



Department of Planning, Zoning, & Historic Preservation

SUMMARY OF MINUTES THE CITY OF BINGHAMTON THE COMMISSION ON ARCHITECTURE & URBAN DESIGN	
MEETING DATE: February 6, 2024	LOCATION: City Hall; 38 Hawley St, Binghamton, NY. 13901
CALLED TO ORDER: 12:15 p.m.	RECORDER OF MINUTES: Dylan Pelton

ROLL CALL		
COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:	PRESENT:	ABSENT:
J. Darrow		X
M.E. Mauro		X
D. Nead	X	
J. Weissman	X	
D. Whalen (interim chair)	X	
B. Haas	X	
STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:	TITLE & DEPARTMENT:	
J. Berling	Director, Planning Department	
S. Patel	City Planner, Planning Department	
D. Pelton	Historic Preservation Planner, Planning Department	
R. Heary	Corporation Council	
Patrick McGinnis	Commissioner of Parks & Recreation	

VOTING		
MOTION: To table last meetings minutes until more commissioners can vote who were in attendance.		
FIRST: D. Whalen	SECOND: D. Nead	VOTE: (4-0-0)
AYE(S): B. Haas, D. Nead, J. Weissman, B. Haas	NAY(S): None	ABSTENTION(S): None

BUSINESS ITEM	
ADDRESS: 188 Court Street	CASE NUMBER: CAUD-2024-4
DESCRIPTION FROM AGENDA: The applicant, Phillip Akel, would like to demolish the residential structure and replace it with a parking lot.	
Determination of Significance for Demolition	
DISCUSSION POINTS & THOSE SPEAKING:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant’s representative, Shara Cambell, introduces Phillip Akel, the applicant, and Anthony Paniccia an engineer. • Applicant’s representative states that the building was listed for some time and the interior of the building has been deteriorating over time. • Applicant’s representative states the applicant owns 184 Court Street and the parking located across the street raised safety concerns. • Applicant’s representative states the applicant’s intention to work with the church next door to create a designed street scape between the two buildings. • Applicant’s representative presents grounds for demolition. • Staff relates to applicant the historic guidelines that were adopted by the City Council. 	

- Staff relays that the guidelines were adopted by resolution to the city charter of Binghamton.
- Applicant's representative states that the representative from Delta engineers produced a list of items required to fix the structure.
- Applicant's representative states that it was listed months ago as a residential house.
- Staff asks if 184 Court Street has a long-term lease on the property.
- Applicant states that the lease shouldn't change in the coming months.
- Applicant's engineering representative states there are only 7 parking spaces and there is inadequate parking for the building at 184 Court Street.
- Applicant's representative states that the applicant understands they would need a site plan to present to the Planning Commission.
- Applicant's engineering representative states that they have exhausted commercial and residential application to use the property as such and decided it is not feasible.
- Applicant's engineering representative stated that a parking lot would not have a negative impact on the area.
- Commissioner states that the area is moving back to a more residential use and may be rezoned in the future.
- Commissioner also states that economic hardship on a property is not grounds for demolition.
- Commissioner states that his belief is there are no grounds for demolition.
- Commissioner states that we should start out discussion with the historical context of the building.
- Staff states that the house is 140 years old and in good condition.
- Applicant's engineering representative states that to bring the building up to code, you would need to pour a new concrete slab in the basement making it economically impractical.
- Staff states that the building, based on the double doors, the floor to ceiling windows and the massing of the façade in the front, is historic.
- Applicant's engineering representative states that the applicant never said it is structurally unsound, but that it would be economically unfeasible for a return on investment.
- Commissioner asks if a Certificate of Compliance could be acquired for the property.
- Staff states that the previous owner tried to sell it as apartments and the previous COC was for offices.
- Staff relates that there is an administrative approval process for returning an occupancy status to a previous one in the zoning charter.
- Applicant's representative asks if the nature of the building could be considered "historic".
- Staff states that Mary Mauro, a commissioner who was absent, wanted a statement read regarding the building stating that it should not be torn down.
- Commissioner states that he is in real estate and he it would be hard to find a buyer for the property.
- Applicant states that they are not in the business of converting houses.
- Applicant's engineering representative states the absent commissioners did not hear their presentation.
- Applicant states that they do not want to see the property at 184 Court Street to end up vacant and believe a parking lot is their best option.
- Commissioner asks if there is precedent for tearing a building down solely for parking.
- Staff replies "no".
- Applicant states that in 2014 there was a building that was demolished for parking at 297 Main Street.
- Commissioner asks if the space could be a "mixed use" space and not specifically just parking.
- Staff states that review of the post demolition plan would have to be considered.
- Staff states that the area the building is in is slowly moving back to residential and not commercial.
- Commissioner states that logically a walkthrough of the building with a code official would be warranted.
- Commissioner states that generally the structures that are allowed to be demolished are structurally unsound. The property at 201 Oak Street was tabled to see if a use could be found for the building considering that it is still structurally viable.
- Commissioner states that Akel Development has torn down several buildings without further development of the land.

- Applicant lists off several building that were developed into viable resources in the city of Binghamton.
- Applicant’s engineering representative asked if code could come through and assess the building.

VOTING

MOTION: To table until further discussion at the next meeting of the CAUD commission.

FIRST: D. Whalen

SECOND: D. Nead

VOTE: (4-0-0)

AYE(S): B. Haas, D. Nead, J. Weissman, B. Haas

NAY(S): None

ABSTENTION(S): None