



**AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Agenda Item number: 3b

Title:	Historic Preservation Commission recommendation to deny a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition of the primary structure and rear addition of 217 Cedar Ave. (continued from 11/13/17)
Presenter:	Russell Colby

Meeting: Planning & Development Committee

Date: February 12, 2018

Proposed Cost: N/A

Budgeted Amount: N/A

Not Budgeted:

**Executive Summary** (if not budgeted please explain):

At the 11/13/17 meeting, the Planning & Development Committee discussed this item and decided to postpone further consideration for 90 days. Since that meeting, the Historic Preservation Commission has worked to provide supplemental information for the Committee's consideration.

- The Commissioners toured the interior of the house to view the condition of the structure. They generally felt the structure was in good condition, but required some maintenance.
- Dan Otto, a restoration contractor, toured the building and provided the attached summary of his findings. Mr. Otto is familiar with buildings of this age and construction type. He believes that the building is in very good condition, and that any needed improvements are cosmetic. Representatives from the church have asked if Mr. Otto could prepare a cost estimate for renovation of the house. Further information on the scope of renovation would be needed to prepare an estimate.
- Kurt Muehlfelt of Muehlfelt Enterprises, moving contractors, toured the structure. Mr. Muehlfelt believes that the house can be moved, as his company has moved similar structures in the past. He preliminarily estimated the cost to prepare and move the house at \$100,000. This cost would not include moving overhead wires or other obstructions in the moving path, or any costs association with the new location (any land cost, building foundation, utility services, or building systems that need to be replaced). Cost of interior improvements would depend on the ultimate use of the building.
- Representatives of the church have indicated they have received interest in the property.

Attached are minutes from the 11/13/17 P&D Committee meeting, the letter from Dan Otto, and copies of applicable Historic Preservation Commission minutes where the building was discussed since November.

If the Committee wishes to continue discussion on this topic, the Baker Memorial United Methodist Church would need to agreeable, or alternately the church may choose to request the Committee take action on the COA request.

**Attachments** (please list):

- Minutes from 11/13/17 P&D Committee meeting
- Letter from Dan Otto, Restoration Contractor
- Exerpts from Historic Commission discussions

**From 11/13/17 meeting:**

- Aerial photo showing Baker Church-owned properties;
- Architectural Survey of the building, 1994;
- Historic Preservation Commission Resolution 9-2017;
- COA request submitted by Baker Memorial United Methodist Church, 10/13/17 (includes request letter, letter with an insurance assessment of the building, letters from surrounding businesses and property owners, plans for reuse of the site as open space and a prayer garden);
- Minutes of Historic Preservation Commission meetings (7/19/17 preliminary review; 10/18/17 COA review);
- Recent photos of the building

**Recommendation/Suggested Action** (briefly explain):

Review the Historic Preservation Commission recommendation.

In accordance with Section 17.32.080 (E) of the Zoning Ordinance, The City Council may deny a Certificate of Appropriateness in accordance with the recommendations of the Historic Preservation Commission. Upon review of the Commission's resolution, its minutes and the application, if the City Council finds that the applicable criteria of this Chapter for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness will be met, it may disregard the Historic Preservation Commission Commission's recommendation and approve a Certificate of Appropriateness.

compromise on a few things, but the compromises are really pointed at our target market, so he feels the changes made benefit the city's advantage as well as our own.

Aldr. Lewis asked if there would be restrictions if someone wanted a deck. Ms. Tungare said yes, the lots would probably require a 10ft. easement. Mr. Helfrich said the utilities will be along the north line and the electric utility main line in front, but we provided for space between the residences to run services in the back regardless, therefore there will not be any easement restrictions on the 15ft. between the rear setback and the 30ft. buffer; could be a 14.95ft. deck.

Aldr. Lemke asked staff what a normal setback would be for the length of a driveway, and are there other examples of that. Mr. Colby said the RS4 district is the smallest lot single-family district of the suburban zoning districts, and that permits up to a 20ft. front yard set-back, because technically you can accommodate a car in a 20ft. setback but it's tight between the sidewalk and the garage. Aldr. Lemke said he does like the product and he's been in one similar before.

Aldr. Payleitner said she too would be a client, but she has 5 kids so she needs that driveway and sees the value in that.

Aldr. Stellato said we have smaller setback examples in town in Kingswood; King James and King Edward streets back up to a landscape buffer with a short backyard with decks going almost right up to the landscape buffer. It's been proven it works, and the city honors them maintaining the landscape buffer and he's more comfortable doing that than shortening up the driveways.

- d. Historic Preservation Commission recommendation to deny a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition of the primary structure and rear addition of 217 Cedar Ave.

Mr. Colby said this building, along with a number of surrounding properties, are owned by Baker Memorial United Methodist Church. The church is exploring opportunities for these properties to be redeveloped in some manner. No redevelopment is being proposed at this time. The church has submitted a plan for reuse of the property as greenspace and prayer garden. Under the City Code, the Historic Commission is required to review requests for any exterior alterations to buildings in the Historic District. The Commission has the authority to approve COAs or to recommend to the City Council that a COA denied. On October 18<sup>th</sup> the Historic Commission approved COAs for demolition of the adjacent building and other ancillary structures on the property, but recommended denial for demolition of the 217 house. The Commission's recommendation is in the form of a Resolution, which is included in the packet. That resolution cites individual criteria that the Commission believes are not being met by the COA proposal. Members of the Historic Preservation Commission are here to represent their recommendation.

Reverend Mary Zajac-Pastor at Baker Memorial United Methodist church-We purchased this house in 1993 with never having the intent to keep it as a home long-term. The intent in 1993 was to at some point remove them and possibly build an annex location. Over the time it took us to purchase those properties and come into the ownership of them, that need did not actually

come through, which is why we're at our long-term plan to remove those properties. We've owned that property for 24 years and have never had a conversation regarding its historic status or how important it is to actually be denied the ability to be removed. As our request is considered please understand you are not dealing with an individual but a community, we have over 800 members and it takes us a while to make a decision due to the lengthy process involved; it took us more than 3 years to get to this point and in considering a buyer for the location there's a lengthy process for approval. The reason we chose greenspace is because we didn't feel we were necessarily good stewards of the property leaving it in its current condition and we'd like to get some church use out of it as we begin the process of seeking to sell the property; we do not have approval from the church at this time to sell it. In dealing with a congregation rather than a business, we don't actually have income, we have offerings, please consider that as a recommendation is made. Moving this particular building as our own cost would not be conducive to our congregation's approval or good stewardship of the funds received.

Steve Gibson-243 Valley View Dr.-Vice Chair for Historic Preservation Commission-gave a brief history of the building and why it's considered historic: structurally and architecturally there are some very cool things about this house. The house was originally owned by Judge William D. Barry who moved from Vermont to St. Charles in 1840; he practiced in Ohio court before that and was admitted to the bar. Once here he was a teacher to other attorneys and had his own law practice. Soon after he moved here he purchased this property from Ira Minard-one of the original founding fathers of St. Charles-and we believe the building was built circa 1845-1847. The house originally had a river stone exterior and he lived in the house until his death in 1892; it's not clear what happened between 1892-1921 but we do know that in 1921 Frank Rasmussen purchased and remodeled the interior of that structure. He was there until 1942 and then gave the property to his daughter-in-law, sister-in-law and Edith Kohler, who was secretary to Mayor Langum. In 1967 she was interviewed by the Chronicle about this property, she talked about the history of the building which included visits on several occasions from Abraham Lincoln, who was a friend of Judge Barry, and repeatedly slept upstairs in a bedroom. She also noted the interior of the house was not original, there were extensive changes to the inside as well as stucco to the exterior as of 1921. Edith Kohler had a brother Henry Kohler who was a business man here in town, he also competed in 3 Indy 500 races, after he was done racing cars he purchased an airplane. In order to fly his plane he bought interest in a property on the east side of town and when he was done with that he gave that interest to the men that then developed DuPage Airport. He then purchased a Ford dealership here in town, as well as garage. Overall the structural changes in the interior are significant, the exterior not so much, the windows and doors are generally in the same position, there may have been a window added to the west side of the house, but most everything else appears to be on the original plan. Given the facts of the history shared tonight the Historic Preservation Commission believes there's an opportunity for this building as it exists to tell the story of St. Charles, pull together a lot of stories of St. Charles and allow people to see where this all existed in the city. It's a fantastic location with proximity to the Dunham Hunt mansion, St. Charles History Museum and East Side park.

Aldr. Lemke said the stucco looks to be not materially different than it was originally stuccoed, it looks to be somewhat deteriorating, is there a sense as to whether this should be kept or who is responsible for rehabbing the house. Mr. Gibson said requests come to Commission for repair or remodeling by the owner of the building, however if this development is being packaged to go to

someone else that buyer would come to us to discuss what they want to do; it's not contingent that the building be 100% in repair when its sold to a new buyer.

Aldr. Payleitner thanked Mr. Gibson for the history on the building, it's significant and clearly in its original condition. In the church's defense; Pastor Mary didn't know she had an architecturally significant building, and she can see why they thought that. In the packet there's an architectural survey that was conducted around 1994 and in there it states it's non-contributing architecturally. Mr. Gibson said it's important to understand that non-contributing doesn't necessarily refer to the historical significance, that was an architectural survey. Specifically what they talk about there is that all of those things we consider to be unique about the house, those were not evident at the time the survey was done. Aldr. Payleitner said clearly it was flawed or unknown, but the church didn't know they had this when they bought it, which they did to demolish it. It has the potential to be a real gem in the historic district and she'd like to see us take a breath and find out if it can be moved, or restored. Chairman Bessner suggested some sort of study to get in and see it.

Aldr. Silkaitis said he'd really hate to lose this house, he understands the condition of it, but maybe take the stucco down and he bets there's stone walls, which is very unique. He knows in the past we've lost some architectural buildings in St. Charles, which he's not crazy about, and he'd like to see us do more work on this to find out what we can do to preserve this house, whether that means moving it, or whatever the situation is. He doesn't want to jump the gun and tear it down, he wants more information before he makes a final decision, but he'd like to save it.

Mr. Gibson said there's an example at the end of the block-the Collins house, the stucco was actually removed and is now stone, as well as 2 stone buildings next to St. Patrick's Church and the Weisel house.

Aldr. Vitek asked if we've explored the cost of moving it, she too agrees that we shouldn't jump the gun. Mr. Gibson said its incumbent on the owner of the property to make any of these changes, not necessarily the church, who has expressed interest in selling the property. The next person to buy that property could undertake the cost of moving or redeveloping that building; so that's really not the focus. Pastor Mary clarified that they have a congregational agreement to remove the homes and return them to green space; we do not have a congregational agreement to sell the property. We do have a strategic property team that's been looking at the possibility of selling for a number of years, but as to when or not we would have congregational approval, she cannot speak to that. We'd have to have a buyer, a price, a congregational meeting, 30 day notice, there's a process. Chairman Bessner asked if during that time the possibility would be looked at to tear down the structure. Pastor Mary said we didn't know we had a historic structure so we already have contractors and funds set-aside to do so; we don't have funds set aside to remove the houses around it without disturbing that one, so likelihood would probably be to leave all the structures standing at this point. Chairman Bessner said maybe an option would be to ask if it's possible to market the property "as-is" for 6 months to see if there's any takers. Pastor Mary said their strategic team has taken the informal assessment that properties on the east side of the river were not ready to sell due to current empty spaces, and so in being good neighbors, to get better use out of the properties, the prayer garden is more in our mission versus rental homes and go this way. If there is interest in the properties that wanted to develop now,

that would absolutely be something they would consider. Chairman Bessner said that would give us an opportunity to see if its marketable, and at the same time take a breather and find out if we can restore or relocate the structure, if it came down that path. We can all do our homework a little further to come to a better understanding and what the final outcome might be.

Aldr. Lewis said she sees both sides, and to Pastor Mary; government moves slow as well, and in speaking with Pastor Mary she felt there was also interest there in protecting and keeping that house. In reading the minutes, people are not opposed to redeveloping that property; they'd like to get the parking lot off Main St. and it could be an exciting property with the 2 stone houses on either end with parking and an entrance in the back. This community has spent a lot of money in restoring these types of buildings, and we owe it all to ourselves to take this pause to see what can be done, what the cost would be and have some vision and conversation on it. She suggested postponing this for 6 months and then revisit.

Aldr. Stellato said he also sees both sides, as well as intelligent people on both sides and he feels there's a compromise here. He doesn't feel the hard line approach is that this house can never be moved, because that's one of the hardline statements he's seen where we thought we don't want money to get in the way, and we don't want historical significance of the site to get in the way more than the house; the house is the most important and critical here. He said he deals with historical structures all the time, and time is really not on our side, we cannot wait too long if the house is already in bad condition. The church has no obligation to do anything to this home going forward, just like any other homeowner, it's up to them, but based on its current condition it will only depreciate over time; we need to move somewhat quickly. He would hate to market it for 6 months and find it cannot be sold and then go back and bring in a structural engineer, where at that point there's now some winter damage to the home. He'd like to really research and find out what it would take to move that house if we had to, that's going to have to be the compromise for those that want to keep it in that exact spot, there has to be some give on both sides. It seems it's a beautiful home but at the same time we have the church that needs to develop that site, they bought it not knowing it was historical and they need to have the right to develop it. This is a tough one, I've been on Council for a long time and not everyone is going to be happy with this one, but he feels there's a good commonsense compromise here somewhere. Chairman Bessner asked if we have the ability to market the product at the same time as looking at it structurally. Aldr. Stellato said you can't rent it out today, it will continue to be vacant. Pastor Mary said we had tenants in these buildings until June when school got out, but we honestly don't feel good having families in these structures. Aldr. Stellato said he wouldn't either, they will remain unattended and he doesn't want that to go too long.

Aldr. Gaugel asked who would be responsible for the structural analysis. Aldr. Stellato said he personally feels the city should have some part in that, and he doesn't mind helping out with if we can get some sort of taskforce involving the city, church and historic preservation to work together to do that. Financially, to hire an engineer will have to be discussed, but first someone needs to go in there first and find out what we have, because moving stone is difficult. The Jones Law office was moved very well, but that's a different structure, but he personally feels the city should jump in and help.

Aldr. Bancroft said he agrees with Aldr. Stellato, moving a structure like this is going to be complicated and dealing with in the governance structure that the Pastor has is going to make it that much harder. These things are hard enough to do when you're a professional, but this is a big task for a church.

Aldr. Lemke said he can see the possibility of marketing "as-is" with the 1 structure left, he does worry about deterioration with being empty all winter. He mentioned the Farnsworth Mansion and the difficulty of moving a stone building; it's not rocket science but it's not easy, nor cheap, and he needs more information.

Aldr. Payleitner said her thoughts were more for restoration and she wondered if there are any experts close at hand to take a look to see what we have in a timely fashion. Mr. Gibson said there are people in the room tonight that could tell us that, not him personally. But from his experience with the Judd Mansion, Heritage Square, etc. where there needed to be work done to stabilize and make things work, it is very possible, the Chamberlain house comes to mind which was completely renovated and is on the market for \$1.1 million. He would also like to know what the cost is of this building being there and not being there, to the church, it's an important consideration and financial hardship is included in the commission's deliberation which would be brought to Committee.

Kim Malay-Historic Preservation Commission, 526 S. 16<sup>th</sup> St.-said we have been in this situation before with the Judd mansion and Richard Riot house; both were purchased by developers and were restored to be very successful, so it can be done and she hopes we can start researching that possibility. Moving it will not be an easy task and a lot of research is needed, but this ordinance is in place because we lost the Farnsworth Mansion in a very similar discussion and she hopes all options are reviewed.

Aldr. Stellato said our ability to pitch in might not only be to test structural integrity, but also in the form of a financial monetary incentive and put it out there for a developer to work with the church.

Dean Bemis-304 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave.-their house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as the Joel H. Hubbard house, the home at 217 Cedar is in our neighborhood. The architectural survey referred to earlier was actually done of the Central District of St. Charles which was completed in 1994 by Dixon and Associates, which states the home dates from 1850. Mr. Dixon was instrumental in helping us get our home on the National Register; he sent us an email on the Barry house stating that in his opinion the 1921 coating and stucco put on the house can actually act as a protection for the stone. He also said the Barry house is certainly an early St. Charles home which contributes to the historic neighborhood and the links to Frederick Rasmussen, Edith Kohler, Abraham Lincoln and General Farnsworth only strengthens the case that this home represents a singular opportunity to reserve the heritage in St. Charles in a way to help future generations understand how St. Charles developed from a shallow ford in the Fox River to the great city it is today. He then shared a story regarding the Andrew Weisel House regarding the removal of the stucco and how outstanding it preserved the brick underneath, and he hopes the home at 217 Cedar will have the stucco removed to preserve this pillar of St. Charles history.

Adam Gibbons-33W777 Hill Rd., Geneva- President-Preservation Partners of the Fox Valley-in February 2017 Aurora's Historical Society uncovered a compelling evidence that Abraham Lincoln stayed overnight at a Boarding house in Aurora. There's also an oral tradition often repeated over many decades that he also stayed in St. Charles in the 1850's, the only 2 dwellings tied to that was the old John Farnsworth house-who was present at the death bed of Abraham Lincoln, as well as the Judge Berry house at 217 Cedar Ave. Although this house is now covered in stucco and suffering from neglect it is a very significant history and the potential for a significant future. On the behalf of Preservation Partner's members and the board, they are hopeful that the demolition will not be allowed; the Judge Berry house is integral part of the fabric of the neighborhood. He mentioned some of the east side historic homes that have been renovated and they feel confident that the Barry house has the same potential. He then gave a brief history of Judge Berry and asked Committee to please show their support of St. Charles rich heritage and do their part to preserve its past.

Susan Izzo-312 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. -said she lives in the Andrew Weisel home and are not just homeowners, but caretakers of the property. We were lucky enough to come in and restore it as a historic property, it was covered in stucco but having the vision to know what is there and knowing the history is really beautiful. People come to celebrate and marvel at these beautiful homes and would like to add that this is something that we need to be very prudent with as we move forward, and make sure this is not destroyed.

John Saucer-39W876 Old Burlington Rd., Campton Hills-said he's here as a member of the community as well as a member of the church, and as 1 of the trustees of the church. The church is 1 of the pillars of the community, made up of family members and generations of people, so when a church makes a decision like this it's not easy, it take years and a lot of people are involved. The last thing the church wants to do is tear down anything that has historical significance, we'd want to air on the side of preserving something. The church has owned and operated these for many years, the only approved by the church and its members was to turn this into a prayer garden, the church operates in budget constraints and does not have unlimited funds. The prayer garden best serves our congregation and it's hard to get a large group to make a decision for any type of change. We are also realists and are open to the community but are not actively looking to sell this; it may never be sold, but we're open and reasonable. If the city or a developer came to us and said they had a use for this and would like to buy it; absolutely our congregation would listen, but that hasn't been the case. By trade he's in real estate, a developer in construction, and something doesn't have to be listed for sale for a developer to show interest, and to his knowledge that hasn't happened in 20 years. These are rundown buildings-decrepit, we've done our best; they were probably not in the best shape when the church took them over. We've put money into these by replacing windows, heating and cooling systems, wiring, etc., but at some point there is a useful lifespan to a structure. Everything doesn't last for 1,000 years and these are in rough shape. He too lives in a historic house and sees the value of saving something old that's worthwhile; however these do not have good bones, nothing is original about this; there are major issues. He thinks the architectural significance in looking at the property is almost zero, so it's really historical values, which he's heard a lot of passionate comments tonight but he knows these places and it doesn't exist. He's heard a lot of historic possibilities tonight, but we don't really know and he feels there's been a lot of conjecture to what the historical significance really is of this. We're not in a hurry to rush to do something, once you

tear it down you can't get it back, and he understands that, but there is a financial cost to wait 6 months; real-estate taxes, insurance, utilities and maintenance. The church is not in a financial ability to let this sit, and we certainly do not have funds to hire architects or historians. We're certainly open to take 30-60 days to publicize it for sale, and if someone wants to move it or buy it and provide a plan to the council for restoration; we could certainly take that to the church for discussion, but he doesn't see that happening. If someone here or the historic preservation commission wants the building we would donate it and they could then move it, but that's very costly. He's not trying to belittle the organization at all, he feels it's important and wonderful, but it's really easy to say we believe there's historical significance, and he disagrees with the significance of this building; in a sense it's kind of grasping straws. He reminded everybody that the city isn't using any of their money, were not here asking for TIF money, this is all private donated funds to turn this into a prayer garden. The building next door is a duplex and needs to be torn down, there are no single-family homes on this block, and it's surrounded by another church, a business and parking lots. As you move from a downtown business district into neighborhoods there's going to be a buffer and change, and how we live today is not how we lived 50 years ago, unfortunately we do need parking lots, otherwise people will not come and shop downtown. The church isn't a developer, this was bought as a church mission initially, and we've had many different renters in there and it just doesn't work, the buildings were too dilapidated before we even got them. We've put time and money into trying to save them, but this property has outlived its lifespan and the majority of the weight needs to be on the side of the property owner and what they would like to do with it.

Pat Pretz-214 Chestnut Ave.-She lives in the historic district, 2 blocks north of the Barry house. She said the St. Charles mission statement puts "heritage" as number one, which makes it unique and special, and it's important. She congratulated the city on being the 2017 winner of America in Bloom, and what an honor it is. Quoted from the finding of America in Bloom-"St. Charles has a very active Historic Pres. Commission that oversees preservation effort; there are ordinances in place that provide authority to prevent demolition of historic resources through City Council." That's quite a charge and she asked that Committee be thoughtful when considering this issue. She said people are looking for places to visit that have this heritage, and we have a number of stories here. She mentioned the trolley tour. Adaptive reuse is a wonderful compromise, although it was a home, it doesn't have to be that in the future. She thinks we're looking too small sometimes, she mentioned some other properties around the city where the home was saved but rethought as a different purpose. She feels for the church, there's a lot of pressure to make ends meet, but there are façade grants in place which is a plus and she thinks collaboration and creativity and vision can develop something that preserves history but relative and functional for today.

Diana Brown-1436 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.-Vice President of the St. Charles History Museum, said a resolution was approved stating we recognize the historical significance of the Barry house and we support a process of further deliberation and consideration by the city to preserve the structure in the historic district.

Karen Lando-107 W. Main St. and 201 Cedar Ave. -said when we purchase the Cedar Ave. location she was uneducated about the fact that it was a historic property; she's sympathetic to the church and completely understands. After doing research they decided that if they were



going to restore the building they would do it right and they took it back to its original look. If the church would decide to sell this property in the future she would hope that whoever the purchaser is will have the vision and the foresight to realize that you can have a modern and historic mix. She said her undertaking was a large one, but thanks to Kim Malay and the Historic Preservation Commission, they were able to secure some matching funds for the exterior of the building. She hopes Committee takes the time to really give this some thought. She mentioned the yearly tour the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders take and that although her building is older, the Barry house has much more historic significance.

Aldr. Payleitner said property ownership has no guarantees and she's feels bad that the church made a discovery that they're not happy with; it's throwing their plans off track for now. This is something we need to take a breath on and investigate to find out if this is worthy of restoration.

Mr. Colby stated that we should allow the church the opportunity to request the committee to take action of what's before you, or if they're comfortable with this delay.

Pastor Mary said 90 days all depends on what's going to happen in those days. From the Church's perspective we don't have intention to hire historical engineers, she wouldn't choose to put the congregations money there and she wondered what would happen in the 90 days and how would it paid for. Chairman Bessner said we'd like to try to get the input from our Historic Commission, the city and representative from the church to look at this to try to market it, or for the city to find out if this is restorable and for what price. Pastor Mary said if we're leaving it up to the church to do something in 90 days, it's not likely, it's not the top of the priority list. She's not adverse to 90 days if she can understand what will happen.

Aldr. Stellato said in those 90 days we set those goals and we come back and talk about what we've learned, and maybe have a get together between the groups to go over those goals with the ultimate goal of looking at some type of final decision. But use these 90 days to open up dialogue between the city, staff, commission and church to figure out what our role is.

**Aldr. Lewis made a motion to postpone the decision for 90 days bring people together to see what we can come up with, come back and report, then try to get to a decision by the end of 6 months. Seconded by Aldr. Stellato.**

**Roll was called:**

**Ayes: Stellato, Silkaitis, Payleitner, Lemke, Bancroft, Gaugel, Vitek, Lewis**

**Absent: Turner**

**Recused:**

**Nays:**

**Motion carried 8-0**

~~e. Recommendation to approve an amendment to Title 15 of the City Code for Building Permit Fees.~~

~~Mr. Vann said approximately every three to four years, staff reviews the fee structure of construction permits, the last increase to the building permit fee schedule was January 2014. The~~

## Assessment by Dan Otto

The Judge Barry house at 217 Cedar Street, St. Charles, Illinois is a classic Greek Revival home built in 1846. The semi circular niche in the north gable end probably contained a wooden fan. The house is built of limestone laid in courses and is in wonderful condition. If the stucco were removed and the stonework tuckpointed it would look similar to the stone house to the west.

The basement walls are plumb and smooth and show no sign of spalling, cracking or water damage. The center support beam is a hand hewn oak 8x10 that needs a post place at the center. The white pine floor joists are notched into the beam and set directly into the stone wall on the other end. Floor joists are in good condition. The original floor, visible from the basement, is 1x10 white pine.

The first floor has  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch hard maple floors probably laid around 1900. The floor is level and smooth and attractively finished with no signs of instability.

The staircase is original and complete except for two missing balusters. The upstairs floors are also maple but  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch thick. They are well finished and very sound.

The attic shows a center beam 6  $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 8" hand hewn oak with oak 3" x 6" ceiling joists notched in. They are spaced 16 inch on center with insulation between.

The rafters are also oak and measure 3" x 4  $\frac{1}{2}$ " on 32 inch centers. The original pine skipped sheathing is in place. The boards were gapped originally because the original roof was wood shingles. The roof now is asphalt shingles over plywood. All the framing is in good condition and shows no sign of leaking or powder post beetle.

The stone of the gable ends shows that the chimneys were built integral with the stone walls.

A  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch 4' x 8' insulation board has been applied directly to the interior walls.

I have been a restoration carpenter in the Fox Valley area for over 40 years. I think the Barry House is in remarkable condition. Restoration would require only cosmetic work and nothing of a structural nature.

This house deserves to stay where it was built. Moving the house is not feasible.  
**PLEASE SAVE THIS HOUSE!**

Projects:  
Sholes School  
SS Jones Law Office  
Alexander Home (Bald Mound)  
Fitzsimmons Mansion (Geneva)



Mr. Pretz felt the change in the material and style will help the street immensely. Mr. Krahenbuhl liked the changes presented. Mr. Kessler was also in favor of the doors and trim, but said he preferred a product like versetta stone over the Hardie board. Mr. B. Colby said he would only use that on a small project.

**A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Pretz with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA using Hardie board as the main siding contingent upon seeing a scaled drawing of the south elevation.**

**a. 218 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue**

Mr. Colby was approached by an architect who is working with the homeowner. The home is in the historic district, but they do not what style it is. The survey lists it as a ranch and the only architectural element they noticed were the frieze returns. The homeowner would like to add a porch and modify the exterior of the building in the Craftsman style. The garage will also be modified to match. They would like to know if this style would be acceptable given its existing architecture. Dr. Smunt said it is basically nondescript and liked what the homeowner is planning to do. The Commissioners were in favor of the changes and suggested the homeowner come in and present their plan.

**11. Additional Business and Observations from Commissioners or Staff**

**a. Downtown Partnership Update**

Mr. Gibson said the Downtown Partnership is re-doing the signs that were mentioned at a previous meeting. They will follow-up with the Commission when they have something new to present.

**b. Residential Façade Improvement Grant**

Mr. Colby advised the Commissioners to email him any feedback they have regarding the instruction sheet he created that explains how to apply for a grant. Mr. Krahenbuhl suggested including verbiage concerning timing issues to indicate how long the applicant has to complete a project in order to receive funding. Mr. Kessler said it should state “exterior only”. The Commissioners discussed whether or not to allow interior structural issues that impact the exterior. Mr. Colby advised they would have to consider this on a case-by-case basis. Since the program does not clearly allow for interior issues, the homeowner would need to prove the connection between the two. Ms. Malay did not want to rule it out altogether because the intent of the program is to preserve the longevity of these homes.

**c. Historical Footprint**

The item was tabled.

**d. 217 Cedar Ave.**

Chairman Norris said the City Council postponed a decision on this issue for 90 days. He said the Council has asked the Commission for assistance to work out a solution. Chairman Norris suggested the Commissioners meet on-site for a further review. Mr. Colby said he would need to advise the church what the Commission's purpose is for going into the building.

Mr. Colby said they can start looking at the building to gain a better understanding. However, they also need to start thinking about what the action is going to be. Is it going to be looking into the cost of moving it or the potential where it could be moved? Just looking at the condition of the building does not address the request from the church to have the building removed.

Mr. Pretz said the Commission doesn't have the background or resources to figure out the moving of the building. Mr. Gibson said the problem is due to a lack of understanding of the process. He said the aldermen are looking to the Commission to explain to them how this became the church's responsibility to restore the building. He said he told the alderman the church doesn't have to do anything; all they have to do is sell it to someone who will make those changes. The church said their only intention is to demolish the building and sell the property.

Mr. Pretz said if they are allowed in the building, they need someone to say it's a sound building and that it could be moved. The expert can advise if repairs can be made to save it and can it possibly be moved. He said once they answer that the Commission is done.

Ms. Malay thinks they are trying to form a subcommittee to see if the City funds having a structural engineer take a look at it. She thinks they are looking for a game plan as to how they are going to do that in the next 90 days. Chairman Norris said they could have a city inspector come in and conduct a Chapter 34 review. The inspector would be able to determine what it would take to have someone live there. Mr. Colby noted the church has not made claims the building is not structurally sound so that should not be the only focus.

Chairman Norris expressed concern that the building may deteriorate further and be compromised.

Mr. Pretz asked if there were documents showing the church's original intent in buying the property. Ms. Malay said the church did try to opt out of the historic district when the ordinance was upgraded in 1995, but they did not have the ability to do so. This would indicate they were aware of what they were aware of the regulations.

Mr. Gibson said the church was very clear with their intent to demolish the building. He suggested the Commission determine how much the property is worth with and without the building and then see if the City could help make up the difference in cost. He said this way they would be made whole with either plan. Mr. Gibson said there aren't that many more of these kinds of buildings left in the city and his only goal is to save this one.

Ms. Malay asked if it would be feasible to ask a developer to provide some assistance. Mr. Colby said they could, however the church has stated that they are not committed to selling the

property, at least not immediately. He noted the concern then is with who will maintain property in the meantime.

Mr. Gibson said it's possible a developer may say they won't touch the property because the house sits in a place that makes the property unusable. That could be keeping the church from being able to sell the property. He said this may be viewed as diminishing the return that they built up over time in hopes of helping their congregation.

Ms. Malay felt Alderman Stellato had various perspectives on this and suggested meeting with him within the next two weeks to get clearer direction as to what the Council is looking for. Mr. Gibson said they need to get in the building before meeting further to view the condition.

Mr. Kessler noted the Commissioners are volunteers adhering to the framework of the ordinance. He felt they have done their job. Mr. Gibson said there is also some education needed here. The Council had questions as to how people know they live in an historic home. Mr. Colby said this information comes up when a title search is done, but people may not pay attention to it, or know what it means.

**12. Meeting Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, December 6, 2017 at 7:00 P.M. in the Committee Room.**

**13. Public Comment**

Ms. Malay said Camp Kane is officially open.

**14. Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Mr. Pretz was not opposed to the modifications. However, he suggested they make sure the modifications are designed to be architecturally correct and proportioned appropriately with the house. Dr. Smunt said to go with what they know existed versus adding an interpretive element that did not exist.

Chairman Norris noted the arched window is one of the strongest elements on that portion of the building and the wraparound porch will drastically put this in the shadows. Mr. O'Connor said it will still be visible from the street.

The Commissioners were generally supportive of the concept, but suggested the O'Connors provide visual materials incorporating the modifications discussed.

## **10. Additional Business and Observations from Commissioners or Staff**

### **a. 217 Cedar Ave.**

Mr. Colby noted the tour of the house is scheduled for 10:30 a.m. on Saturday and will be noticed as a meeting. A suggestion was made to include the aldermen. Mr. Colby advised some aldermen have already been through the house. He said they have to be careful to avoid having a majority of a quorum of aldermen. Dr. Smunt suggested inviting the 4<sup>th</sup> ward aldermen if they haven't already been through it. Mr. Gibson suggested Art Lemke and Dan Stellato.

Since this is a public meeting, Mr. Pretz asked about inviting Dan Otto. Mr. Otto has a background in structure and moving buildings. Mr. Pretz felt Mr. Otto would be able to provide some valuable feedback that could be beneficial to the Commission in preparing a response back to the Council. Mr. Colby said it would be acceptable to invite him as it is a public meeting.

Mr. Kessler asked for clarification as to the purpose of the meeting/tour. Was it to show the Council some options? He restated his original position noting he felt their duty was to read the ordinance and see if this meets it. He felt they had already done that. He asked what they believe the outcome of their tour will be. Chairman Norris suggested evaluating a plan after the meeting/tour. Dr. Smunt said if they find the building has a reasonable chance at being part of a redevelopment plan if the property is sold, the Commission needs to say so.

Mr. Gibson said the City Council is asking the Commission to give an opinion and provide guidance in making their decision. He said the Commission could say they have taken their action, made a recommendation, and given a resolution, but this could be an opportunity to further assist the Council and advise them of everything the Commission did on this. Mr. Pretz stated a developer was reaching out to the church to talk about the availability of the property.

Mr. Colby said this discussion will likely return to the P&D meeting in March. Mr. Gibson said he felt the 90 day extension was for the Commission to have time to review a plan. However, he said if they are ready to give their feedback before then, they could move forward in doing so. Ms. Malay said it also gives the Council more time to do what they need to do.

Mr. Colby asked if the Commission wanted to set up a sub-committee or group to meet with interested aldermen and the church. From a scheduling standpoint, he noted only two Commissioners would be able to attend. Mr. Pretz felt it was a good idea if it helps the Council get a better understanding on the matter. Dr. Smunt said it all depends on the outcome of the tour. The Commission decided to conduct the tour before making any further plans.

**b. Residential Façade Improvement Grant**

Mr. Colby asked if anyone had any comments on the summary he shared with them. The Commissioners did not have any additional feedback.

**c. West Dundee/Elgin**

Mr. Pretz said he received information from the Dundee Township Historic Society on their plaquing process and qualifications. Their nominations were expanded to include homes 100 years and older. He asked if this item could be put on the next agenda for additional discussion.

Mr. Pretz also mentioned the City of Elgin has a celebration twice a year recognizing their nominated homes. This is done by their heritage commission, in conjunction with their history museum and downtown partners. He recommended doing something similar to recognize the homes that have been nominated in a given year. Dr. Smunt said this may be an ideal way to do something for the catalog homes. After categorizing them, they haven't done much else with the information. He said they could feature the ones that have recognizable original architecture. He felt it could be a seed to stimulate pride in their neighborhood.

Mr. Pretz thought it was a way to continue reinforcing homeowners who received landmark designation years ago that they have a significant home.

**11. Meeting Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, December 21, 2017 at 7:00 P.M. in the Committee Room.**

**12. Public Comment**

**13. Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

**MINUTES  
CITY OF ST. CHARLES  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2017  
COMMITTEE ROOM**

**Members Present:** Chairman Norris, Pretz, Smunt, Krahenbuhl, Gibson, Kessler, Malay

**Members Absent:** None

**Also Present:** Russell Colby, Division Planning Manager

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**1. Call to order**

Chairman Norris called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Roll call**

Mr. Colby called roll with seven members present. There was a quorum.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Items 13 and 14a were tabled.

**4. Presentation of minutes of the December 6, 2017 and December 9, 2017 meetings**

**A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Kessler with a unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2017 meeting.**

**A motion was made by Mr. Krahenbuhl and seconded by Mr. Gibson with a unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2017 meeting. Ms. Malay abstained.**

**5. Discussion: 217 Cedar Ave. site visit**

The Commission conducted a site visit of the building on December 9<sup>th</sup>. Six of the Commissioners attended. Dan Otto was also present to assess the structure and provide feedback on his findings.

Dr. Smunt said the inside was messy and neglected, but structurally, the building is very sound. He felt there was future potential for the structure in any redevelopment of the property.



Mr. Pretz said Dan Otto conducted a follow-up visit and also felt it was a sound structure. Mr. Otto provided a written document with more detailed findings. Mr. Pretz reviewed some of these findings. Chairman Norris entered the document as Exhibit 1, dated 12/20/17.

Mr. Kessler felt the building was in pretty good condition and Mr. Gibson thought it was in the proper condition to be saved. Mr. Krahenbuhl said the house should not be demolished until there is a plan for what to do with it.

Peter Vargulich was present on behalf of Baker Church and referenced the third paragraph in Mr. Otto's letter. It says the floors on the first floor are level and smooth with no signs of instability. However, Mr. Vargulich said he missed a significant warping of the floor in the front room. Mr. Otto also stated moving the house was not feasible. Mr. Vargulich asked for an explanation as to why he came to that conclusion. Mr. Pretz thought he didn't say it could not be moved; just that it may not make sense based on the stone and the type of structure it is. It may be too overwhelming. Mr. Gibson suggested they get further information from Mr. Otto concerning his comments. Dr. Smunt said they could also get an opinion from a moving company with experience moving these types of structures. Mr. Vargulich felt that was fair.

#### **6. Zoning Variation: 314 Indiana St.**

John Cebrzynski, from John Henry Homes, and Dan Marshall, the architect, was present.

The house on this property suffered a fire and was recently demolished. The new house being constructed requires a variance for a reduced rear yard set-back from 30 feet to 20 feet, and an increase to the percentage of the lot that can be covered by buildings. The request is for an additional 141 square feet of additional building area. The Zoning Board of Appeals will be reviewing the request at their upcoming meeting. The proposed house is in the historic district and would require a COA prior to construction. The information is being presented to the Commission for their support in granting the variance; and for preliminary review comments on the proposed design.

Mr. Cebrzynski said the proposed house will be going from 17 feet to 20 feet in the rear yard. The front will match the house on the right when viewed from the street. Everything else will remain the same. He said the design fits in well with the area. Mr. Krahenbuhl asked if it was possible to stay within the permitted square footage. Mr. Marshall said they could, but the rooms will be very compact and will become a marketability issue.

The Commissioners discussed the front set back and felt the proposal did not have a negative impact on the district.

**A motion was made by Dr. Smunt and seconded by Ms. Malay with a unanimous voice vote to recommend that the Zoning Board of Appeals grant a variance to allow for an economically feasible residential redevelopment of the property. The concept architectural plan will contribute to the existing adjacent architecture and streetscape in the historic**

**9a. 217 Cedar Ave. update**

Peter Vargulich, representative from the Baker Memorial United Methodist Church, was present.

Mr. Colby advised that the house mover looked at the building and provided a rough estimate of \$100,000 to pick up the house and move it. Without knowing the new location, the estimate does not include any costs associated with moving things out of the way such as utility wires, or a new foundation, utility services or building systems that need to be replaced when the building is placed in the new location.

The church previously asked if Dan Otto would be able to provide an opinion about the renovation costs. Mr. Pretz said Mr. Otto is interested in doing this, but he asked for a refined scope of work in order to determine exactly what the church would like to have done. Mr. Pretz also asked for clarification as to Mr. Vargulich's role in the church. Mr. Vargulich sits on the Board of Trustees and is the lead trustee for the church on this project. Mr. Pretz asked if the church has received any inquiries about the property. Mr. Peter confirmed there has been some interest.

Mr. Colby advised they anticipate placing this discussion before the Planning & Development Committee at their next meeting on February 12th. This would be close to the 90 day timeline the Committee requested to postpone consideration of the COA. Mr. Colby stated it would also be an appropriate time to ask the Committee about next steps. He said the Church may choose to ask the Committee to make a decision on COA now, or wait to see what the Committee members suggest as the next steps before deciding what to do. Mr. Vargulich was fine with this plan.

Dr. Smunt asked if this provides Mr. Otto a reasonable timeframe to complete his work. Mr. Pretz felt he would need more time. Mr. Colby said they can advise the Committee they can generate the information from Mr. Otto if they feel that would of some use to them.

Attachments from 11/13/17 Planning & Development  
Committee meeting packet

## **Information from 11/13/17 meeting:**

### Background

Baker Memorial United Methodist Church owns a number of parcels adjacent to their church building at the corner Cedar Avenue and N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. These parcels include church-owned parking lots that are also utilized for public parking, and two residential structures: 211-215 Cedar Ave. (a two-unit building) and 217 Cedar Avenue. The church has been exploring opportunities for both the parking lots and residential properties to be redeveloped in some form. The City's Comprehensive Plan identifies the existing parking lot at the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Main Street as a "Catalyst Site" for potential redevelopment that could have a catalytic impact on the surrounding area.

### Certificate of Appropriateness

The properties are located in the Central Historic District. A Certificate of Appropriateness or "COA" is required for any exterior alterations to buildings located in a Historic District. The Historic Preservation Commission has the authority to either approve a COA or recommend to the City Council that a COA be denied. The review of a COA is based on criteria in the Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 17.32 of the City Code).

The Historic Preservation Ordinance states the following with respect to COAs for building demolition:

*"Prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition or relocation of a building or structure, a plan for the use of the property being vacated by the proposed demolition or relocation shall be submitted and approved by the Commission, or upon appeal, by the City Council. The approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition or relocation may be conditioned on issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the new construction on the site."*

### Historic Preservation Commission review

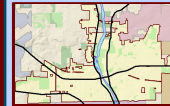
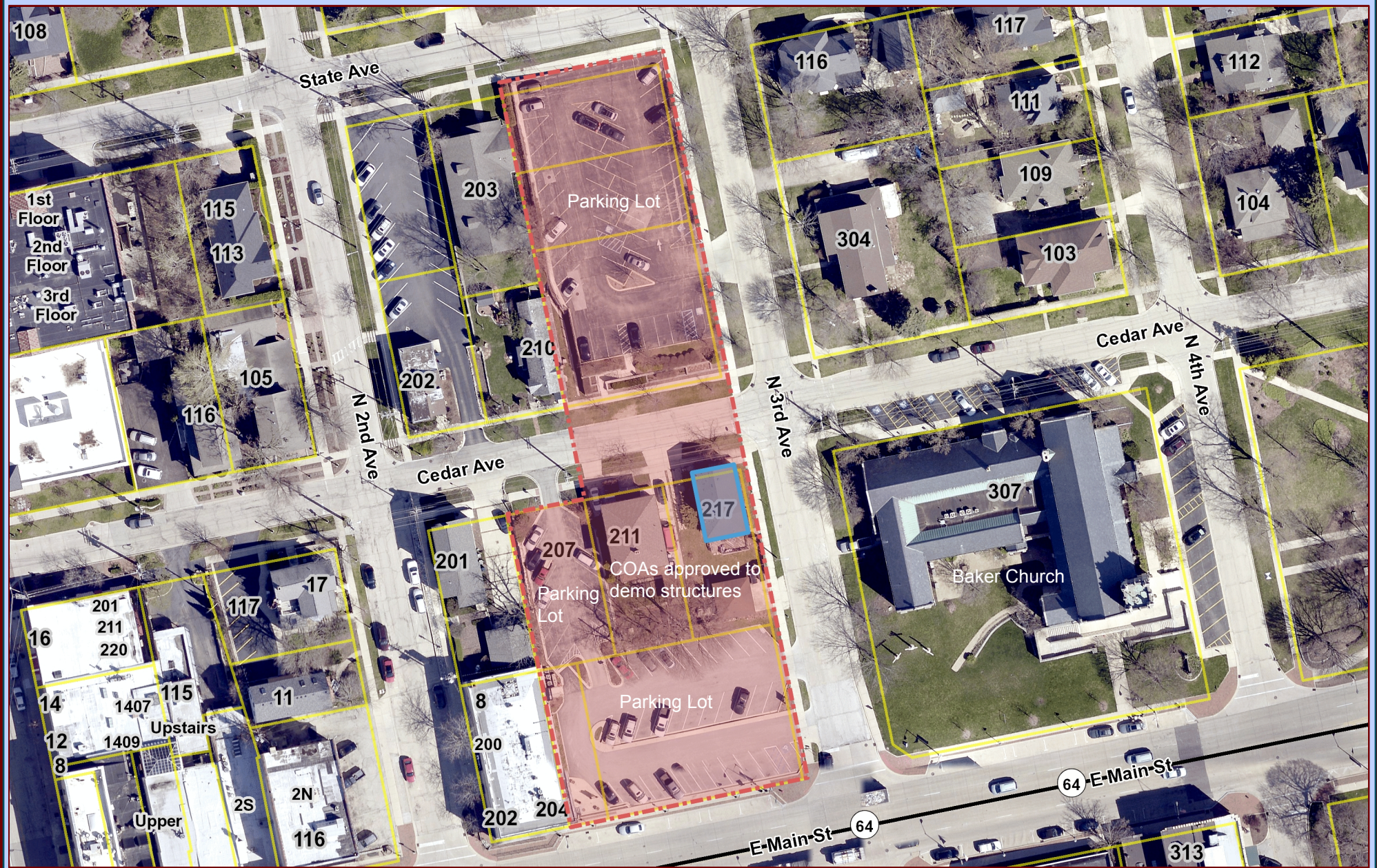
The Commission provided preliminary comments regarding potential redevelopment of the properties in July 2017. In October, the Church requested Certificates of Appropriateness for demolition of both of the Cedar Ave. buildings. The immediate plan for use of the property is as greenspace and a prayer garden.

At the meeting on Oct. 18, the Commission approved COAs to allow for the complete demolition of the 211-215 Cedar Ave. property and for demolition of the ancillary structures on the 217 Cedar Ave. property (garage, decks, fence, etc.).

The Commission recommended denial of a COA for the demolition of the primary structure and rear addition of the 217 building. To support a denial recommendation, the code requires that the Commission to make findings and identify individual code criteria that are not being met by the COA. The Commission passed the attached resolution with their findings by a vote of 6-0 (the Chairman does not vote). Members of the Historic Preservation Commission will be present to represent their recommendation.



## Baker Church Properties



Data Source:  
 City of St. Charles, Illinois  
 Kane County, Illinois  
 DuPage County, Illinois  
 Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Coordinate System: Illinois State Plane East  
 North American Datum 1983  
 Printed on: November 7, 2017 01:44 PM



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ST. CHARLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

# ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY ST. CHARLES CENTRAL DISTRICT ST. CHARLES, ILLINOIS

DIXON ASSOCIATES / ARCHITECTS

## ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY

	1	2	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Minor Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Major Alteration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Additions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sensitive to original	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Insensitive to original	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1: first floor; 2: upper floors; 3: roof/cornice

## BUILDING CONDITION

- Excellent: Well-maintained
- Good: Minor maintenance needed
- Fair: Major repairs needed
- Poor: Deteriorated

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

**Style:** Greek Revival

**Date of Construction:** 1850

**Source:** St. Charles Historical Museum

**Features:**

Two story structure with one story addition at south. Front gabled roof. Stucco exterior filled in fan light and greatly affected the appearance.

## ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Significant
- Contributing
- Non-Contributing



### Address:

217 East Cedar Avenue

### Representation in Existing Surveys:

- Federal
- State
- County
- Local

**Block No.** 42

**Building No.** 5

**SURVEY DATE:**

MAY 1994

**ROLL NO.** 14

**NEGATIVE NO.** 3



ST. CHARLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

**ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY**  
**ST. CHARLES CENTRAL DISTRICT**  
**ST. CHARLES, ILLINOIS**

DIXON ASSOCIATES / ARCHITECTS

CONTINUATION SHEET NO: 1



**Address:**

217 East Cedar Avenue

**Remarks:**

East Elevation.

**Block No. 42**

**Building No. 5**

**ROLL NO. 10**

**NEGATIVE NO. 36**



**Address:**

217 East Cedar Avenue

**Remarks:**

Garage.

**Block No. 42**

**Building No. 5**

**ROLL NO. 10**

**NEGATIVE NO. 35**

**City of St. Charles, Illinois**

**Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 9-2017**

**A Resolution Recommending Denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness for  
demolition of the primary structure and rear addition of 217 Cedar Ave.  
(Baker Memorial United Methodist Church)**

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the Historic Preservation Commission to review applications for Certificates of Appropriateness in accordance with the requirements of the St. Charles Municipal Code, Title 17 “Zoning”, Chapter 17.32 “Historic Preservation”; and

WHEREAS, on October 18, 2017, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed a request for demolition of all structures and improvements located at 217 Cedar Avenue and approved Certificate of Appropriateness No. 17-44 for a portion of the work, specifically demolition of the garage, auxiliary buildings, wood decks, knee wall and driveway/paving slabs; and

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission finds a portion of the work proposed in the application for Certificate of Appropriateness, specifically demolition of the primary structure and rear addition, does not meet the applicable criteria of Section 17.32.080(G) “Certificate of Appropriateness: Criteria” and will therefore adversely affect or destroy historically or architecturally significant features of a building within a designated historic district, based on the findings listed in Exhibit “A”.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Historic Preservation Commission to recommend to the City Council denial of the Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition of the primary structure and rear addition of 217 Cedar Avenue based on the findings listed in Exhibit “A”.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ayes: Malay, Kessler, Gibson, Krahenbuhl, Smunt, Pretz  
Nays: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: None

**PASSED**, this 18th day of October, 2017

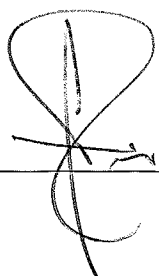
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman



Exhibit "A"

**Findings for Denial of Certificate of Appropriateness**

17.32.080.G. Certificate of Appropriateness: Criteria

In making a determination whether to approve or to recommend denial of an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the Historic Preservation Commission shall be guided by the following criteria:

**1. Significance of a Site, Structure or Building**

- a. The Historic Preservation Commission shall apply the maximum flexibility allowed by this Chapter in its review of applications for new construction and for alteration, removal or demolition of structures that have little architectural or historic significance. However, if the new construction, alteration, removal or demolition would seriously impair or destroy historically or architecturally significant features of a landmark or of a building, structure or site within a designated historic district, the Historic Preservation Commission shall give due consideration to protection of those historically and architecturally significant features.
- b. The following properties are presumed to have architecturally or historically significant features:
  - i. Properties within a designated historic district that are classified as architecturally or historically significant by a survey conducted pursuant to Section 17.32.070.
  - ii. Properties designated as landmarks pursuant to Section 17.32.300.
  - iii. All properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- c. The following properties will sometimes have architecturally or historically significant features - properties within a designated historic district that are classified as architecturally or historically contributing by a survey conducted pursuant to Section 17.32.070.
- d. The following properties will usually have little architectural or historic significance - properties within a designated historic district that are classified as architecturally or historically non-contributing by an architectural survey conducted pursuant to Section 17.32.070.

**FINDING:**

**The building is classified as "Non-Contributing" in the 1994 Architectural Survey of the Central Historic District. The building is identified as the Barry House on the St. Charles Public Library Local Historic Buildings Listing. Historic information on the building was not available when the 1994 survey was conducted. Evidence presented during the review of the Certificate of Appropriateness suggests that the building could be re-classified as "Contributing". The following supporting exhibits are attached: Exhibit "A"- Photo of the original appearance of the structure; Exhibit "B"- Photo of the house after a remodeling in the 1940s; Exhibit "C"- 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the footprint of the house and addition; Exhibit "D"- Descriptive Statement of the Judge William D. Barry house supporting designation of the building as a Historic Landmark on the basis of historical significance.**

**2. General Architectural and Aesthetic Guidelines**

- a. Height  
The height of any proposed alteration or construction should be compatible with the style and character of the structure and with surrounding structures.
- b. Proportions of the Front Facade  
The relationship between the width of a building and the height of the front elevation should be compatible with surrounding structures.

- c. Proportions of Windows and Doors  
The proportions and relationships between doors and windows should be compatible with the architectural style and character of the building.
- d. Relationship of Building Masses and Spaces  
The relationship of a structure to the open space between it and adjoining structures should be compatible.
- e. Roof Shapes  
The design of the roof, fascia and cornice should be compatible with the architectural style and character of the building and with adjoining structures.
- f. Scale  
The scale of the structure after alteration, construction or partial demolition should be compatible with its architectural style and character and with surrounding structures
- g. Directional Expression  
Facades in historic districts should blend with, and reflect, the dominant horizontal or vertical expression of adjacent structures. The directional expression of a building after alteration, construction or partial demolition should be compatible with its original architectural style and character.
- h. Architectural Details  
Architectural details, including types of materials, colors and textures, should be treated so as to make a building compatible with its original architectural style and character, and to enhance the inherent characteristics of surrounding structures.
- i. New Structures  
New structures in an historic district shall be compatible with, but need not be the same as, the architectural styles and general designs and layouts of the surrounding structures.

**FINDING:**

**Demolition of the building would remove an example of Greek Revival Architecture that meets the General Architectural and Aesthetic Guidelines listed in Items 2a through 2h.**

**3. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation**

- a. Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building, structure or site, and its environment, or to use the property for its originally intended purpose.
- b. The distinguishing original qualities or historic character of a building, structure or site, and its environment, shall be retained and preserved. The removal or alteration of any historic materials or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
- c. All buildings, structures or sites shall be recognized as physical records of their own time, place and use. Alterations that have no historical basis, or which seek to create an earlier appearance, shall be avoided.
- d. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
- e. Distinctive stylistic features, finishes and construction techniques or examples or skilled craftsmanship, which characterizes a building, structure or site, shall be preserved.
- f. Deteriorated historical features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be based on accurate duplications substantiated by documentary, physical

or pictorial evidence, and not conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.

- g. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other physical or chemical treatments which will damage the historic building materials shall not be used.
- h. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
- i. New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize a property. Contemporary design for the new work shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions are differentiated from the old, and are compatible with the massing, size, scale, color, material and character of the property and its environment.
- j. New additions, and adjacent or related new construction, shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

**FINDING:**

**Removal of the structure would not meet Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, Items 3a, 3b and 3e. The photo attached as Exhibit "A" shows the original characteristics and architectural features of the building.**

- **3a. Demolition of the building would constitute a significant change, rather than a minimal change, that would eliminate the defining characteristics of the building.**
- **3b. Demolition of the building would eliminate the distinguishing original qualities and historic character of the building.**
- **3e. Demolition of the building would eliminate distinctive features that characterize the building.**

**4. Code Conflicts**

Where there are irreconcilable differences between the requirements of the building code, life safety code, or other codes adopted by the City and the requirements of this Chapter, conformance with those codes shall take precedence, and therefore the Historic Preservation Commission shall approve a Certificate of Appropriateness. In so doing, however, the Historic Preservation Commission shall be obligated only to approve those portions of the proposed work that are necessary for compliance with the applicable codes, as determined by the Building Commissioner or Fire Chief.

**FINDING:**

**Not applicable.**

77 01  
A



"B"



JUNE 1888  
ST. CHARLES  
ILL.



River

CHESTNUT

E. STATE

E. CEDAR

E. MAIN

E. WALNUT

Scale of Feet

Natl. Sugar Co

St. Charles Engraving Co

St. Charles Lumber

CRANES MILL

CROWN ELECTRIC MFG CO

COLUMBIAN SAWN PAPER

C

"D"

# 217 CEDAR AVE

## JUDGE WILLIAM D BARRY'S HOUSE

### DESCRIPTIVE STATEMENT

#### PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The home is a simple two story building, oriented north and south on the lot. It appears to be stuccoed and there is some evidence from the roof line design details that the building was designed in a Greek Revival style. The front of the building is non-descript with a pedimented door in the first floor and evidence of a decorative fan motif in the stucco at the top of the front wall below the crest of the roof. The rear of the house includes an addition to the house on the first floor and what appears to be a door leading to the basement or lower level of the home. Sanborn maps from 1898 indicate that this addition is original to the home, although the lower level door was on the west rear side of the building. Recent photos show deterioration in the concrete walks around the house and may evidence some structural repairs are necessary.

#### HISTORY OF PROPERTY

Judge Barry moved to St. Charles in April, 1840, according to Samuel W. Durant's History of St. Charles, Illinois, Revised and Corrected published in 1885, He had practiced earlier in Ohio courts after his admission to the bar there. At once Judge Barry became a highly effective and popular attorney within Kane County.

Soon after Judge Barry moved to St. Charles he either had this house on present day Cedar Avenue built or he purchased it. The house originally had a stone exterior which has since been covered with a stucco coating. About 1921 when Miss Edith Kohlert's brother-in-law, Frederick Rasmussen purchased the house, the stone was the exterior material and at that time was coated with stucco.

According to Miss Edith Kohlert, long term secretary to the late Mayor I. G. Langum, when interviewed on July 18, 1967, Abraham Lincoln was a friend of Judge Barry's, and came to St. Charles on occasion for visits, He is reputed to have slept in this house, possibly on more than one occasion in one of the upstairs bedrooms.

Miss Kohlert also noted that the interior of the house is not the original. Here again about 1921 when her brother-in-law purchased the property, he had to complete major repairs to make the house attractive and useable. At that time the entire interior of the house had to be rebuilt for he had purchased nothing more than a shell.

## NOTABLE OCCUPANTS OF THE HOME

Judge William D. Barry, already mentioned. Judge Barry is truly one of the leading historical figures in St. Charles and Kane County history. Besides his work as an able attorney, he served as Kane County Judge and had many future judges, attorneys and others who studied law in his office on Main St. As a friend of Gen. Farnsworth, and classmate of Abraham Lincoln, Judge Barry was a powerful figure during the Civil War.

Here is additional information on Judge Barry from Samuel Durant's History of Kane County:

"During his residence in St. Charles, [Judge Barry] served three terms as judge of the county court, and during his forty-five years of residence had been a continuous and prominent practitioner in the various courts in northern Illinois, both State and Federal."

"During all the years of General John F. Farnsworth's congressional career [Judge Barry] was emphatically his right-hand man and firm supporter, and was chiefly instrumental in securing several of the later nominations of his old friend against a tremendous pressure from other counties for a rotation of the office."

## FREDERICK RASMUSSEN AND EDITH KOHLERT (SISTER-IN-LAW)

Frederick Rasmussen was a superintendent at the **St. Charles Milk Sugar Company**, located north of Main Street, along the Fox River. In later life, he apparently became a carpenter, according to census records. Edith Kohlert occupied this house beginning in 1942. That year she and her late father moved into the house to reside with her late sister. Edith was secretary to St. Charles Mayor I. G. Langum. She also served on the campaigns of several other mayors. She was the sister of St. Charles businessman, Henry "Cap" Kohlert, who competed in 3 Indy 500 races, started the DuPage Airport, and owned an auto dealership in St. Charles. Edith continued to reside in the home until her death in 1973. The home then was sold to the Baker United Methodist Church in ~~1975~~:

JUNE 1993

## STRUCTURAL CHANGES

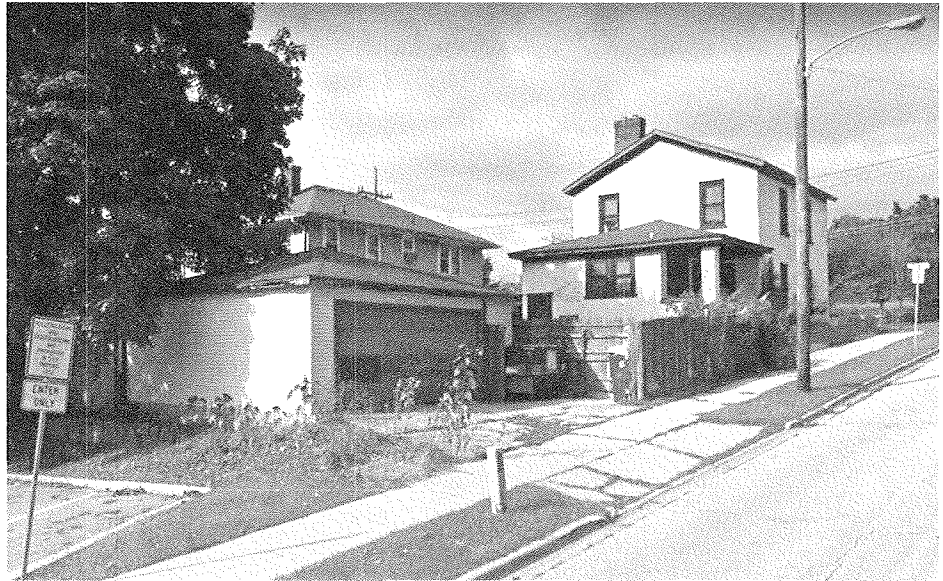
Edith Kohlert describes significant interior modifications made by her brother in 1921 when he purchased the property. In addition, the building was covered in stucco at some point, probably at about the same time the interior was modified. Miss Kohlert gives no indication of addition changes made later. There does not appear to have been any significant exterior modification or maintenance performed to the exterior of the building after its purchase in 1975 by the current owner.

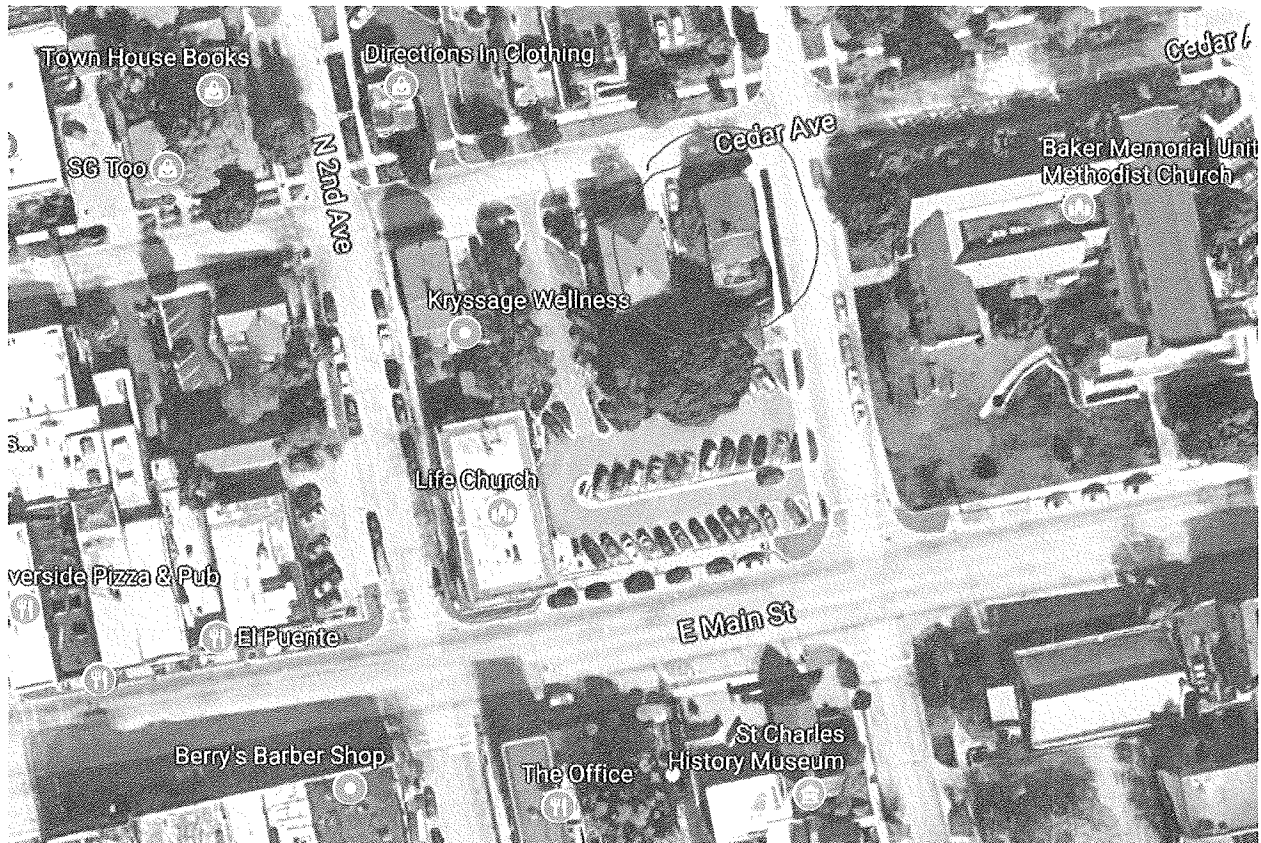
## REASONS TO DECLARE THIS A HISTORICAL LANDMARK

Given the depth and breadth of history that has occurred directly within the four walls of this building, as well as its location near some of the most significant early settlement of St. Charles (the Franklin homestead, the Hunt House, the Eastside Park – now Baker Memorial Park, Penny's Brickyard, the Chamberlain House, Judge Barry's Law Office), this building helps complete the story of where St. Charles came from, and why it is the city it is today.



The addition of the stories of Frederick Rasmussen and his sister-in-law, Edith Kohlert, longtime secretary to one of the most beloved and honored Mayors in St. Charles history, as well as the more apocryphal linkages to Abraham Lincoln and Gen. Farnsworth, only strengthens the case that this home represents a singular opportunity to preserve the heritage of St. Charles in a way that can help make future generations of St. Charles residents understand how St. Charles developed from a shallow ford in the Fox River to the great city it is today.





**BAKER MEMORIAL  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

*A traditional church for a modern world*

Rev. Mary Zajac, *Pastor*

October 13, 2017

St Charles Historic Preservation Commission

RE: Request for COA to Demolish structures at 217 and 215-211 Cedar Avenue

Baker Memorial United Methodist Church (BMUMC) has owned the residential properties at 217 Cedar and 215-211 Cedar for many years. Initially it was BMUMC intent to combine these properties with our other adjacent properties (associated parking lots) for an annex building that would support Church missions. That need has not developed. As an interim use, the Church has provided the homes for families in need. BMUMC has spent thousands of dollars in maintenance and repairs, as well as hundreds of hours of volunteer work.

Over the past several years, BMUMC has gone through an internal evaluation process to decide what the future of our properties should be. We have decided to sell these properties in conjunction with our other adjacent properties. Currently we are looking for a developer that will redevelop the property (both homes and the parking lots -between Main Street, Cedar Avenue and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue).

Our decision to request demolition of both homes is twofold. First, the condition of both homes has deteriorated to the point where neither home is insurable. We have included letters from our insurance company that address the condition of the homes and their decision. Second, we want to be good neighbors. The condition of the homes has an impact on nearby businesses and other properties for sale. Attached are letters from some of the adjacent property owners and their support of our decision to make this request.

With planning for the demolition of both homes, we will need a new location for our refuse enclosure (which is currently adjacent to the garage at 217 Cedar). We are proposing a location near the corner at 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Cedar Avenue. Attached are drawings showing the design for this new refuse enclosure. The masonry walls are detailed to blend with the building façade and new plantings will help to integrate it with the overall appearance of the Church.

As an interim use of the residential lots (post demolition), BMUMC is planning to install a prayer garden on a portion of the 217 Cedar lot. The design for the prayer garden is included within an attached drawing. The remainder of the residential lots will be maintained turf which will support other youth activities and missions.

307 Cedar Avenue | St. Charles, Illinois 60174 | office: 630.584.6680 | fax: 630.584.6712 | bakermemorialchurch.org

HERE, NEAR & FAR AWAY | *reaching beyond the borders of our church community*



**Dwayne Jackson**  
**Director of Risk Management &**  
**Ministry Protection**

77 W. Washington Street, Suite 1820, Chicago, Illinois 60602  
Phone: 312.783.5945; [djackson@umcnic.org](mailto:djackson@umcnic.org)

October 4, 2017

Baker Memorial United Methodist Church  
Attn: Jenn Gunn  
Director of Administration & Communications  
307 Cedar Ave.  
St. Charles IL 60174

Re: Travelers Insurance  
Termination of Property Insurance Coverage  
211 Cedar St., St. Charles, IL 60174, 215 Cedar St., St. Charles, IL 60174 and  
217 Cedar St., St. Charles, IL 60174

Dear Ms. Gunn,

As a member of the Property and Casualty Insurance Program managed by the Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church (NICUMC), an inspection of the above listed properties were performed on October 3, 2017.

The inspection found the above listed properties to be unsuitable and in disrepair. Thus, it is the decision of NICUMC to terminate Property insurance coverage effective October 4, 2017. This decision is further supported by the Travelers' Risk Consultant that participated in the inspection of the properties.

Please anticipate receiving correspondence from Travelers Insurance confirming their intent to terminate the Property insurance coverage in accordance with the terms and condition afforded under the Property policy.

In light of the adverse risk and exposure, please contact this office within the thirty (30) days to advise of the steps undertaken by Baker Memorial United Methodist Church to demolish the above listed properties.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dwayne Jackson".

Dwayne Jackson  
Director of Risk Management & Ministry Protection

CC: Lonnie Chafin, Treasurer (NICUMC)  
Dan McGuire, Travelers Insurance

Travelers Risk Control  
161 N Clark Street  
Chicago, IL 60601

October 10, 2017

Mr. Dwayne Jackson  
Director of Risk Management & Ministry Protection  
Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church  
77 W. Washington St # 1820  
Chicago, IL 60062

Dear Mr. Jackson:

On October 3, 2017 we visited Baker United Methodist Church in St. Charles, IL and two rental houses they own across the street. This letter will only reference the condition of the two rental houses, the church itself is in excellent condition. Those two houses are 215 Cedar Ave, a yellow single family home, and 211-215 Cedar Ave, a blue duplex. Both houses are owned by Baker UMC and are both currently vacant. Both homes are in very poor condition and this letter will document why.

**211-215 Cedar Ave**

From the exterior, the stucco is missing in several places and is cracking on every elevation. There are broken windows, a chimney that is deteriorating, a roof that is ten years past its service life that is leaking throughout the interior, a sidewalk and driveway that need complete replacement, rotting soffit and fascia, hanging gutters and excessive storage in the backyard, which is also overgrown.



*Driveway, stucco, soffit all in poor condition*



*Broken front window*

It's very difficult to even get into this house because the front steps have deteriorated to the point of rebar being exposed. Inside the home there is mold in both bathrooms and under the kitchen sink, evidence of constant roof leaks in every room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and broken hand rails.



*Steps leading to front door*



*Mold and rot under kitchen sink*



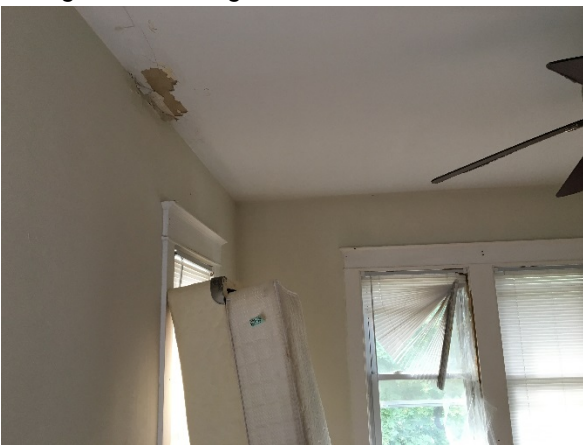
*Bannister at top of stairs*



*Shingles are curling due to extreme deterioration*



*Rear elevation*



*Roof leaks in every 2<sup>nd</sup> floor room*

**217 Cedar Ave**

This house has similar deterioration to the exterior as 211-215. The front wall, as seen in the upper right photo below, is leaning towards the sidewalk and needs to be completely rebuilt. There is rotting fascia, water damage on all the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor ceilings, the chimney has spalling brick, the sidewalks and driveway need to be repaired, the rear deck is overgrown and missing balusters and there are several places where mold is growing.



*Front of Home*



*Front wall is falling over, steps and sidewalks in poor condition*



*Rear of home, chimney missing bricks, stucco peeling.*



*Deck overgrown and is unsafe to walk on*



*Interior stucco peeling*



*Roof leaks*



*Mold in bathroom, likely inside duct work also*



*Detached Garage in poor condition*

The purpose of this letter is to make you, your broker and our underwriting team aware that these vacant homes are in a state of disrepair. There are structural, electrical, roofing and plumbing issues that make these home unsuitable for living in their current state and the poor condition of the sidewalks and front steps put the general public at risk.

We appreciate your business and the opportunity to help you reduce exposures and minimize loss. If you have questions regarding our discussions, the content of this report, or if I can be of further assistance, please contact me. Thank you for choosing Travelers.

Sincerely,

Dan G. McGuire  
Risk Control Consultant  
312-458-6318  
DGMCGUIR@travelers.com



## Jenn Gunn

---

**From:** Pastor Mary @ Baker Memorial Church  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 19, 2017 8:09 AM  
**To:** Jenn Gunn  
**Subject:** Fwd: Two Houses Next above your Parking Lot

Can you please print this for me. Also, can you please store a copy on the N drive with the other letter copy? Any luck with the insurance folks?

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Theresa Pavlek <[tps1563@gmail.com](mailto:tps1563@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** September 19, 2017 at 8:03:53 AM CDT  
**To:** [pastormary@bakermemorialchurch.org](mailto:pastormary@bakermemorialchurch.org)  
**Subject:** Two Houses Next above your Parking Lot

**Dear Pastor Mary Zajac,**

**Our business understands that your church has requested from the city, permission to demolish the houses at 211-215 and 217 Cedar Ave. These buildings are adjacent to the parking lot used by the majority of our customers coming to Avenue Two Hair Styling Inc. These buildings in their current condition represent an eyesore to our customers, to the surrounding community, and to the many people that travel through Heritage Square retail and on Third Ave. on a daily basis.**

**We understand that once demolished, the church plans to bring in top soil and plant grass seed on the two lots, with the idea of providing an open space and making it**

**a “prayer garden” for church activities. We totally support your effort to demolish the buildings to reduce risk and improve the aesthetics of the community, especially when viewing the neighborhood from the parking lot.**

**Please feel free to share this with the city, along with other “testimonies” you may receive.**

**Sincerely,**

**Frank Pavlek**

**Representing Avenue Two Hair Styling Inc.**

**204 East Main St.**

**St. Charles, IL 60174**

**6330-584-2002**

September 13, 2017

Pastor Mary,

I am understand you are seeking permission from the City of St. Charles to tear down two of the Baker Church properties on Cedar Avenue.

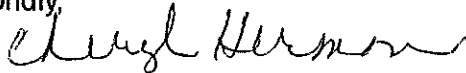
I own the property that is directly across the street. I'm reaching out to let you know that I am in complete agreement with the removal of these properties. They are in disrepair.

We have our property on the market and have been have been hearing negative comments about them from potential buyers.

I think a Prayer Park is a wonderful idea that would benefit the community as well as beautify it.

Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help you move forward with this plan.

Fondly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheryl Herman".

Cheryl Herman  
210 Cedar Ave.  
St. Charles, IL., 60174

331-223-1926

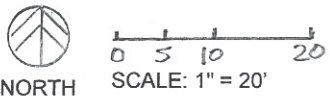
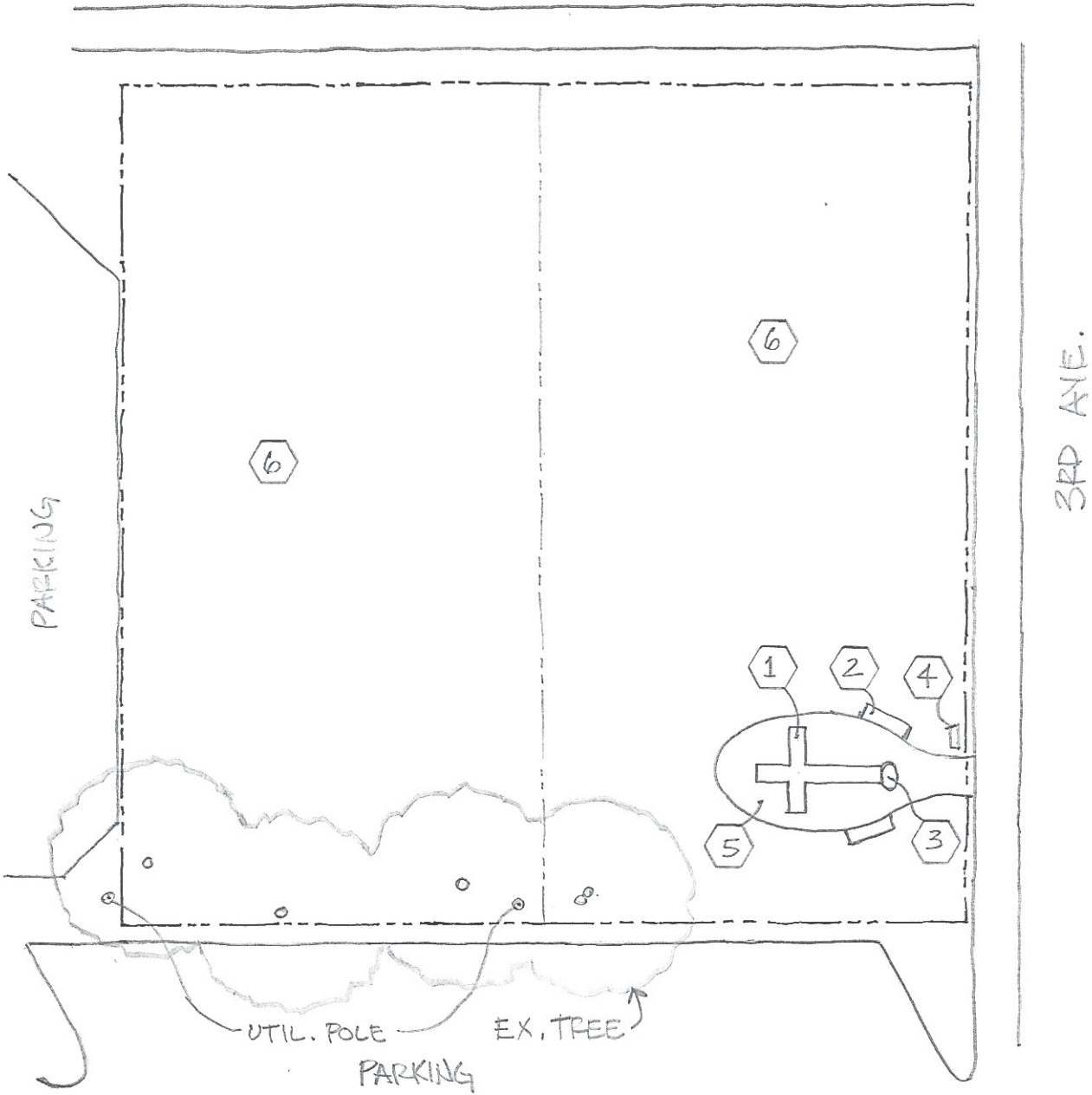
Dear Mary,

As owner and operator of  
Directions In Clothing at 202 Cedar Ave.  
in St. Charles, IL, I was so happy to  
hear that you and your church authorities  
had decided to take down the houses on  
your property across from my store on  
Cedar Ave.. I really hope your efforts  
to beautify our wonderful City of St. Charles  
will be recognized and supported. There  
have been so many issues with the  
habitants who lived there that this  
would be a relief to you and your church.

Thank you for leading in this change  
for the better of our city.

Mameen Adesky  
(630) 584-1997

CEDAR AVE.



PLAN NOTES:

1. Cross shaped raised bed for seasonal plantings, see image.
2. Bench
3. Stone with Bible verse, see image.
4. Prayer Drop Box, see image.
5. Gravel or mulch surface.
6. Maintained Turf.

# Baker Memorial United Methodist Church

307 Cedar Avenue  
St Charles, IL 60174

Prayer Garden

10-14-17

## Blue Stem Design, Inc.

Planning \* Urban Design \* Landscape Architecture  
503 S. 16<sup>th</sup> Street \* St Charles, IL 60174 \* 630-618-8316



Cross shaped raised bed.



Prayer Box



Stone with Bible verse.

**6. Preliminary Review: 211-215 & 217 Cedar Ave.**

Peter Vargulich and Reverend Mary Zajac, representatives from the Baker Memorial United Methodist Church, were present.

The church owns the structures located at 211-215 & 217 Cedar Avenue along with the parking lot facing Main Street and the lot on the Cedar Avenue side. Mr. Vargulich noted the church's original intent in purchasing these adjoining parcels was to develop an annex for the church as it grew. He noted this never came to fruition and holding onto this property was no longer in their best interest. They have had tenants in both properties, but over the years this has proven to require a significant amount of effort for the church to manage, and has also become difficult to maintain. Numerous trade services, volunteers and contributions have gone into those properties.

The congregation has decided they do not want to own these properties any longer. They are prepared to eventually move forward with soliciting a purchaser. They would like to make the properties as ready as possible for development so they are proposing demolishing everything on the existing properties. They felt that would help them in marketing the properties for redevelopment. Mr. Vargulich stated they haven't determined the asking price yet, but they have done some studies and worked with outside consultants to help educate themselves in determining an appropriate land price. They plan to eventually petition for a demolition permit and will come to the Commission formally to request a review.

Chairman Norris said they need to discuss the properties separately as they are both unique. He asked the Commission to start with the property at 217 Cedar Avenue. It is a non-contributing structure built in the 1850's in the Greek revival style.

Ms. Malay is concerned with the loss of this structure due to its historic significance and allowing demolition without knowing what is going in its place. She noted this was Judge Barry's home, and it is believed that Abraham Lincoln stayed there.

Mr. Gibson noted Judge Barry was one of the original judges in Kane County. He is also known for taking part in helping break up Richard's Riot. Mr. Gibson understands a clear lot could potentially be easier to market, but they have found existence of a structure like this could be marketed as it stands. He said this was an opportunity to potentially get someone who would want to restore it and return it to a more significant structure. Mr. Gibson felt this was one of the more significant houses in the city in terms of history. He would encourage them to investigate what the difference would be to market it with and without the house on the property. He felt it should be one of the City's historic landmarks if it was restored to any level of what it was originally. He did not see any reason why they could not seek national historic registration just based on the scope of Judge Barry's impact on Kane County.

Ms. Malay noted Heritage Square is a good example of preserving a building like that. She said they could find a developer that would be willing to salvage the structure and actually incorporate it into the redevelopment. She said she would like to see them try to do something

along those lines. Mr. Gibson stated that could form the foundation for a series of homes that reflect that same historic look. Ms. Malay said that corner could also be used for commercial purposes so the building could be incorporated into office and retail space.

Mr. Kessler said they have found an upswing in the number of people in that quadrant of town who, on their own, are landmarking and preserving buildings. He felt there would be potential to tie into that in the church's area. He said they know of people who take on these types of projects. Mr. Kessler also noted landlords/investors may also be interested in rental properties.

Dr. Smunt asked if the parking lots are included in the sale of the properties. Mr. Vargulich confirmed that is correct. Dr. Smunt stated the City's Comprehensive Plan is to get a parking lot off of Main Street and develop storefront retail with parking behind it. He said there are all kinds of possibilities that he would like considered before he would approve demolition of an existing structure. He noted he is not opposed to redevelopment and said the next buyer should come up with that plan to present to the City. He said that one building could become a unique feature of a redevelopment project along with many other options for additional parking and more retail space on Main Street. As a whole, it is right for a developer. Dr. Smunt commented on the stone structure of the building and that the perimeter would be fairly solid. He said the area has some great history and this house becomes part of that history. He felt it was very inviting for redevelopment. Dr. Smunt noted the church shares parking with the city. He said if redevelopment occurs they would probably want to keep the same amount as they currently have. Rev. Zajac said the church usually uses parking when others in downtown do not.

Mr. Pretz was not opposed to redevelopment. However, in reference to the home, once it's gone, it's gone. He said not knowing what is going in its place, puts a burden back on the Commissioners due to all the unknowns. He would like to know what is coming in its place. In preparation for that lot, he is not opposed to demolition of the garage. He said it's definitely not contributing and sees no value in that particular structure, but the home itself could be brought up to a contributing level with the appropriate foresight by the potential owner. At this stage, he would be opposed to any demolition on that particular site.

Dr. Smunt said he does not see a reason to spend money on demolition. He thinks the church could find a buyer and sell him/her the idea of mixed use development with historical features.

Ms. Malay said if they think they can get more money with a cleared lot, another option would be to work out a deal with the potential buyer to have the church take care of the demolition, but first come through the Commission with the preliminary concept to see if it is going to work before they agree to purchase. She said they can have as many people as they want come before the Commission with a concept plan.

Mr. Gibson pointed out that a "non-contributing" rating does not mean it is not important. It is specifically referring to the condition of the house as it stands architecturally. Some modifications as simple as taking a porch or railing down can restore the architectural status to contributing.



Discussion on 211-215 Cedar Avenue:

Mr. Kessler said someone may want to utilize the site on a temporary basis. A landlord/investor may want to use it as a rental unit until they determine what they want to do with the site. The corner area could also be named “Barry’s Corners” or “Judge Barry Corners” giving it a distinct little district. However, once the structures are gone, all those possibilities are gone too.

Mr. Gibson is not aware of any unique architectural or historical feature on this building that would prevent him from approving redevelopment use. However, he would like to see further research done before any demolition is approved.

Ms. Malay said this house would be the one she would be more likely to approve for demolition if they presented a good redevelopment plan. However, she would not want anything demolished until they see a plan. Mr. Pretz said he would also need to see the replacement before approving demolition.

Dr. Smunt said this structure would be the one most likely to be removed on a redevelopment plan, whereas, the 217 structure has more historical significance. He also prefers to see a plan before making a final decision.

Chairman Norris noted that 211-215 is a non-contributing structure and the date of construction was from 1900-1920.

Ms. Malay clarified that what the Commission is asking is not usual for anyone asking for a demolition.

Dr. Smunt said he hoped that a potential developer would look at the City’s Comprehensive Plan that talks about getting some retail structures on Main Street with some residential space on the second or third floors. He said if they used some turn of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial vernacular architecture, it could be a beautiful redevelopment. He would be open to a variety of ideas.

Mr. Gibson said they could relocate 217 next to 201, a nearby stone house.

Mr. Vargulich clarified his intent was not to suggest by demolishing the houses that the potential redevelopment would not be coming back to the Commission for review. He said they will be going back to their church committee to see what they want to do. Mr. Pretz stated it is important any potential developer pursuing demolition know they should be ready to talk about what they want to put in its place.

Rev. Zajac said, as a neighbor to the redeveloped space, the church wants to choose a buyer with a plan that they are comfortable with. She noted the idea of moving the structures sounded interesting because the current structures are oddly placed within the parking lots.

Dr. Smunt said that whatever is presented, the Commission will give all due consideration.

Mr. Prentiss asked if the Commission could provide names of contractors who specialize in historic homes. Mr. Colby will follow-up with Mr. Prentiss.

Mr. Kessler said with the program being so new, and funds being rather limited, he may not be in full support of moving away from the letter of the ordinance at such an early stage of the program.

Mr. Gibson stated this is a façade improvement grant. He said people are looking for non-regular maintenance items to be done so it has to be packaged in that way. They want to make sure when the work is done, they have done something to make the home more historically accurate or more stable; something that is not maintenance items.

Ms. Malay asked if he is planning on doing any other work. Mr. Prentiss said these are his two main pressing issues right now. Mr. Pretz asked for his timeframe. Mr. Prentiss said he was concerned with the cost of the paint job and would need the contractor's estimate before deciding when to do this work. He is hoping he can do it next year. The flooring issue is his first concern. Mr. Pretz said the Commission would not be able to provide any cost relief for new flooring because this is interior work. However, Mr. Krahenbuhl noted if he can prove there is something structural causing the problem and if it would cause other damage to the exterior of the home, then they may be able to assist.

Mr. Kessler felt the sloping floor would have to be rather severe for it to actually be causing structural issues to the exterior. He said they have already wrestled with some nuances with other homeowner requests in regards to what is considered a repair and what is a replacement. He did not want to add another element of complication to this process at this time.

Chairman Norris asked about the availability of funds for this year and next year. Mr. Colby said the portion of the budget that was attributed to the Residential Program for this year was \$10,000. He said that funding is still available. He noted the Commission has been talking to other property owners about utilizing some of those funds, but he was not sure if those projects would advance. Mr. Colby stated the 2018 budget begins in May. However, he does not know how much funding will be available.

Mr. Prentiss asked if there was a deadline for submitting his contractor information. Mr. Colby said there is no set deadline, but applications are prioritized based on the order in which they are received. When all the information has been received, they consider the application complete.

## **6. COA: 211-215 & 217 Cedar Ave. (demolition)**

### **a. 211-215 Cedar Ave.**

Peter Vargulich and Chuck Freiburger, representing Baker Memorial United Methodist Church, were present.

The Commission previously reviewed the potential demolition of these properties during a preliminary review discussion on July 19, 2017. Mr. Colby noted minutes from that review are in the packet as a part of the record and there is no need to restate any information contained in those minutes.

Mr. Colby advised the request is for the demolition of the building. He noted the Commission has the authority to approve the COA request and the ability to recommend to the City Council that the COA request be denied. The Commission does not have the authority to actually deny the COA.

Mr. Kessler said the replacement of the structure is a key element of the review process. His understanding was the applicant was going to look into this and return with some ideas. He doesn't see anything new. Although he prefers to see preservation over demolition, he does not think the 211-215 structure is that significant and would not oppose demolition. However, it has to be part of a plan that shows something is going to happen in its place.

Mr. Colby noted the COA process for demolition requires the applicant supply information in regards to what is going to replace the building. He said the site plan shows the replacement is going to be an open area. He said this meets the ordinance requirement. The Commission has to weigh that information as part of its deliberation.

Mr. Krahenbuhl felt the Commission could not approve the demolition at this point due to a lack of information regarding the replacement. He said the building is in bad condition and cannot get approved for insurance.

Chairman Norris asked Mr. Vargulich if the church intends on leaving the lot vacant, or if it would be used for something else. Mr. Vargulich said the intent is for it to be a prayer garden. However, there is some sloping of the lot. For level accessibility, the plan shows the garden on the 217 lot. Both lots will be used for youth activities and youth missions.

Ms. Malay said knowing the condition of the building and the idea of having an open space, she was fine with the overall demolition of the 211-215 parcel.

Mr. Pretz commented on the letters of support for the demolition. He felt the letter from the insurance company needed additional information to support their view. He asked if the church had anyone from the City look at the building to see what might be a maintenance issue and what might be a violation. He felt the report provided showed maintenance issues. He asked if the other letters come from members of the church. Mr. Vargulich said they were not. Mr. Pretz said his concern with the letter from the Maureen Salesky, owner of Directions of Clothing, indicated the issue may be with previous tenants and not the building itself. He felt removing the building to avoid seeing certain tenants was not a reason to demolish a building. There were two other letters that discussed the condition of the houses and the unsightliness of them, and showed support of the prayer garden. Mr. Pretz thought these two people may have been disserved by not being given the whole plan of what the church may ultimately decide to do. He said it's

possible a developer may want that property at a future date in time. Chairman Norris advised the Commission can only consider information provided in the project scope presented.

Ms. Malay asked if the church still intends to put the property up for sale. Mr. Vargulich advised that is their intention.

Chairman Norris stated the property will still be within the historic preservation district, and if the property is sold to someone who would like to build a new structure, the Commission will still have the opportunity to review that project scope.

Mr. Gibson asked if the church would be okay with an approval for the demolition of the 211-215 building and not the one at 217. Mr. Vargulich said he would have to go back to the church leaders for that decision. Mr. Gibson was concerned that the project presented was based on having a certain amount of square footage that may not be available if one structure stays standing.

Mr. Colby advised procedurally if the Commission approves a recommendation for denial, they would need to make reference to the COA findings, and note which findings are not being met. The denial recommendation would need to reference the specific structure and it may be confusing when they are discussing two different structures where there are different interpretations being made. Mr. Colby said it was OK to split the COA into two because they are different buildings with different architectural surveys and different historical information associated with them. He said it also provides the church the opportunity to pursue demolishing one without having to return to the Commission. He thought it might confuse the issue if they were combined together and the Commission voted for denial, but then said they are okay with one of them being demolished. He recommended against putting the two buildings together under one COA consideration.

Mr. Gibson referenced the minutes from the July 19, 2017 meeting. He said the Commission asked for information regarding the plan for replacement. Although they received a replacement plan, they were also told the property could be sold before that ever happens. He asked if they are approving a demolition to create a green space, or are they approving a demolition to create a saleable property. Chairman Norris said the church has the right to sell the property.

Mr. Gibson said the plan talks about access and he felt that appeared as if they needed a plan to come back before them. Chairman Norris said the sketch they have is the plan they presented. There are no plans to add a fence for access control. If the house was taken down, the existing fence would also come down.

Mr. Colby stated the COA requires they show what the replacement is, and as part of the demolition permit, it is a requirement the site be brought to the state that was presented. He said that gets tied to the approval.

Ms. Malay asked if they could put in any stipulations regarding maintenance. Mr. Colby said it would fall under the property maintenance code.

Mr. Gibson stated the paperwork from the insurance company is a bit disingenuous. He said it states there needs to be some repairs done, but it does not state they are going to terminate the insurance coverage. He felt they could always get some kind of insurance coverage.

Mr. Gibson asked if the reason they were considering the demolition was because the building is in a state of disrepair. Chairman Norris said the City has not cited it yet and anything can be fixed. At the moment, there is nothing on file with the building department. Mr. Gibson asked if the reason the Commission would vote on a motion to approve demolition was due to the fact that they do not consider this building to be historically significant. He said he was uncomfortable voting for demolition of a building that has fallen into such disrepair. He felt that was not appropriate in the historic district. Mr. Colby said the architectural survey lists it as a non-contributing structure and there hasn't been any information offered on the historic significance of the building. Mr. Gibson stated they are not considering anything from the insurance company and only considering whether or not the replacement grass will have a negative impact on the historic district.

Dr. Smunt joined the meeting after the discussion of this item had concluded.

**A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Kessler with a 3-2 voice vote to approve the demolition of 211-215 Cedar Avenue based on its non-contributing factors; and that it would be replaced with green space as proposed in the COA. Mr. Pretz and Mr. Gibson voted nay. Dr. Smunt abstained.**

**b. 217 Cedar Ave.**

Ms. Malay said she is opposed to this demolition due to the historical significance of this property and how losing it would be a great loss of that history. Mr. Kessler agreed. He said the previous discussion in July included his options for saving the building.

Mr. Gibson provided a picture of the building as it was before it was modified with stucco. A second picture showed the building when it was purchased around 1921 by Frederick Rasmussen. He also showed a picture of the Collins House at 201 Cedar and commented that this house was restored and is now a beautiful part of the Century Corners shopping area. People are curious about that house and where it came from. He feels the house in question has the same potential. He said even in its present state, it stands out. He said the house ties in historically because the woman who purchased the home in 1942, Edith Kohlert, was the sister of Henry Kohlert. Henry was the person who originally purchased the property the DuPage Airport sits on. Edith was the secretary to Mayor Langum. He said there are a number of things that can be done to this house besides knock it down. It could be relocated, or it could be incorporated into a larger project. He also noted the last remodeling job done on the house was in 1921, and that in itself was historic enough to consider keeping it.

Mr. Pretz asked for the date of the house. Mr. Gibson thought it was about circa 1846-1850.

Chairman Norris asked about the garage. Mr. Gibson stated it was of no use and he would be okay with that being taken down.

Mr. Krahenbuhl said this house looks more unique and he would support keeping it. Dr. Smunt noted this house has greater historic significance and thought there could be a bit more architectural significance uncovered if the stucco was removed. He still supports saving the building. Mr. Pretz stated most of the issues are maintenance. He said he could support removing the stucco to expose the stone, removing the garage, the deck, the driveway, the sidewalks, the vegetation and the front knee wall.

Liz Safanda of Preservation Partners of the Fox Valley was present. She said the house is in one of the oldest, and possibly one of the first, neighborhoods in town. She said there have been significant improvements made in this area and this is part of the fabric of this neighborhood. She felt it was acceptable as is, but there was room for improvements.

Chairman Norris asked if the church representatives would like the Commission to take this to a vote. He said they could consider the primary structure with the attached south porch as one item, and the garage with everything in the back as another item. Mr. Vargulich said yes, to continue with the vote.

**A motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Pretz with a unanimous voice vote to recommend to City Council denial of the COA for demolition of 217 Cedar Avenue for the primary structure and the south porch, based on the following findings:**

- 1) Significance of a site, structure or building: The 1994 Architectural Survey classification of the building is non-contributing. The home has historical significance. The house is known as the Judge Barry house and is listed on the Library historic buildings site. The Commission believes there is evidence to support changing the classification. Evidence was presented at this meeting that supports changing this to a contributing structure.**
  - **Exhibit A is a picture of the house believed to be from the turn of the century.**
  - **Exhibit B is a picture of the house believed to be from the 1960's that shows remodeling work.**
  - **Exhibit C is the Sandborn Map from 1898 that shows the building with the south structure attached.**
  - **Exhibit D is a descriptive statement for the landmark nomination.**
- 2. Architectural and aesthetic guidelines: Demolishing the building would remove an example of Greek Revival Architecture that meets items 2a through 2h.**
- 3. Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation: Removing the structure will not be in compliance of 3a, 3b and 3e.**

**A second motion was made by Ms. Malay and seconded by Mr. Pretz with a unanimous voice vote to approve a COA for the demolition of the axillary buildings (garage, deck, driveway, knee wall, sidewalks) for 217 Cedar Avenue.**

**7. COA: 307 Cedar Ave. (refuse enclosure)**

The proposal is for the relocation of a refuse enclosure for the Baker Memorial United Methodist Church. The enclosure will consist of a CMU backup. The visible portion will be clad to match the façade.

**A motion was made by Dr. Smunt and seconded by Mr. Kessler with a unanimous voice vote to approve the COA as presented.**

**8. Additional Business and Observations from Commissioners or Staff**

- a. Residential Façade Improvement Grant**
- b. Architectural Survey requirements**
- c. Historic Landmark Nomination**

These items were not discussed.

**9. Downtown Partnership Update**

**a. Walkability**

Mr. Gibson advised the Downtown Partnership is working with the St. Charles History Museum to develop what they are calling the “walkability of downtown St. Charles”. As part of that, they are going to offer the downtown businesses branded materials. The Executive Director of the Partnership is asking for feedback on the type of materials that can be used for the signs and how can they be attached to historic buildings. The director will attend a future meeting for assistance with this. The Commission discussed some options.

**b. America in Bloom Report**

Mr. Gibson read information from the America in Bloom report that pertained to heritage preservation.

**10. Meeting Announcements: Historic Preservation Commission meeting Wednesday, November 1, 2017 at 7:00 P.M. in the Committee Room.**

**11. Public Comment**

Brian Graf, the property owner of 515 Walnut Street, was present. He was seeking information on the positive and also challenging aspects of owning a landmarked house.









Advanced Disposal