
LAWRENCE HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION
ITEM NO. 4: DR-2-12-09
STAFF REPORT

A. SUMMARY

DR-2-12-09 1725 New Hampshire Street; Rezoning and Demolition of existing structure; Certified Local Government Review. The property is in the environs of the Edwards House (1646 Massachusetts), and the Eugene F. Goodrich House (1711 Massachusetts), National Register of Historic Places. Submitted by Wally Storey Associates for Dillon Companies Inc, for Woodoc Investments LLC, the property owner of record.

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant is requesting to rezone the parcel at 1745 New Hampshire Street from RM24 to CS. The applicant's plans include the demolition of the existing structure located at 1725 New Hampshire Street and the consolidation of this parcel into the overall Dillon's parcel for expanded parking and site reconfiguration to better comply with current code requirements.



East elevation of 1725 New Hampshire Street.



Southeast elevation of
1725 New Hampshire Street.

C. STANDARD FOR REVIEW

For Certified Local Government Review of projects within the environs of listed properties, the Historic Resources Commission has typically used the Standards and Guidelines for Evaluating the Effect of Projects on Environs to evaluate the proposed project. Therefore, the following standards apply to the proposed project:

- 1. The character of a historic property's environs should be retained and preserved. The removal or alteration of distinctive buildings, structures, landscape features, spatial relationships, etc. that characterize the environs should be avoided.*

- 2. The environs of a property should be used as it has historically been used or allow the inclusion of new uses that require minimal change to the environs' distinctive materials, features, and spatial relationships.*
- 3. The environs of each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes to the environs that have acquired historic significance in their own right should be retained and preserved.*
- 4. Demolition of character-defining buildings, structures, landscape features, etc. in a historic property's environs should be avoided. When the severity of deterioration requires removal within the environs, compatible reconstruction shall occur.*
- 5. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.*
- 6. New additions, exterior alterations, infill construction, or related new construction should not destroy character-defining features or spatial relationships that characterize the environs of a property. The new work shall be compatible with the historic materials, character-defining features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the environs.*
- 7. Moved historic properties that have not retained or acquired historic significance in their new environs shall be considered as artifacts without environs.*

D. STAFF ANALYSIS

The applicant is requesting to rezone the parcel at 1745 New Hampshire Street from RM24 to CS. The applicant's plans include the demolition of the existing structure located at 1725 New Hampshire Street and the consolidation of this parcel into the overall Dillon's parcel for expanded parking and site reconfiguration to better comply with current code requirements. The existing parcel and the associated structures are not listed individually or as part of a district on the National, State, or Lawrence registers. The subject property is located in the environs of the Goodrich House (c.1890) and the House House (c.1894).

"Environs," as defined by the Standards and Guidelines for Evaluating the Effect of Projects on Environs, means the historic property's *associated* surroundings and the elements or conditions which serve to *characterize* a specific place, neighborhood, district, or area. In an environs review the objective is to determine the impact of a proposed project on a listed property and its environs.

Like the treatments for historic properties, guidance for environs review begins with the identification of the character-defining features of the environs, its historic and current character, and what must be retained in order to preserve that character. The character of a listed property's environs may be defined by form; exterior materials such as masonry, wood or metal; exterior features and elements such as roofs, porches, windows or construction details; as well as size, scale and proportion, massing, spatial relationships, etc.

The Standards and Guidelines for Evaluating the Effect of Projects on Environs also identifies that

exterior alterations of properties in the environs of a listed property are generally needed to assure continued use, but it is important that such alterations *do not change*, obscure, or destroy any *character-defining* spaces, materials, features and/or relationships. Alterations may include demolition of structure(s) and/or features, providing additional parking, modification of entries, installation of signs, or cyclical maintenance involving repairs with incompatible materials (emphasis added). The line of sight between a listed property and a proposed project is often directly related to the impact of a project on the listed property.

Environs guidelines specific to this project include:

ZONING

Recommended

Maintain zoning that continues the histories land use in the environs of a listed property.

When rezoning is required within the environs of a listed property, the impact of the rezoning should be considered and steps taken to mitigate adverse effects.

Not Recommended

Rezoning to allow development that is incompatible and/or inconsistent with the character of the environs.

Speculative or spot zoning without a well-defined use for the property that is compatible with the environs.

Any rezoning without design documents indicating the compatibility of the proposed new use, addition, and/or infill construction.

<p>DEMOLITION</p> <p>Recommended</p> <p>Retain the features that define the character of a listed property when possible.</p> <p>When removal of a character-defining feature or structure is necessary, a new feature or structure that is compatible with the environs should be installed.</p>	<p>Not Recommended</p> <p>Demolition of character-defining features or structures with no plans for compatible replacement features or structures.</p> <p>Demolition of character-defining structure(s) with the intent of creating open space, such as a parking lot or park</p> <p>Demolition of a character-defining structure(s) and replacement of it with a historic building moved to the site.</p>
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When evaluating the environs of the Goodrich House and the House House, there are several considerations. The original environs of both properties were residential with commercial nodes being located to the north and south and not in this area. The use of Massachusetts Street as a main automobile thoroughfare to the downtown area began to change the uses along the southern

Massachusetts Street in the late 1930's, 40's and 50's. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps indicate that the area located at 19th and Massachusetts Street was predominately commercial by 1947. The area of environs for the Goodrich and House houses was still predominately single family residential with a church and some apartment complexes. The environs of these structures changed significantly after 1947 with the development of more commercial from the south and finally the construction of Babcock Towers in 1973.

The structure located at 1725 New Hampshire Street was constructed in 1957. It is a brick apartment complex currently with six units. It is very minimalist with the only detailing the main entry surround and the symmetrical placement of simple windows. The western portion of the parcel supports a concrete block four car garage with utility area.

Demolition of historic structures is rarely positive for a neighborhood because it destroys the relationships between the structures, landscape features, and open space, and as a result the overall character of the area is diminished. When possible, staff prefers rehabilitation to retain structures and their relationship to the environs of the listed properties. If demolition is approved, it removes the opportunity for a future owner to rehabilitate the existing structure. However, the proposed project may not meet the test of a character-defining feature of the environs either of the listed properties.



West elevation of 1725 New Hampshire Street.



Southwest elevation of 1725 New Hampshire Street.

The subject structure is not listed on the Kansas or National Registers and is not eligible for the financial incentives for rehabilitation associated with listing. While the existing main structure is compatible with the environs of the listed properties, the dates of significance for the listed properties are the dates of construction and do not extend to the current fifty-year mark. However, environs review does allow for properties that have achieved significance to the environs of the listed properties. Has this structure achieved significance to the environs of the Goodrich and House houses? Staff's evaluation of the environs included the changes to the environs that affect the line of site from the listed properties to the subject property. The construction of Babcock Towers has obliterated the line of sight from the House House to the subject property. The

construction of parking lots has significantly altered the environs and the line of sight from the Goodrich House. The impact on the Goodrich house will be the addition of more parking area beyond the existing parking area. The line of sight from the House House will have no change due to the size of Babcock Towers.



Because of the construction date and the form of the existing structures, it is difficult to identify the subject structures as character-defining for the listed properties. While the structure may be compatible with the environs of the listed properties, it does not appear to be character-defining. The Standards and Guidelines for Evaluating the Effect of Projects on Environs does not prohibit the removal of a structure that is not character-defining. In addition, the guidelines do not require a replacement plan for the removal of non-character defining structures. Staff is rarely supportive of the removal of a structure without a replacement plan. While staff has significant concerns about the removal of this structure, due to the form, style, location, and setting, the existing structure does not appear to be a character defining element of the environs of either the Goodrich House or the House House. Therefore, staff is of the opinion the rezoning of this property and the subsequent removal of the subject structures will not encroach upon, damage, or destroy the listed historic properties or their environs. Staff does recommend, however, that the structure be documented for future study of the development of the area.

E. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

In accordance with the Standards for Evaluating the Effect of Projects on Environs, the standard of evaluation, staff recommends the Commission approve the proposed project and make the determination that the proposed project does not encroach upon, damage, or destroy listed historic properties and their environs with the following conditions:

1. The applicant will allow staff to photograph the property before demolition.
2. The applicant will supply a building condition analysis to be reviewed and approved by the Historic Resources Administrator.
3. Any changes to the approved project will be submitted to the Historic Resources Administrator prior to the commencement of any related work.