

<b>COA # 2010-COA-104 (ONS)</b>	<b>INDIANAPOLIS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT</b>	<b>Hearing Date MAY 5, 2010</b>
<b>1223-1225 N Central Ave OLD NORTHSIDE</b>		NEW CASE
<b>Applicant mailing address:</b>	<b>A2SO4 ARCHITECTURE, LLC FOR INDIANA LANDMARKS</b> 300 South Meridian Street, Suite 250 Indianapolis, IN 46225	
<b>Owner:</b>	<b>Indiana Landmarks</b> 340 West Michigan Street Indianapolis, IN 46202	Center Township Council District: 9 Jackie Nytes
<b>CASE</b>		
<b>IHPC COA: 2010-COA-104 (ONS)</b> • Demolish a commercial building.		
<b>STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval</b>		

<b>STAFF COMMENTS</b>
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**Background of the Property**

This commercial building was built in 1948 for the Indianapolis Furnace Company. Since 1969 city directories indicate the building was split into two separate addresses. Various commercial uses existed in the south half of the building while the furnace company continued to use the north half of the building until a few years ago. The building is currently vacant.

It is a freestanding one-story concrete block structure with a flat roof, 4” limestone front façade, a row of fixed wood windows which are probably not original, and two mismatched metal doors facing Central. A metal coping tops the parapet wall running along all four sides of the building. The building is approximately 50 ft wide x 112 ft long sited on a 50 ft wide x 208 ft lot with a 20 foot front yard setback and a zero foot side yard setback.

**History of the Site**

Sanborn Map research suggests that this site may have been vacant until the Furnace Co. built on it in 1948. In 1887 (our oldest Sanborn Map), this site was part of a very large lot for a large house at the corner of Central Avenue and 13<sup>th</sup> Street. By 1898, the large lot was divided into three lots. The large house was removed and three houses were built. However, the subject lot remained empty, except for two very small, unexplained accessory buildings at the rear. The 1915 Sanborn Map shows the lot still empty, with even the small accessory buildings gone.

**Request for Demolition**

Indiana Landmarks is requesting to demolish the existing commercial structure, which it recently purchased. Indiana Landmarks plans to expand their parking. Demolishing the structure would allow for increased project development and increased off-street parking. An application for future site development will be forthcoming.

**Evaluation of the Demolition Request / Old Northside Preservation Plan**

The demolition guidelines in the Old Northside Historic Area Preservation Plan were written specifically to help retain as many of the historically significant residential structures throughout the neighborhood as possible.

Staff’s evaluation is as follows:

- **Condition:** Some of the storefront glass has been broken out but the building has been boarded up and secured as needed. The building has no Health & Hospital orders on it and it seems to be in stable condition. The wood storefront windows are exhibiting signs of deterioration. Some water damage is evident on the exterior. Aerial photography shows water standing on the flat roof which could have contributed to the water damage. The property has been vacant for over a year.

- **Significance:** This 62 year old building is an example of mid-century modern design. However, there is nothing unique or outstanding about it. Other than the limestone facing material, it lacks the architectural detailing, craftsmanship and quality of materials that might otherwise warrant further consideration. Given the fact that this building is out of character with its historic surroundings, there is nothing about the building that would merit retaining it on its own design merits.
- **Contribution to the Historic Character:** When the building was built, it was an intrusion into the residential character of the surrounding neighborhood. As a commercial building, it is out of character with the surrounding historically residential environment.
- **Feasibility of Renovation:** The site is zoned D-8, residential, although the commercial building was built in 1948 with a variance. The Old Northside Plan does not recommend commercial use for this site. While some previously commercial buildings have potential for conversion to residential, this building offers little to no reasonable potential.
- **Additions:** The existing structure was built with a zero foot sideyard setback. The only type of additions that could be made would be to the back or on top of the existing building. Any modifications to the building to give it a residential use would be out of character with the Old Northside's Victorian housing stock and period of historic architectural significance from 1848 to 1930.
- **Replacement:** This building warrants removal on its own merits, even without consideration of what will replace it. Even if the site is left vacant, its removal will benefit the neighborhood by removing a 62 year intrusion that has not gained in architectural and historical significance over time.

**Justification for Demolition**

This request for demolition is justified for the following reasons:

1. This existing building does not contribute to the historic character of the Old Northside.
2. The building is a commercial intrusion into an otherwise residential setting.
3. Removal is consistent with the Old Northside Plan, which encourages “...removal of incompatible non-historic land uses which damage the historic and residential character of the Old Northside.’
4. Evidence suggests this site was vacant until the construction of the one story building in 1948.
5. This building lacks historic and architectural significance.
6. This building does not merit restoration and reuse.
7. The effect of the removal of this building on the historic fabric of the area would be insubstantial, and possibly beneficial.

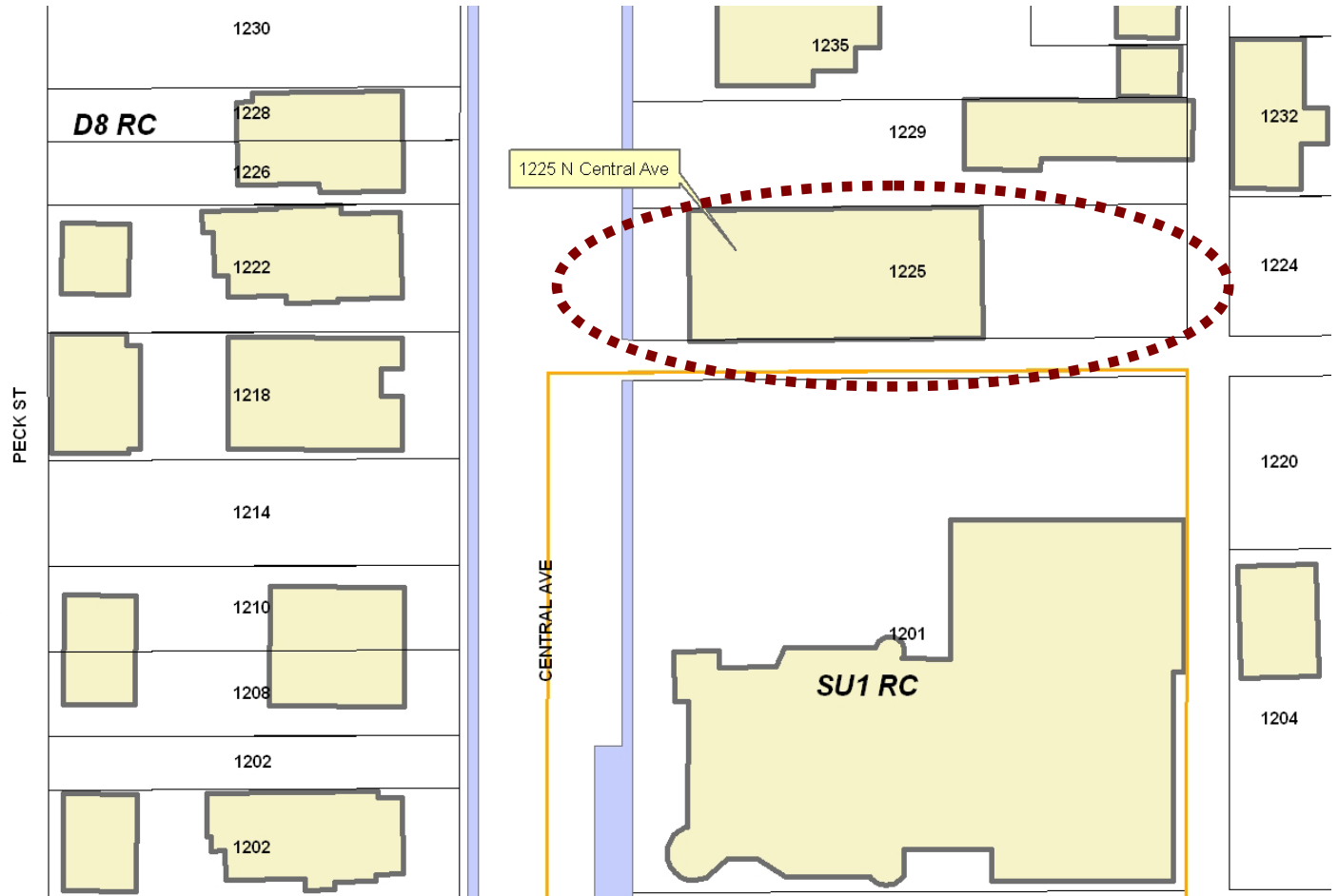
**STAFF RECOMMENDED MOTION**

**COA #2010-COA-104 (ONS):**

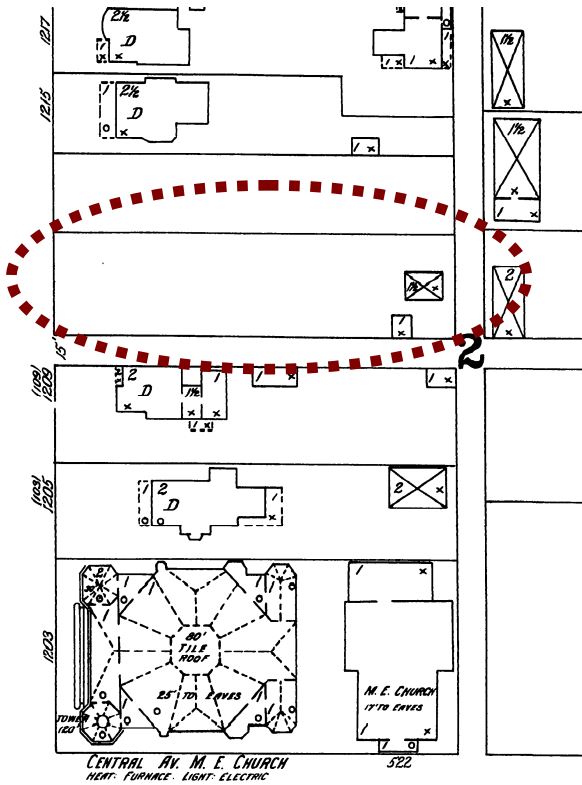
**To approve a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish a commercial building; per submitted documentation and subject to the following stipulations:**

1. **The foundation, slab and footings as well as any other building materials must be completely removed from the site and disposed of properly. All debris must be removed from the site and the site shall be restored in conformance with City ordinances.**
2. **Once the lot is vacant, it shall not be paved, fenced or used for any purpose other than landscaping until approval is granted by the IHPC for other development.**

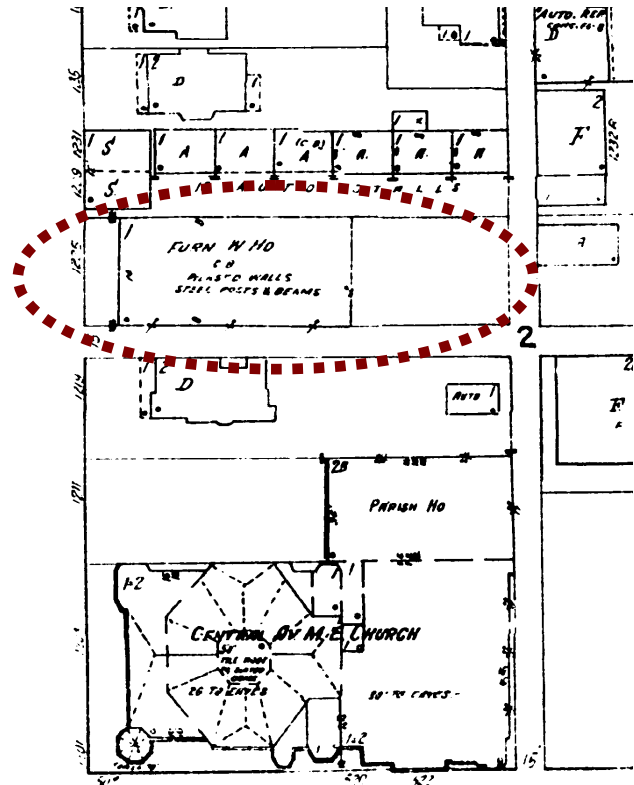
**Staff Reviewer:** Ann Steadham



Map showing existing relationship of commercial building to surrounding structures



1898 Sanborn Map



1956 Sanborn Map



**Aerial photo of building looking north**



**Aerial photo of building looking west toward back of building**



**Photo of one story commercial structure that is the subject of this demolition request**



**Photo of building looking south toward front facade**



**Photo of front façade (Storefront exhibits signs of modification over time)**



**Close up of condition of front facade**