

STATE OF TEXAS §
COUNTIES OF POTTER §
AND RANDALL §
CITY OF AMARILLO §

At 5:15 p.m. on the 26th day of June 2014, the Amarillo Board of Review for Landmarks and Historic Districts (BRLHD) convened in a called session in Room 306 on the Third Floor of City Hall, 509 East 7th Avenue, Amarillo, Texas, with the following members present:

VOTING MEMBERS	PRESENT	NO. MEETINGS HELD	NO. MEETINGS ATTENDED
Carson Burgess	Yes	31	25
Linda Pitner	Yes	1	1
Mason Rogers	Yes	23	22
Tom Thatcher	Yes	5	3
Chan Davidson	Yes	1	1
LV Perkins	Yes	5	5
Trey Porter	No	1	0
Howard Smith	Yes	11	10
Kim Crawford	Yes	10	5

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cris Valverde, Historic Preservation Officer
James Bentley, Planner I

Chairman Mason Rogers opened the meeting, established a quorum and conducted the consideration of the following items. James Bentley, Planner I, presented the staff report and recommendation.

ITEM 1: Approval of the minutes of the April 17, 2014 meeting.

Motion to approve minutes of the April 17, 2014 meeting was made by Board Member Burgess, seconded by Board Member Smith, and carried 6:0:2 with newly appointed Board Members Chan Davidson and Linda Pitner abstaining.

ITEM 2: DEM-14-02 Demolition of existing structures located at 1601 and 1603 S. Jackson St., 201 and 420 S.W. 16th Ave., and 1604 S Tyler St. all in Section 170, Block 2, AB&M Survey, Potter County, Texas. (Vicinity: SW 16th Ave. and S Tyler St.)
APPLICANT: Richard Ford
LISTED ON SHERIFF'S SALE: No
DELINQUENT TAXES: None

Mr. Bentley gave a brief summary of the projects stating their historical significance and the architectural features that were present. He mentioned past demolitions in the area, their cumulative effect on the historic nature of downtown, and approval of this request in relation to further erosion on the areas historic nature. Mr. Bentley stated that staff believed the opportunity to adaptively re-use the structures was present. Mr. Bentley presented staff's opinion that demolition, if approved, would have a significant detrimental impact on the overall character of the Plemons-Eagle Historic Neighborhood.

Applicant Richard Ford spoke stating his intentions for the request. Mr. Ford stated the crime levels and costs involved in calling authorities out to the listed addresses. He stated that a new development in the area would be beneficial to the neighborhood. The applicant then stated that if the buildings were to be rehabilitated, there would not be sufficient parking for tenants. Mr. Ford then mentioned that these structures would not be feasible for rehabilitation due to the American Disability Act (ADA) requirements that would be necessary for re-use/continued use of the buildings. Mr. Ford closed with asking the Board Members to allow him to demolish the structures so that he can begin redevelopment in the area to better serve the community.

Board Member Smith asked the applicant why his group was interested in developing downtown as opposed to other areas in the City.

The applicant responded saying that the group that is funding the project has the interest in downtown development.

Board Member Rogers inquired as to how long the current owners of the structures have maintained ownership.

Mr. Ford stated that 1603 S. Jackson St. had been owned by Sunbird Construction for seven to eight months, 420 S.W. 16th Ave. had been under ownership of Sunbird Construction for three months, and Sunbird Construction had closed on the remaining three properties the day before this meeting.

Dustin Cole with Scarborough Specialties located at 1601 S. Harrison St. then spoke stating that he was in favor of the demolition due to the transient activity in the adjacent buildings and that the buildings were decreasing Scarborough Specialties' property value.

Steve Pear representing the Plemons-Eagle Neighborhood Association (PENA) spoke and told the Board Members the intent of PENA. He then asked that the request be tabled for 60 days so that the PENA could meet with the applicant to determine if a compromise could be met.

Melissa Daily with Downtown Amarillo, Inc., whom also serves on the PENA Board, stated her interest in preserving Downtown Amarillo. She stated that some of the sites might be better served with new development; however the applicant has not provided any information on what that might be. She closed with stating that she would like to try and work with the developer as well to determine if there were any other avenues that could be taken other than demolition.

Property owner David Horsley (1720 S. Harrison) thanked Mr. Ford for allowing the public to have a tour of the structures. Mr. Horsley provided a short story of how he became a property owner within the Plemons-Eagle Historic Neighborhood. He agreed that the buildings were in bad condition but that he believed they could still be revitalized and therefore he was against demolition of the structures.

Property owner Jerry Wells (412 W. 16th Ave.) spoke for the demolition stating the revitalization of the structures was not feasible due to the costs involved. He also mentioned that all structures would need to be brought up to code and that they would require parking.

There was discussion of tax credits available for the historic structures between Mr. Ford, Mrs. Daily, and Board Member Burgess. Mr. Ford stated that the developer was not interested in these tax credits.

Property owner Troy Foos at 1613 S. Harrison St. re-iterated that demolition of the structures would have a significant impact on the historic character of the neighborhood.

Mr. Ford responded to the request to table the demolition stating that they were not interested because they knew the costs involved in remodeling the properties was unfeasible. He stated that there would be no benefit to postponing the vote because they would not have plans for new development within that time.

The applicant brought to the attention the year moratorium on the demolition if the request was to be denied.

Mr. Valverde spoke to the logic of the moratorium being present within the Landmarks and Historic Districts Ordinance.

Board Member Smith suggested that the Board deny the request for properties located at 1601 and 1603 S. Jackson St. and approve the demolition for properties located at 201 and 420 S.W. 16th Ave., and 1604 S Tyler St.

Board Member Rogers disagreed with the suggestion of Board Member Smith stating that he believed all five structures have potential for re-use/rehabilitation.

Board Member Perkins then made a motion to table the item for 60 days.

The motion died for lack of a second.

Board Member Smith made a motion to deny the demolition of structures located at 1601 and 1603 S. Jackson St. and approve the demolition for structures located at 201 and 420 S.W. 16th Ave., and 1604 S Tyler St.

The motion died for lack of a second.

Board Member Pitner stated her concern that if the item is not denied the opportunity to rehabilitate the structures will no longer exist and that the lack of future plans leads her to believe that redevelopment might not occur.

Motion to deny demolition as presented was made by Board Member Pitner and seconded by Board Member Davidson and carried 6:2.

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There being no further items before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m. All remarks are recorded and are on file in the Planning Department.

James Bentley
Planner I