/or 4) Economic Hardship. Specific analysis of the four criteria is contained below:

- 1) **Public Safety Hazard:** The building has been evaluated by the Sumter City-County Building Official. The Building Official has determined it to be in an advanced state of decay and could constitute a hazard to the safety and welfare of the public. Staff notes that the level of hazard to the safety and welfare of the public, due to the buildings advanced state of decay, does not meet the bar for emergency removal in advance of board review.
- 2) **Loss of Architectural Integrity:** There are architectural characteristics that, on its face, could merit preservation/restoration. It is unclear at this time whether sufficient loss of architectural integrity has occurred to merit demolition under that condition.
- 3) **Loss of Structural Integrity:** While the building is in a clear state of decay and disrepair, particularly as evidenced by the large hole in the roof on the northwestern corner, the specific details concerning structural integrity have not been established by a licensed architect or structural engineer that fully documents the building's physical condition, provides a reasonable cost estimate for the necessary repairs, and justifies why such repairs are not feasible.
- 4) **Economic Hardship:** It is unclear whether investment in the building could make sense from a financial standpoint. A detailed report has not been submitted that includes a reasonable estimate of rehabilitation costs and evidence that the potential value of the property cannot produce a financial return on such investment.

III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

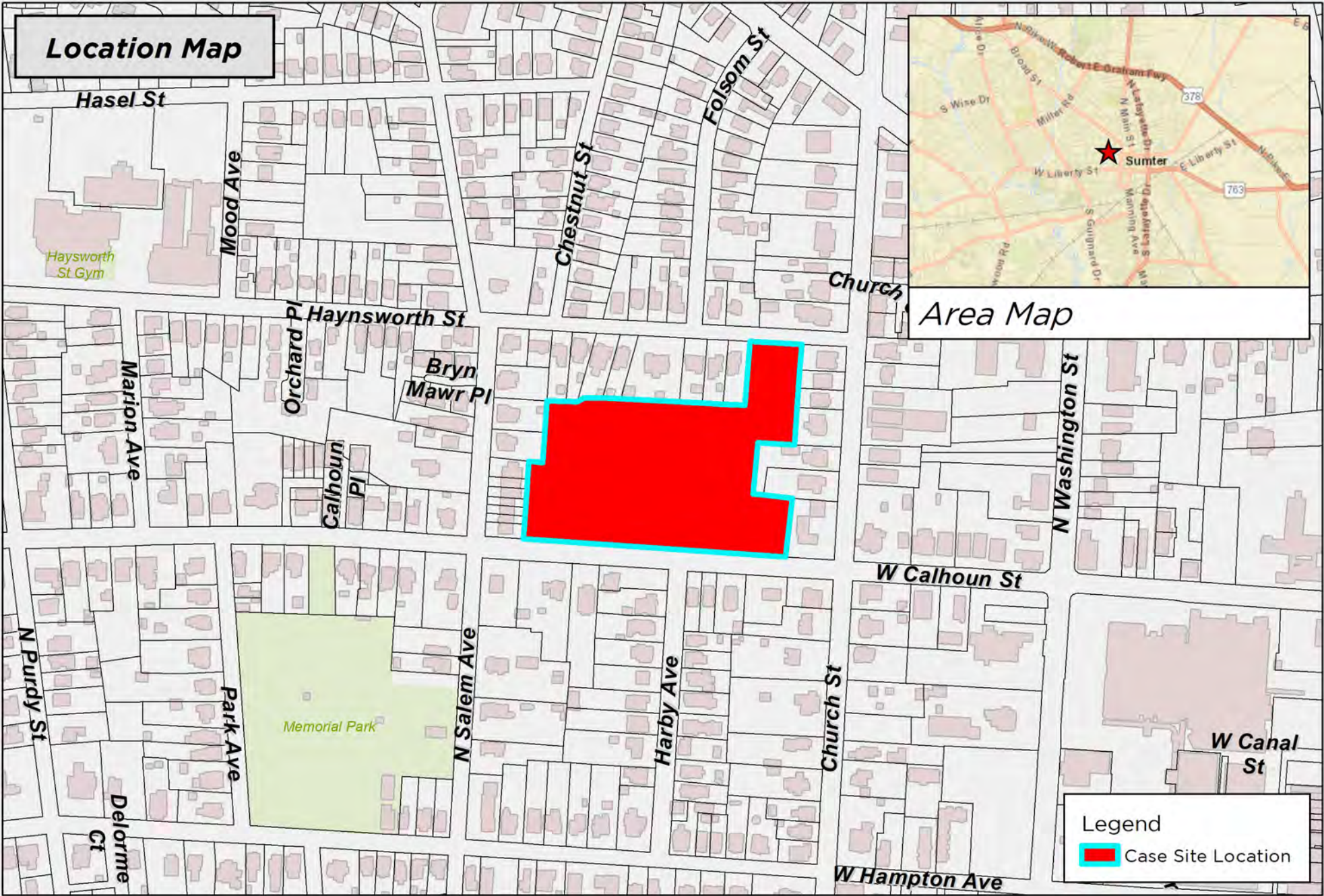
If the Design Review Board makes the finding(s) necessary to approve this request based on Design Review Guidelines Section 7.2, staff recommends no additional conditions of approval.

IV. DRAFT MOTION

- 1) I move that the City of Sumter Design Review Board **approve** HP-24-09 in accordance with the materials, photographs, and plan submitted and referenced in the Staff Report based on compliance with Design Review Guidelines.
- 2) I move that the City of Sumter Design Review Board **deny** HP-24-09.
- 3) I move that the City of Sumter Design Review Board enter an alternative motion.


V. DESIGN REVIEW BOARD – SEPTEMBER 26, 2024

Location Map

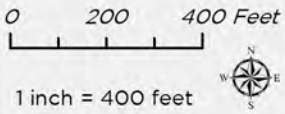


Area Map

Legend

 Case Site Location

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HP-24-15
 219 W Calhoun St, Sumter, SC, 29150
 Tax Map # 228-05-05-026