

Mess, Camie

From: Mess, Camie
Sent: Wednesday, April 25, 2018 5:08 PM
To: Wolf, Fred (fw@wolfackerman.com)
Cc: Werner, Jeffrey B
Subject: BAR Action - April 17, 2018 - 218 West Main Street

April 25, 2018

Certificate of Appropriateness

BAR 17-08-01
218 West Main Street
Tax Parcel 280009100
Brands Hatch, LLC, Owner/Fred Wolf/Wolf Ackerman Design LLC, Applicant
Rear and side demolition in association with Tech Center project

Dear Applicant,

The above referenced project was discussed before a meeting of the City of Charlottesville Board of Architectural Review (BAR) on April 17, 2018. The following action was taken:

Schwarz moved: Having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including City Design Guidelines for Demolition, I move to find that the proposed demolition satisfies the BAR's criteria and is compatible with these properties and other properties in the Downtown ADC district, and that the BAR approves the application as submitted for the preservation of the front façade (masonry, cornice, and lentils), if there are any changes to the demolition plan these should come back to staff to be circulated via e-mail to the BAR. Also, the BAR requests that the building be documented according to standards set by staff. Earnst seconded. Approved (6-0).

This certificate of appropriateness shall expire in 18 months (October 17, 2019), unless within that time period you have either: been issued a building permit for construction of the improvements if one is required, or if no building permit is required, commenced the project. You may request an extension of the certificate of appropriateness before this approval expires for one additional year for reasonable cause.

If you have any questions, please contact Jeff Werner at 434-970-3130 or wernerjb@charlottesville.org.

Sincerely yours,

Camie Mess

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
April 17, 2018**



Certificate of Appropriateness Application

BAR 17-08-01

218 West Main Street

Tax Parcel 280009100

Brands Hatch, LLC, Owner/Fred Wolf/Wolf Ackerman Design LLC, Applicant

Rear and side demolition in association with Tech Center project

Background

218 West Main Street is a contributing structure in the Downtown Architectural Design Control (ADC) historic district. The small, duplex, commercial building was constructed in 1901 of brick that has since been painted red with yellow trim. The first level consists of storefronts--which have been remodeled several times—and are set within a single, mitered-brick frame. The storefronts were rebuilt and renovated in 1981 when the building was purchased by Butler Griffin Limited Partnership. The historical survey is attached.

Application

Request for partial demolition of the building and retain the front façade (north elevation). The applicant realizes the importance of this front façade and how it engages with the mall. Plan is to carefully shore, underpin, and brace the façade throughout the construction project, protecting its integrity and allowing it to be adapted into the design for the Technology Center.

Criteria, Standards, and Guidelines

Review Criteria Generally

Sec. 34-284(b) of the City Code states that,

In considering a particular application the BAR shall approve the application unless it finds:

- (1) That the proposal does not meet specific standards set forth within this division or applicable provisions of the Design Guidelines established by the board pursuant to Sec.34-288(6); and*
- (2) The proposal is incompatible with the historic, cultural or architectural character of the district in which the property is located or the protected property that is the subject of the application.*

Pertinent Standards for Review of Construction and Alterations include:

- (1) Whether the material, texture, color, height, scale, mass and placement of the proposed addition, modification or construction are visually and architecturally compatible with the site and the applicable design control district;*
- (2) The harmony of the proposed change in terms of overall proportion and the size and placement of entrances, windows, awnings, exterior stairs and signs;*
- (3) The Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation set forth within the Code of Federal Regulations (36 C.F.R. §67.7(b)), as may be relevant;*
- (4) The effect of the proposed change on the historic district neighborhood;*

- (5) The impact of the proposed change on other protected features on the property, such as gardens, landscaping, fences, walls and walks;*
- (6) Whether the proposed method of construction, renovation or restoration could have an adverse impact on the structure or site, or adjacent buildings or structures;*
- (8) Any applicable provisions of the City's Design Guidelines.*

Pertinent Design Review Guidelines for Demolition

Review Criteria for Demolition

- 1. *The standards established by the City Code, Section 34-278.***
- 2. *The public necessity of the proposed demolition***
- 3. *The public purpose or interest in land or buildings to be protected.***
- 4. *Whether or not a relocation of the structure would be a practical and preferable alternative to demolition.***
- 5. *Whether or not the proposed demolition would adversely or positively affect other historic buildings or the character of the historic district.***
- 6. *The reason for demolishing the structure and whether or not alternatives exist.***
- 7. *Whether or not there has been a professional economic and structural feasibility study for rehabilitating or reusing the structure and whether or not its findings support the proposed demolition.***

Guidelines for Demolition

- 1. *Demolish a historic structure only after all preferable alternatives have been exhausted.***
- 2. *Document the building thoroughly through photographs and, for especially significant buildings, measured drawings according to Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) Standards. This information should be retained by the City of Charlottesville Department of Neighborhood Development Services and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.***
- 3. *If the site is to remain vacant for any length of time, maintain the empty lot in a manner consistent with other open spaces in the districts.***

Discussion and Recommendations

The applicant makes a compelling argument for partial demolition of the building and has clearly done their research. The BAR should discuss if keeping the front façade and how it engages with the mall will be enough preservation of the building.

Also, if the partial demolition is approved, staff recommends the BAR include in the motion the request to document the building per Guidelines for Demolition point #2.

Staff urges the BAR to consider conditions that preserve, as applicable, all existing historic components of the façade; not just the masonry.

Suggested Motion

Having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including City Design Guidelines for Demolition, I move to find that the proposed demolition satisfies the BAR's criteria and is compatible with these properties and other properties in the Downtown ADC district, and that the BAR approves the application as submitted.

To the Members of the BAR:

On behalf of Brand Hatch LLC, WOLF ACKERMAN DESIGN is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to demolish the rear portion (excluding the front façade) of the building located at 218-220 West Main Street, that currently houses the Carytown Tobacco Shop and The Escape Room, to allow for the future construction of new level of underground parking 15-20 feet beneath it as part of a new project called The Technology Center that will occupy this site and combine it with the adjacent 230 W. Main Street and 215 W. Water Street properties.

Charlottesville City records date the building to c.1920. Sanborn maps also show the building present in its 1920 maps. And we have provided two photos which show that property. One photo, circa 1930s shows what appears to be the original façade with two storefront openings at ground level, a center doorway and 6 second floor windows (one-over-ones, double hung that are modern replacements w/ vinyl inserts and insulate glass in the sashes) with a painted metal cornice above. The window heads and sills appear to be cast concrete or cast stone, painted. A more recent photo, circa 1980s, depicts the building in its current state with a view of its side (it used to face a parking lot prior to the construction of the ice rink and its now internal to the rink's lobby). We believe the front façade wall construction is a solid 3 wythe brick construction that is approximately 14" thick. That is the dimension we would preserve.

In the 1980s photo, the storefronts have been modified significantly with stucco or wood siding, the brick has been painted and the center door opening has been in filled with non-matching brick. There was a large sign on the west side wall. Presently there are several “interior windows” in the west side wall. That wall is now only visible from inside the adjacent building (as part of that lobby). The openings have glass block and are trimmed with flat wood, picture framed casing that would not be of the period when the wall was built suggesting they could have been added when the rink was constructed (the rink had offices in the adjacent building on the second floor). There is some evidence that other 2nd floor masonry openings may have existed at a prior point and have been filled. Again – these are all part of wall that is now internal and not visible from the right-of-way.

The building is a 2-story brick masonry structure approximately 36' tall. Its primary façade faces West Main Street (the Downtown Mall) and at one point that was probably the only visible façade of the building. Its east wall along the property line appears to be a shared wall with Violet Crown Theater (built c. mid-1990s) and will remain in place. Its west wall is largely concealed by the neighboring property along that property line – the Main Street Arena also built in the mid 1990s. Only the top 3 to 4 feet of its parapet on the west side is exposed. The rear wall of the property is completely surrounded by the ice rink construction that wraps behind and is not visible. Finally, the roof of the structure is wood framed with a rubber EPDM membrane and has a long, low slope from front to back concealed entirely by a parapet on all sides.

Additionally, this property is located mid-block in a zoning district that currently requires surrounding buildings to entirely fill their site and build directly to the property lines, which would generally mean the portions of the building we are requesting permission to remove and reconstruct would not typically ever be exposed or visible.

We recognize the importance of the primary elevation of this building. It is a handsome facade and an important part of the Downtown Mall's historic streetscape. Our design intent has always been to preserve it by carefully shoring, underpinning and bracing it throughout construction to protect its integrity and adopt it into our new project design. But understanding that the main way this building engages with the Mall is through its front façade and the other walls and roof not really having any expression - we did not view them as similarly significant or important to preserve. Concealed by other construction already, they provide no special architectural features or characteristics beyond their age. Nor do we feel that replacing these portions of the building will diminish the character or the perception one's has of the property from the street where it will be visible.

Therefore, we feel a COA is justifiable and appropriate for the partial demolition of those portions of the building at 218-220 West Main that are either not visible or substantially internalized by adjacent construction in order to facilitate the new construction that is planned below and around this building's footprint. The requested demolition includes: East Wall, West Wall, South Wall and Roof – with the north facing street wall to be protected and preserved.

Once the subgrade work is completed, the new project will replace the side and rear walls and roof - with the BAR's approval – recreating a new version of the envelop using modern construction techniques and providing new openings and details that will relate to both the historic façade that is preserved and the adjacent new construction. And as part of this renovation of the front façade, the two primary storefronts will receive new glazing and the central door will be opened up and function as a door to a new retail space on the ground level. The windows above will be preserved as is along with the original cornice.

Finally, I'd like to mention that we are also investigating an alternative approach to see if the façade could be split, reinforced, stabilized in a frame and temporarily removed and replaced to facilitate safer, more efficient construction below that area. If the BAR were open to it and we can achieve that in such a way that still preserves the historic integrity – we'd appreciate the opportunity to discuss it with the board. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Fred Wolf, *partner*

WOLF ACKERMAN DESIGN, LLC















