



Mayor Tim Greimel

# CITY OF PONTIAC

Planning & Zoning Division

City Hall - 47450 Woodward Avenue

Pontiac, Michigan 48342-5009

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Mark Yandrick  
Planning Manager

## **PONTIAC HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**June 21st, 2023, 6:00PM**

**CITY HALL – 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR – COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**47450 WOODWARD AVENUE – PONTIAC, MICHIGAN**

### Agenda

1. CALL TO ORDER:
2. ROLL CALL:
3. OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS:
4. MINUTES FOR REVIEW:
5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:
6. HISTORIC DISTRICT REVIEW:
7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
8. NEW BUSINESS:
  - 8.1 HDC 23-014 – 75 Oliver Rd, Demolition
9. PUBLIC COMMENT:
10. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:
11. ADJOURNMENT:

## **Community Development Department**

Rachel Loughrin, Director  
Larry Domski, Building Official  
Jack McIntyre, Code Enforcement Manager  
Deborah Younger, Economic Development Manager  
Mark Yandrick, Planning Manager



**TO:** Historic District Commission

**FROM:** Corey Christensen, Senior Planner

**DATE:** June 8, 2023

**RE:** Staff Report: 75 Oliver St. (HDC 23-014)

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### **Executive Summary:**

The applicant, Oakland County Treasurer's Office, requests a notice to proceed for the demolition of 75 Oliver St. The County Land Bank Authority received a grant to stabilize three structures in the Modern housing Corp Historic District and has determined this property to be in too poor of a condition to salvage. The structure is in significant disrepair and cannot be restored.

The Historic District Commission took a tour of the Modern Housing Corp Historic District on April 12, 2023. During this tour the structure at 75 Oliver St. was noted for being in especially poor condition.

Staff recommends approval of this application.

### **Overview:**

The property is located in the Modern Housing Corp Historic District, southwest of the intersection of Oliver St. and Hammond St.



Figure 1: Overall Location Map

The applicant requests full demolition due to the deteriorated condition of the home. The structure has been vacant and a nuisance in the neighborhood for several years. City records show a history of violations on this property dating back to 2010. In November of 2011 a ticket was issued for leaving the property open to trespassing. In October of 2012 tickets were issued to the property owner for vacancy and for debris on the property. In February of 2013 the property was condemned. Since that time the Oakland County Treasurer's Office has taken ownership of the property.

The Oakland County Land Bank Authority received a grant to stabilize three structures in the Modern Housing Corp Historic District. The other two properties, 79 Oliver and 595 N Perry, are proposed to be restored, but due to the significant cost of restoring 75 Oliver the applicant is proposing a demolition.



*Figure 2: Rear View of the Subject Structure*

### **Standards of Approval:**

The secretary of the interior Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties define four types of projects and certain types of considerations as shown below.

### **Using the Standards and Guidelines for Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, & Reconstruction**

- **Preservation** is defined as the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic



materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project. However, new exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment. The Standards for Preservation require retention of the greatest amount of historic fabric along with the building's historic form.

- **Rehabilitation** is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. The Rehabilitation Standards acknowledge the need to alter or add to a historic building to meet continuing or new uses while retaining the building's historic character.
- **Restoration** is defined as the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project. The Restoration Standards allow for the depiction of a building at a particular time in its history by preserving materials, features, finishes, and spaces from its period of significance and removing those from other periods.
- **Reconstruction** is defined as the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location. The Reconstruction Standards establish a limited framework for recreating a vanished or non-surviving building with new materials, primarily for interpretive purposes.



Figure 3: Front Façade of 75 Oliver St.

## Choosing an Appropriate Treatment for the Historic Property

Choosing the most appropriate treatment for a building requires careful decision-making about a building's historical significance, as well as taking into account a number of other considerations.

- **Level of Significance.** National Historic Landmarks, designated for their "exceptional significance in American history," and other properties important for their interpretive value may be candidates for Preservation or Restoration. Rehabilitation, however, is the most commonly used treatment for the majority of historic buildings. Reconstruction has the most limited application because so few resources that are no longer extant can be documented to the degree necessary to accurately recreate the property in a manner that conveys its appearance at a particular point in history.
- **Physical condition.** Preservation may be appropriate if distinctive materials, features, and spaces are essentially intact and convey the building's historical significance. If the building requires more extensive repair and replacement, or if alterations or a new addition are necessary for a new use, then Rehabilitation is probably the most appropriate treatment.
- **Proposed use.** Many historic buildings can be adapted for a new use or updated for a continuing use without seriously impacting their historic character. However, it may be very difficult or impossible to convert some special-use properties for new uses without major alterations, resulting in loss of historic character and even integrity.
- **Code and other regulations.** Regardless of the treatment, regulatory requirements must be addressed. But without a sensitive design approach such work may damage a building's historic materials and negatively impact its character. Therefore, because the ultimate use of the building determines what requirements will have to be met, some potential uses of a historic building may not be appropriate if the necessary modifications would not preserve the building's historic character. This includes adaptations to address natural hazards as well as sustainability.

### Analysis:

This demolition request would not fall under one of the secretary of the Interior's standards as it is not preservation, rehabilitation, restoration or reconstruction. However, demolitions are sometimes justified and the Historic District Commission has the authority to issue notices to proceed to allow for the demolition of historic resources. The commission must find that retaining the resource is a hazard to public safety, will deter a major improvement project of significant benefit to the public, or cause undue financial hardship to the property owner due to an action beyond the owner's control, such as an act of God or a governmental action. Buildings that have lost their historic integrity and are determined not to be historically significant anymore may be demolished as well.

In the case of 75 Oliver there are two justifications for demolition. Firstly, the resource as it exists is a hazard to the public safety. The structure poses a fire risk to adjacent property owners and is an unsafe building that poses a risk to anyone who goes inside. There's already a record of trespassing. Secondly, mothballing the structure poses an undue financial hardship on the Oakland County Land Bank that is not the fault of the current property owner.

### Recommendation:

Staff recommends APPROVAL of the demolition of 75 Oliver St. without conditions.

### Motions

I make a motion to approve case HDC 22-014 to demolish 75 Oliver St.

I make a motion to approve case HDC 22-014 to demolish 75 Oliver St. with the following conditions of

approval \_\_\_\_\_.

I make a motion to DENY case HDC 22-014 to demolish 75 Oliver St. as presented because it does not comply with the following standard of approval \_\_\_\_\_.

I make a motion to POSTPONE case HDC 22-014 to demolish 75 Oliver St. as presented to give time for the applicant to provide the following additional information \_\_\_\_\_.



# Application for Historic District Commission

City of Pontiac

Office of Land Use and Strategic Planning

47450 Woodward Ave, Pontiac, MI 48342

T: 248.758.2800

F: 248.758.2827

Property/Project Address: 75 Oliver

Sidwell Number: 14-21-328-018

Date: May 10, 2023

Office Use Only

PF Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Complete the application and submit it to the Office of Land Use and Strategic Planning. Received applications will be processed and put on the next available Historic District Commission meeting. The Historic District Commission meets the second Tuesday of the month. Incomplete applications will delay the review process.

**Applicant (please print or type)**

|           |                                   |       |      |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|-------|------|
| Name      | Oakland County Treasurer's Office |       |      |
| Address   | 1200 N Telegraph Rd               |       |      |
| City      | Pontiac                           |       |      |
| State     | MI                                |       |      |
| ZIP Code  | 48341                             |       |      |
| Telephone | Main: 248-858-2930                | Cell: | Fax: |
| E-Mail    | robinsonj@oakgov.com              |       |      |

**Property Owner (please print or type)**

|           |                                   |       |      |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|-------|------|
| Name      | Oakland County Treasurer's Office |       |      |
| Address   | 1200 N Telegraph Rd               |       |      |
| City      | Pontiac                           |       |      |
| State     | MI                                |       |      |
| ZIP Code  | 48342                             |       |      |
| Telephone | Main: 248-858-2930                | Cell: | Fax: |
| E-Mail    | robinsonj@oakgov.com              |       |      |

**Project and Property Information**

Describe in detail all intended work, specifying dimensions, textures, color and materials. Provide samples and/or brochures describing substitute materials. Include other appropriate descriptions, plans, and/or drawings as specified below and on reverse side. (Check appropriate activity.)



☐ Exterior Alterations, ☐ Additions, ☐ New Construction, and/or ☐ Signs require:

- Scale drawings showing, all exterior elevations visible from a public street and to be affected by intended work are required when there are:
  - Any changes in dimensions, material, or detailing.
  - Any new additions or signs to any building.
- Consideration of signs also requires provision of:
  - A sample of proposed style of lettering and colors.
  - A description of frame and installation

☐ Repairs:

- Any repairs using original dimensions, type of material and details would both require a scale drawing; only a written description is needed.

☒ Demolition:

- State reasons for demolition
- State why you believe it is not feasible to put the structure in acceptable condition for reuse.

☐ Moving:

- State reasons for moving
- State proposed location

Description:

see attached

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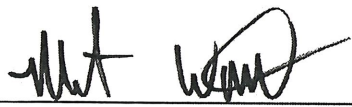
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(Attach additional pages as necessary)

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Owner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

State of Michigan  
County of Oakland

On this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, A.D., 20\_\_\_\_, before me personally appeared the above named person, who being duly sworn, stated he/she has read the foregoing application, by him/her signed, and know the contents thereof, and that the same is true of his/her own knowledge, except as to the matters therein stated to be upon information and belief and so as to those matters he/she believes it to be true.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public, Oakland County, Michigan  
My Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_



75 Oliver was tax foreclosed in 2013, at which point it was already in serious disrepair (see below). Over the years, there have been various applications submitted to purchase the property, but none with a valid plan, qualified team or budget to renovate the structure.

Earlier this year, the Oakland County Land Bank Authority was awarded a grant to stabilize the three structures in the GM Modern Historic neighborhood currently owned by the Oakland County Treasurer's Office – 75 Oliver, 79 Oliver and 595 N Perry. The allowed work could be for anything that continues to add to the deterioration of the structures – roof, windows, doors, and other exterior and interior items considered stabilizing. During and after the stabilization work, the development team awarded the project would continue to renovate the structures until they received a Certificate of Occupancy from the City of Pontiac.

An RFP was posted in April for this work on Bidnet but the deadline came and we didn't receive any proposals. After talking with some of the companies from the site visit, we learned that 75 Oliver had declined so much over the years with a fire and failing roof, that the grant funds wouldn't be enough to cover the financial gap between the stabilization work and the continued renovation budget to prepare it for sale.

We reposted the RFP for the two remaining structures (79 Oliver and 595 N Perry) and the demolition of 75 Oliver and have received a successful proposal for the work and have signed...

Saving historic structures is important to us. We hope that the two historic renovations will help with the continued revival of this wonderful neighborhood.

2013



2018

