

Applicant's Exhibits:

(as provided for the public hearing 9/10/20)

1. Applicant addendum report 9/10/20
2. Applicant report 6/17/20



203 S. MARION ST. OAK PARK, IL

HISTORIC OVERVIEW - ADDENDUM

August 27, 2020

HPC SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

The property located at 203 S Marion Street is under consideration for re-development by the current owners and Focus. Focus submitted a Certification of Appropriateness for demolition to the Historic Preservation Commission for the existing structure and detached garage. The existing structure is listed as a contributing property in the Ridgeland Oak Park Historic District however, many additions and modifications have been made to the building outside the period of significance (1870 – 1929) that have significantly altered the historic characteristics of the structure.

In the first meeting with the Historic Preservation Commission on June 17th, several questions were brought up and supplemental information was requested.

- Can the house be restored as a single family house?
- Is it possible to incorporate the contributing building into the new development?

This Addendum responds to these questions with further information and detail. Also note that the original submission to the HPC includes an overview of the history of the property and further details of the modifications made to the structure.

The design for the proposed development will utilize the entire site area and requires the demolition of the existing structure. Developing this property with a new building that contributes to the quality and variety of the District while providing for a vibrant use to complete the third corner of Pleasant and Marion Streets is our mission.

Considerable investment is required to restore the exterior of the property and gut rehab the interior for commercial or residential use. Focus is not pursuing restoration because the upfront costs cannot be supported with market rents. This summary goes on to describe the many alterations made to the building outside of the period of significance and the challenges associated with restoring the structure and rehabbing the funeral home for alternative use. Therefore Focus cannot restore the existing structure or incorporate the structure into the future development.

ALTERATIONS TO ORIGINAL STRUCTURE

As indicated in the previous submission on pages 4-6, many alterations have been made to the house, after the Period of Significance (1870 - 1929) starting in 1933, to turn the single family house into a funeral home. Indicated below are photos of the building that depict the removed and alterations to the historic structure.



Original Marion Street View prior to 1929



Existing Marion Street View of Funeral Home

Approximately 3,900 sf of additions were added to the original home to adapt to its current use.

One of the chimneys has been removed on the south side

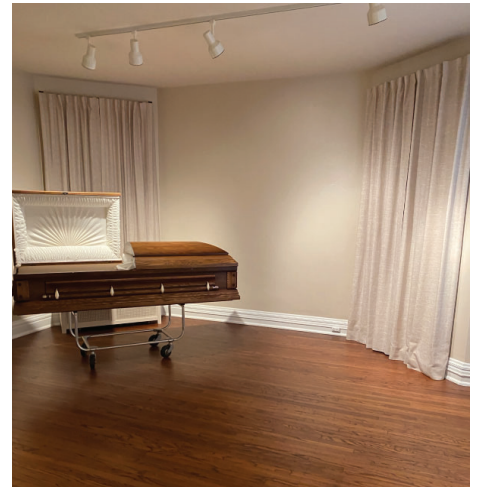
North Side entry portico is believed to be added after major additions were added in the 1950's.

Prominent main entry Queen Anne style original porch with the front entry on the east side of the house facing Marion Street was removed and an entirely different Colonial architectural style brick portico was added in 1957.

The interior of the house has been significantly modified to convert the function of the house to a funeral home. This house has gone through numerous renovations over the years to convert the interiors into offices, viewing rooms, embalming rooms, storage, and sales areas. The current layout functions well for a funeral home but would take a substantial gut renovation to restore back to a single family home. Shown below are several views of the interiors.



Embalming Room



Viewing Room



Entry Parlor (in location of original front porch - dashed line indicates approx. location of original front door. Original first floor windows were removed)



Two Story Casket Hoistway

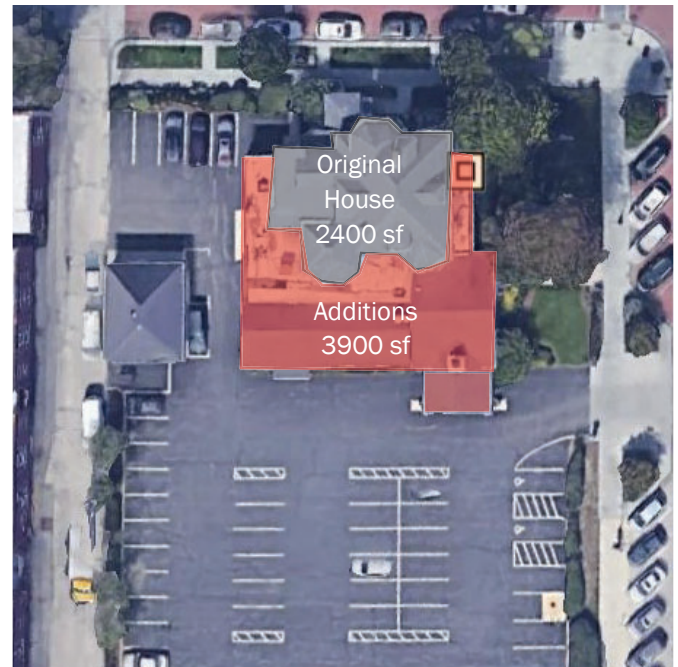
While we anticipate substantial costs associated to restore the funeral home to a single family home, we are also concerned about the enduring legacy or stigma of its funeral home past and making it attractive to new owners.

MAINTAINING STRUCTURE WITHIN NEW DEVELOPMENT

If the house is maintained as a single family residence, at least 50% of the total site area would need to be subdivided to create a 100' wide parcel along Marion Street. This would restore the lot size that the house was originally located on. The remaining lot would be significantly reduced and that would impact the development that could occur there.



Aerial View - The red dotted line in middle of property indicates the location of a subdivided lot for a single family residence and adjacent development parcel. If house is restored to original design, only 50% of the property would be available for redevelopment.



Detail Aerial View - This view indicates the extent of the additions that are beyond the Period of Significance that would need to be removed in order to return the property to that period. Three out of the four original facades of the building are concealed within recent additions.

Additionally, based on our research our belief is that a large single family home with a large lot at this location next to new development will not be attractive to future occupants considering that it will be an "island" among other 3-5 story buildings with the hotel to the north and the apartment buildings to the west. As indicated in National Register Nomination for the Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District, "an important physical aspect of the District is its alternating quality between busy apartment-lined streets and quiet single-family areas." "Its (the District) success can be gauged in part by the balanced contrast between the bustling character of the apartment-lined periphery of this Historic District and the quiet suburban atmosphere of the interior streets lined with detached residences." The character of this street has shifted to one of a busy apartment lined street and therefore a single family residence will feel out of place.

The Comprehensive Plan (Envision Oak Park 2014) indicates in Chapter 4 Land Use & Built Environment that this parcel be considered a Neighborhood Commercial/Mixed Use district. This area is located in a Transit Oriented Development zone close to public transit and is a pedestrian-oriented walkable site for goods and services. This parcel including several others south of this one are indicated as being "multi-story mixed use structures" on the Future Land Use diagram.

Based on the modifications and alterations to the current property, the current context of this site in the District, and our review of the contributing structures standards (NPS Criteria for National Landmark Status and the National Register of Historic Places Criteria of Evaluation), we believe this structure could be considered as non-contributing.



203 S. MARION ST. OAK PARK, IL

HISTORIC OVERVIEW

May 19, 2020

BOOTH HANSEN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This overview of the historic characteristics of the property at 203 S. Marion is submitted as additional information related to the Certificate of Appropriateness demolition review. Booth Hansen and Focus have toured the property and conducted research with the assistance of HPC staff and the Historical Society of Oak Park River Forest.

Focus is a Chicago-based developer and general contractor, that since 1993, has utilized an integrated delivery model to produce a diverse portfolio of distinctive real estate. For 25 years, Focus has acted as a developer and general contractor throughout Chicagoland delivering real estate to the Chicago market valued at over \$1.8 billion. The places and spaces the company brings to life mirror the collaboration between its vertically integrated, multi-disciplinary teams driven to manifest success. The transformative effect of Focus' work is the result of the company's dedication to impact lives, enhance communities, build value and control the risk of innovation.

Booth Hansen is an architecture firm founded 40 years ago that has had the privilege on working on many historic buildings and neighborhoods. We have restored, adapted and rehabilitated buildings such as the Auditorium Building, Palmolive Building, the Gage Building, Three Arts Club, Virgin Hotel, CIBC Theatre-Majestic Building, and others. Designing buildings that respect and respond to the context is a guiding principle of the firm, that we carry forth as the design architect of the proposed development.

This property is being considered for redevelopment by the owner of the property and Focus. As such, Focus is submitting for a COA review for the re-listing of the original structure as non-contributing to the Historic District and allow for the demolition of the entire structure and detached garage. Focus and Booth Hansen commitment to the redevelopment of this property as it will reinforce the Pleasant District and the Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District. This site will also strengthen the south end of the district with the historic Carleton Hotel on one corner and a two story retail building at 200-212 S. Marion on the other. Developing this property with a building that contributes to the quality and variety of the District while providing for a vibrant use to complete the third corner of Pleasant and Marion Streets is our mission.

HISTORY OF PROPERTY

The house at 203 S. Marion Street was built in the Colonial Revival style with Queen Anne influences between 1890 and 1895 and the original Architect is unknown. It was visible in the 1895 Sanborn map. The original owner was J.C. Rogers. This wood frame building served as a primary residence until 1920 , when is was converted into apartments. It was converted to a funeral home by owner Earl A. Dreschsler and architect Norman Barfield in 1933. More additions and alterations occurred in 1957 by architect John Barr Todd for the Dreschslers. Further modifications and partial removals have been made since that time. As indicated in the Ridgeland Oak Park Historic District Designation, the period of significance is 1870 - 1929. Listed below is a list of building permits that have been obtained from the Village of Oak Park permit records.

1920: Interior Renovations changing old single family residence into apartments. Metal lath and cement plaster interior walls and ceiling of stair hall to upper apartment.; Owner: W. E. Rogers, Architect: E. E. Roberts, Contractor: J. L. S. Bernard

1922: Porch extension; Owner: W. E. Rogers; Contractor: J. L. S. Bernard

1922: Enclose second floor sleeping porch; Owner: James C. Rogers, Contractor: J. L. S. Bernard

Alterations- Modifications beyond the Period of Significance 1870 - 1929:

1933: Alterations for a funeral home; Owner: Earl A. Drechsler, Architect: Norman D. Barfield, Contractor: C. Nelson (Note: 1920 interior renovations by E.E. Roberts are no longer intact or have been significantly altered)

1938: Convert old barn into a garage; Owner: Earl Drechsler, Contractor: Martin Schulz

1944: Extend brick store 7 feet to provide more room ; Owner: Samuel Sfitzer; Contractor: Samuel Sfitzer

1951: Rear brick addition to store building ; Owner: Earl Drechsler; Contractor: J. and E. Duff

1957: Addition and alteration to funeral chapel; Owner: Earl A. Drechsler, Architect: John Barr Todd, Contractor: Continental Construction Company



MODIFICATIONS

The current condition of the house shows the following significant alterations, additions and modifications to the original structure.

- One of the chimneys has been removed on the south side and the north one remains
- The foundation is the original stone at the house and brick on the newer additions.
- Hip Roof has replacement asphalt shingles
- Prominent main entry Queen Anne style original porch on the east side of the house facing Marion Street was removed and an entirely different Colonial architectural style brick portico was added in 1957.
- Exterior walls were modified with added colonial brick additions and the existing house was reclad in vinyl siding.
- Several of the original 6/6 double hung windows remain, several have been replaced with metal frame windows and many windows have been removed and boarded shut (south side). Original shutters are missing.



MODIFICATIONS

The current condition of the house shows the following significant alterations, additions and modifications to the original structure.

- There are several Colonial brick additions on the west, east, & south sides of the original house. These additions substantially change the aesthetic of the original Queen Anne house. These additions were constructed after the period of significance (1870-1929).



Note: Much of the interiors has been significantly modified from a residential plan to a funeral home with offices, viewing rooms, storage, etc. Many of the interior walls and functions have been removed. If the non-historic additions were to be removed, substantial reconstruction of the historic structure would be required to reestablish the exterior wall as was originally located.



- There is a single story entry portico on the north side of the house that may have been added. Historic photos do not show it well but we believe that it is not original since the primary entry was previously on Marion Street and this entry would have been more of an understated service entry. Additionally the bay for this entry does not match the original design and massing. The door and sidelite does not appear original to the Queen Anne style.



MODIFICATIONS

The current condition of the house shows the following significant alterations, additions and modifications (continued).

- The original wrought iron fence has been removed from the property.



- Over 59% of the site is now covered with asphalt and concrete paving. This parking lot is not characteristic of the rest of the district and the original context of the house as a part of a row of houses on Marion Street that has not existed since the 1950's.



Original barn converted into vehicular garage in 1938.



CONTEXT - HISTORIC DISTRICT

The property is part of the Ridgeland Oak Park Historic District established in 1983. The period of significance listed in the District nomination is 1870 - 1929. When the house was built on 203 S. Marion Street in the 1890's, the street was named Wisconsin Street and was primarily single family homes. As the district evolved over the years so did the character of the street and included a change in name to Marion Street. "An important physical aspect of the District is its alternating quality between busy apartment-lined streets and quiet single-family areas." as mentioned in the Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. We have included Sanborn maps of the street from 1895, 1908, and 1950. These maps show how the block changed from many single family homes to just a scattering that were eventually surrounded by asphalt parking lots.



1895 Sanborn Map



1908 Sanborn Map



1950 Sanborn Map



Marion Street Looking South Towards Pleasant St. c. 1915-20



Integration of Apartment Buildings and Homes

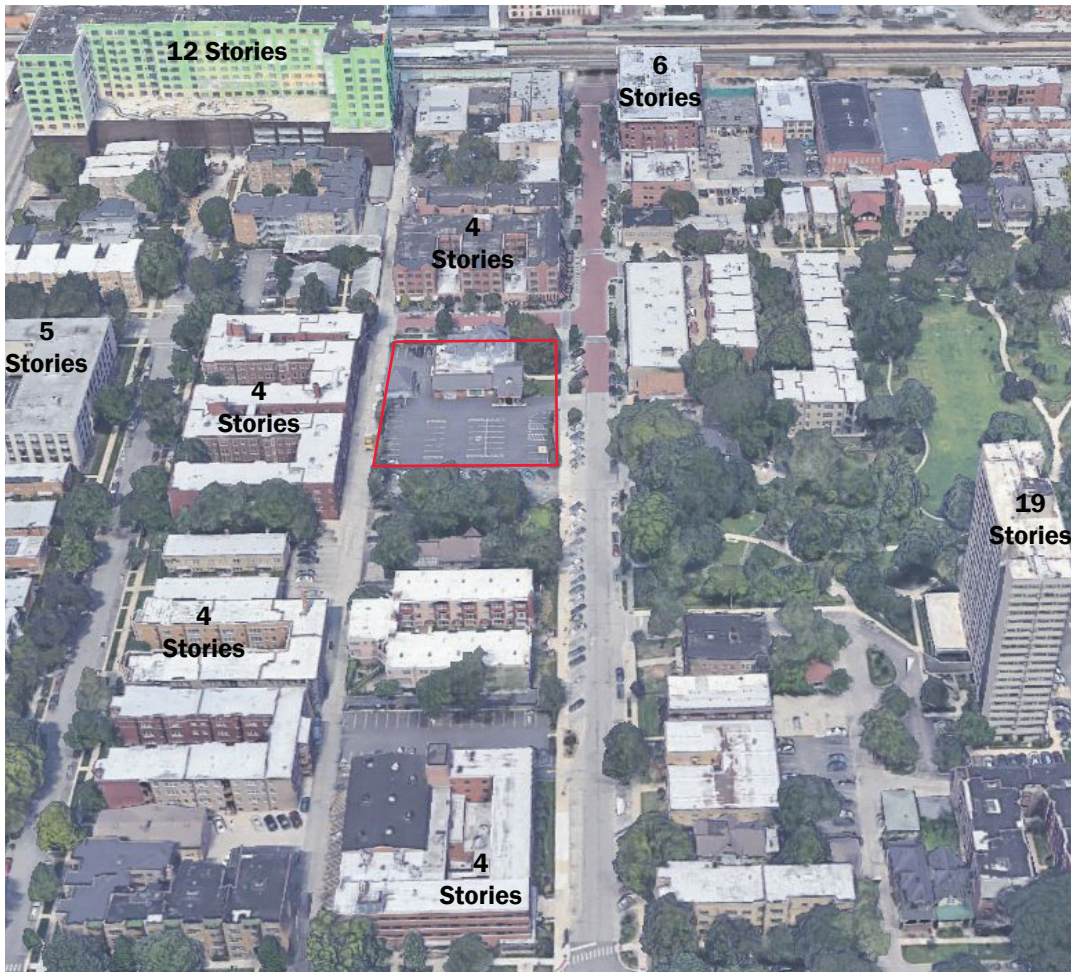


Corner of Marion Street and South Boulevard Looking West



Current view of Marion Street looking south and lack of street edge

CONTEXT - CURRENT



The current neighborhood has changed over the last several years with the inclusion of a 12 story residential building at Harlem and South Boulevard, a six story residential building at Marion and South Boulevard. This type of taller and more dense development was built in 1975 at the 19 stories tall Mills Tower.

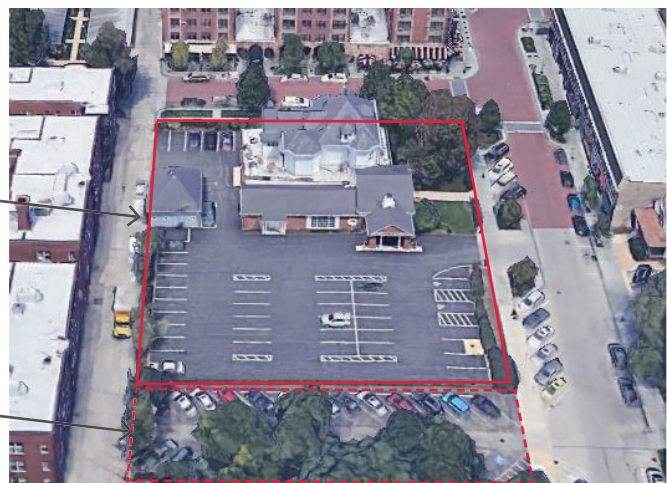
Also note that a parking lot was added next to this property at 219 S. Marion. Originally a single family house was located on the parcel, but was approved for demolition by the Historic Preservation Commission in 2000 by granting a Certificate of Economic Hardship. These two parcels originally had three single family houses.



Photo of House at 219 S. Marion
(Wednesday Journal, April 19, 2000)

203 S. Marion
parcel

219 S. Marion
parcel



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE - CRITERIA FOR NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK STATUS

This evaluation of the seven aspects of historic integrity as established by the National Park Service as well as how the building does not contribute to the Ridgeland- Oak Park Historic District are listed below with the criteria on the left column and the evaluation on the right.

Historic Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its historical associations or attributes. While the NHL and National Register of Historic Places (NR) programs use the same seven aspects of integrity to evaluate properties (listed below), NHLs must retain them to a *higher degree* than required for NR listing. If the resource has been more than modestly modified or deteriorated since its period of national significance, it may meet the NR threshold for integrity, but not the higher NHL standard.

These responses are based on current condition of property, structure and adjacent context

Location: Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. The actual location of a historic property, complemented by its setting, is particularly important in recapturing the sense of historic events and persons.

While the house is still in its original location, there is no evidence of a historic event occurring in the house or in recapturing any sense of a historic event or person.

Setting: Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. It refers to the historic character of the place in which the property played its historical role. It involves how, not just where, the property is situated and its historical relationship to surrounding features and open space. The physical features that constitute the historic setting of a historic property can be either natural or manmade and include such elements as topographic features, vegetation, simple manmade paths or fences, and the relationships between buildings and other features or open spaces.

The setting of the house as currently stands is completely different and modified from the original setting as evidenced by the Sanborn maps. Originally it was located on the west side of Wisconsin Street (now Marion Street) in a row of other single family residences and church parish house. Now it has been surrounded by more recent additions and three adjacent lots have been turned into asphalt parking lots.

Design: Design is the combination of elements that create the historic form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. This includes such elements as organization of space, proportion, scale, technology, ornamentation, and materials. Design can also apply to districts and to the historic way in which the buildings, sites, or structures are related. Examples include spatial relationships between major features; visual rhythms in a streetscape or landscape plantings; the layout and materials of walkways and roads; and the relationship of other features, such as statues, water fountains, and archeological sites.

In this historic district, the visual rhythms of the streetscape are important to the character of the district. As mentioned in relation to the Setting, the rhythm of a streetscape with its front yards and large street facing porches has been dismantled in this part of Marion Street.

Materials: Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. If the property has been rehabilitated, the historic materials and significant features must have been preserved. The property must also be an actual historic resource, not a re-creation; a property whose historic features have been lost and then reconstructed is usually not eligible.

Most all of the original house has been replaced without use of historic materials. One of the most defining features of the house, the front porch was completely removed. Most all the windows have been removed or replaced with non-historic windows.

Workmanship: Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history. It is the evidence of artisans' labor and skill in constructing or altering a building, structure, object, or site. It may be expressed in vernacular methods of construction and plain finishes or in highly sophisticated configurations and ornamental detailing. Examples of workmanship in historic buildings include tooling, carving, painting, graining,

There appears to be no part of the remaining house that exhibits any particular skill or craftsmanship.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE - CRITERIA FOR NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK STATUS (CONT.)

Feeling: Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character. For example, a rural historic district which retains its original design, materials, workmanship, and setting will relate the feeling of agricultural life in the nineteenth century.

Since the property's expression of the original aesthetic has been so substantially modified, the feeling that it may have once had no longer exists.

Association: Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. A property retains association if it is the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer. Therefore, a property where a nationally significant person carried out the action or work for which they are nationally significant is preferable to the place where they returned to only sleep, eat, or spend their leisure time. Like feeling, association requires the presence of physical features that convey a property's historic character.

This property has no record of a direct link to an important historic event or person. Therefore it has no association to such event or person.

From the National Park Service website, National Historic Landmarks; <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalhistoriclandmarks/glossary.htm> *Glossary of Terms*

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES - CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

This evaluation of how the building does not contribute to the Ridgeland- Oak Park Historic District are listed below with the criteria on the left column and the evaluation on the right. Note that only criteria A and C below were used to establish the District in the 1983 Nomination submitted to create the District.

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

These responses are based on current condition of property, structure and adjacent context

A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

While this property is part of the story of Oak Park, it has lost most of its architectural integrity to contribute to the story of "Changing over time".

B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

Not a criteria used to establish the District

C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

The current building has lost most of its architectural integrity that was characteristic of the type, period, or method of construction. The house was not the work of a master and due to the modifications, no longer represents a significant and distinguishable entity.

D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Not a criteria used to establish the District

From the National Register Bulletin; *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*

ECONOMIC VIABILITY

The property has been operating as a funeral home since 1933 when the Dreschler family purchased the property and retrofitted the existing apartment building into a mortuary and chapel.

In 1998, the Williams Family purchased the property and continued operating the business. The Williams family has indicated that the funeral industry has evolved over the last 20 years and the proliferation of cremations is reducing the revenues generated in the industry. The average cremation typically costs less than one-third of a funeral with a burial. The new wave of business owners are opting for “storefront” funeral homes that require less real estate and rely less on the revenue generated from the sales of caskets and urns. The Williams are ready to retire and sell the property. They have not been able to find another funeral home operator that is interested in purchasing the property.

Due to significant interior and exterior renovations and additions, the interior of the original has been converted into offices and funeral home viewing spaces. Many of the original spaces including the kitchen, several bathrooms, and bedrooms have been converted to other uses and fixtures removed. Several of the modifications have modified the plumbing and finishes extensively. The structure has been so altered to the point where the costs required to convert it back to a single family home may be more than the construction of a new building. Due to the position of the house on the property (occupying approximately 40% of the site), leaving the house as it is does not allow for a significant parcel remaining to invest in a new compatible building. Renovating the home into an office or retail use would not be viable to meet modern standards for those uses.



DESIGN GUIDELINES

The design for the proposed building on this site will be contextual to the historic district and the specific influences of the Pleasant District. We look to the rich history of apartment buildings in Oak Park as a guideline for our design.

As indicated by the Oak Park Architectural Review Guidelines, we will comply with the following standards for a New Building:

1. A new building in a historic district must be compatible with the size, scale, set-back, massing, material, and character of the buildings which surround it on the same and adjacent blocks (the zone of influence for new buildings is six blocks -- the block on which the building is proposed to be built, the two adjacent blocks on the same side of the street, and the three opposing blocks on the other side of the same street).
2. A new building shall not change the historic character of the other buildings which surround it on the same and adjacent blocks.
3. A new building shall have its front entrance facing the same direction as the majority of buildings on the same block, unless it can be shown that compatibility with adjacent buildings can be achieved better through a different orientation.
4. A new building built in a historic district shall be compatible but visually distinct from other buildings which surround it on the same and adjacent blocks.

Shown below are examples of Oak Park buildings that contain architectural qualities that the design of a new building will be guided by. The caption below each photo indicates the aspect of the building we see as a design guidelines.



Contextual while building over parking level



Use of a variety of materials



Modern building using massing & materials



Courtyards with active street level



Active street level & light courts



Contextual while incorporating new materials



Use of lighter color materials, bay windows for scale, & courtyards



Large bays give units corner windows



Classic Courtyard Design with stepping window bays

TEAM EXPERIENCE

Focus and Booth Hansen have worked on several successful community projects responding to contextual issues and opportunities. This is the relevant experience in Oak Park and projects we have collaborated on (indicated by an “*”).



Kelmscott Park, Lake Forest, IL *



The Terraces & Euclid Commons, Oak Park, IL



Courtyard Square, Wheaton, IL



1717 Ridge, Evanston, IL *



Euclid Commons, Oak Park, IL



The Parker, Chicago, IL *



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