

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2024-0015

Discussion regarding 947 E. Tienken Rd., Ralph Putman, Owner

(McLeod Memo dated 1-2-24, Designhaus Letter dated 12-11-23, Plans, Location Map, and Photos had been placed on file and by reference became a part of the record.)

Present was Ralph Putman, property owner and Joe Latozas of Designhaus Architecture, Architect for Mr. Putman.

Chairperson Thompson noted that this item is for discussion and a request for feedback and is not a formal application on what is being proposed. He asked for any staff comments

Mr. McLeod displayed the items that were submitted and stated that he would defer to Ms. Kidorf for any commentary.

Ms. Kidorf stated that while the existing house and additions were not all built at the same time, they were all built within the period of significance for the historic district and the additions would still be considered contributing or historic. She stated that she is aware that the house is in very poor condition, and Mr. Putman has come several times looking for some guidance for the project. She stated that the addition as currently proposed would not meet Secretary of Interior Standards as it overwhelms the house, only preserving one little piece of the historic house. She stated that as submitted, the scale just overwhelms the historic house and it is almost like the historic house itself is an addition.

She commented that she applauds Mr. Putman's efforts to try to preserve the house, and moving both the house and barn back are something that could be considered appropriate based on the conditions out there. She stated that the proposed addition, along with eliminating all of the current additions on the house would not be appropriate. She questioned whether it was proposed to deconstruct the existing house, and if that is the case would it look as it does now; and asked if the house was stable enough to be picked up and moved. She asked what landscaping would need to be changed to accommodate such a move.

Mr. McLeod stated that the parcel configuration is unique, and displayed on the screen how the barn is within the road right-of-way and is actually on Road Commission property. He noted how the house sits on the front property line at one point. He commented that this is part of the reason that from a Planning and Engineering point of view, moving the house back may ultimately be a better scenario.

Chairperson Thompson stated that he would echo Ms. Kidorf's comments in that while it looks nice, the historic home is well dwarfed by the addition; and he commented that moving the house back is something that he could consider given the area that it is in and considering the vibration from the Tienken corridor.

Ms. Lyons thanked Mr. Putman and Mr. Latozas for coming in and commented that the drawings are very helpful for the Commission to be able to give feedback. She suggested a redesign that does not overwhelm the house and make it feel like as one is coming up the hill that the roofline makes it appear as there is another house on top. She suggested the possibility of a one-story connection instead of a two-story connection, so that anything bigger was set into the back. She commented that while she personally loves porches, the porches as presented make it stick out even farther and takes away from the character she would expect to see from that particular kind of house. She asked what the intention was for the rear portion of the house.

Ms. Kidorf responded that it is proposed to be demolished and it is just the two-story portion that is a part of the current plan.

Mr. Latozas responded that they did a thorough investigation into the structural soundness of not only the home but the foundations. He explained that the front two-story portion is built pretty well and is structurally sound, and they feel that it can be lifted and moved 40 feet back to a new location out of the right of way and conforming to setbacks. He noted that the foundation, walls and roof are failing in the back portion; and he stated that there is not a lot of structural capacity of that structure to be saved. He explained that their intent is to save the front two-story portion, move it back into a conforming location that is safe and then add an addition to where the existing one story portion is set.

He explained that Mr. Putman wants to save the materials from the second portion and use whatever is viable for parts of the addition or as decorative items within the addition to champion that part of the building within the living area or kitchen. He stressed that saving that portion would be a stretch without taking it apart piece by piece, replacing what is wrong, and then putting it back together, rebuilding it stick by stick. He commented that he appreciated the information and feedback being given as it is invaluable.

Mr. Putman stated that he would love for the Museum to take this house and leave it right where it is and save it, but he cannot do that as it is in the right-of-way. He explained that there are two additions and the first is comprised of two-by-twelve boards that are just nailed to the beams and would not conform to code. He noted that there is no foundation under the second addition. He stated that he had five builders and the City come out and every one said that they should be torn down. He commented that he already has a lot of money into that house and has gotten nowhere. He agreed that the house should be saved, but stated that a resident cannot be asked to try to save something like that as they will put twice as much money into it than they will get out of it.

He explained that this is the third architect that he has had, and this one has come up with some really nice plans. He invited the Commission to come out and go through the house. He stated that he did not realize when he bought it that it was in the right-of-way; and he noted that it has been flooded out, including the hot water, heat, plumbing and drywall. He stated that he had to remove all of the drywall and insulation, and then saw the way the electrical was done. He noted that there is no foundation under the back at all and it is leaning out a bit.

He added that the whole roof structure would have to be changed, and things were done in 1860 that you cannot do now. He stressed that he is getting old and has no choice. He stated that he offered it to Pat McKay, but Mr. McKay was not interested in moving it across the road to Museum property.

Ms. Kidorf noted that Mr. Putman withdrew plans for the barn and the other outbuildings.

Mr. Putman responded that he was waiting for the Commission's comments and noted that the barn is not on his property and is completely on the road right-of-way and the house sits on the right-of-way. He stated that there is not much left of the sheds.

Ms. Kidorf asked how long Mr. Putman has owned the property.

Mr. Putman responded that he purchased it in 1985.

Ms. Lyons asked if the architect had any questions based on the Commission's comments regarding what they are looking for to be in compliance with Department of Interior Standards.

Ms. Latozas asked if he could review his notes briefly. He commented that it appears that the Commission thinks that the scale of the addition being proposed is too grandiose and needs to be scaled back to limit the view of the addition from the road and let the existing portion of the building stand for itself and be the example of its historical architecture, letting the addition hide itself in the trees in the rear. He had a number of questions regarding rehabilitation of the existing two-story. He asked if the windows and doors could be replaced in the same design color, and commented that he was confident that the siding could be repaired and saved. He asked if it was appropriate to put a stone veneer on a concrete footing for the new foundation.

Ms. Kidorf responded that if the windows and doors are deteriorated beyond repair the color is not as much of a concern as the profile and profile materials. She stated that she did not know if a stone veneer would be required since it would be a new foundation.

Ms. Lyons noted that there is one line in the standards that talks about maintaining the character and the look, and stated that this is the key as to what they are looking for. She commented that she would be open to looking at something taller if the addition was farther back and did not appear overpowering.

Chairperson Thompson concurred, stating that having a little space for the connection would add confirmation that it is a historic home with a new addition. He added that landscaping could hide the house a bit.

Mr. Putman stated that he also would need to know what he can do with the barn, as he is concerned he will put a lot of money into it and the Road Commission could come and tear it down to widen the road.

Chairperson Thompson stated that the Road Commission would have to come to the HDC. He noted that there are no plans whatsoever that they are aware of to widen Tienken Road.

Mr. Putman stated that he would love to see the hill cut down a bit for the kids who try to walk on that side of the road.

Mr. McLeod displayed a map showing how the property lines are positioned up and down Tienken. He commented that it is unlikely that the Road Commission would come through to take the barn out absent of any expansion plans for Tienken, and stressed that there are none. He stated that ultimately as a part of any improvement to the site, the expectation or hope would be that the barn would shift backwards closer to the other barns in the back.

Mr. Putman asked if there would be an acceptable location elsewhere on the site for the barn, and noted that there is a large walnut tree, two sheds and a three-seater outhouse. He asked if it might be possible as he has some property in the woods.

Mr. McLeod responded that one of the conversations that could be had is whether there is an acceptable location elsewhere on the site for the barn and if it should need to be moved. He stated that if the site is to redevelop in some fashion the hope would be that there is a new home to assure the barn stays as a part of the overall collection of buildings on the site.

Chairperson Thompson asked Ms. Kidorf if it would be an issue to move the barn to a different part of the site as long as it stayed intact.

Ms. Kidorf responded that it would be perfectly reasonable for the Commission to consider moving the barn especially if the house is moving back as well. She noted that she would like to add into the discussion the connecting addition and suggested that perhaps it could look similar to the current addition.

Ms. Lyons stated that she is not clear on the original floor plan of the house and what portion is being moved, and suggested this be made more clear for the next round of discussion.

Mr. McLeod suggested that for future submittals it would be helpful if the proposal shows the square footage of the existing building, the square footage of what will be preserved, and the square footage of the resulting building to provide some context of scale.

Mr. Putman offered that he had some interior photos of the existing building.

Mr. Latozas and Mr. Putman thanked the Commissioners for their input and feedback.

Discussed