

CASE # 2011-COA-076 (WP)	INDIANAPOLIS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT	Hearing Date JUNE 1, 2011
837 Woodruff Place Middle Drive WOODRUFF PLACE		NEW CASE
Applicant: CHRISTINA COOK mailing address: 837 Middle Drive Indianapolis, IN 46201		Center Township Council District: 16 Brian Mahern
Owner: Same as above		
CASE		
IHPC COA: 2011-COA-076 (WP) Demolish historic accessory structure		
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval		

STAFF COMMENTS

Background of the Property

The property located at 837 Middle Drive has a single-family two-story house built c. 1895 with a detached accessory structure. The rear building looks to be made up of an historic one-car garage built c. 1915 and a smaller shed built prior to 1956. These two historic structures were combined and converted into a separate dwelling unit by a previous owner prior to district designation. The owner believes, through conversations with neighbors, that two separate fires occurred in the combined accessory structure prior to their current ownership. The current owners purchased the property in October 2001.

Condition of the Structure

The existing detached accessory structure has had many modifications to the original configuration of openings and exterior materials of the separate original historic structures. After the first fire, that looks to have occurred in the original garage, a significant portion of the roof framing was reconstructed. After the second fire, interior repairs were not pursued, and the structure was no longer used as a dwelling. The building is still in an extreme state of disrepair. Staff noted the following conditions that still exist today:

1. Partial roof structural failure including large holes in the roof surface, several roof rafters have significant fire damage warranting replacement
2. Eave and fascia board deterioration evident on exterior of garage
3. Water damage and rot to portions of the structural framing exists
4. Interior raised floor over garage floor slab has caved in causing additional structural failure to the wall systems above
5. Damage to the original foundation retaining walls has occurred
6. Original Dutch lap siding on garage is covered over with aluminum siding on one side and insulbrick on two other sides. Existing shed portions of structure is covered with non-historic wood shakes in a staggered pattern. Overall condition of original exterior siding material is unknown.
7. Historic garage doors are missing and the original opening has been filled in with framing members to close off access to the garage from the alley
8. None of the existing windows or pedestrian doors look to be original to the structure

Demolition Request

The applicant is requesting to demolish the existing fire damaged accessory structure. No repairs have occurred on the accessory structure for at least ten years and the building remains in the same condition it

was in shortly after the last fire. Repeated attempts to cover the holes in the roof with tarps and plywood have deteriorated and fallen off in the time that has elapsed. In March 2010, the property owners received a Notice of Violation from the Marion County Health Department, citing the poor condition of the roof, soffits, rafters, and exterior siding. Indiana Landmarks holds a covenant on this property.

Future Plans

The applicant is planning to build a new two-car detached garage on the same site in the near future. The applicant has chosen to delay the new construction request and present fully designed plans at a future Commission hearing, dependent upon the decision of the Commission on the demolition request.

Certificate of Authorization

The State statute states: "... *the commission shall issue a certificate of authorization... [if it] finds an application to be inappropriate, but that its denial would result in substantial hardship or deprive the owner of all reasonable use and benefit of the subject property, or that its effect upon the historic area would be insubstantial.*"

Woodruff Place Historic Preservation Plan

The Woodruff Place Plan states the following with regard to the demolition of an historic structure:

"The IHPC shall approve a Certificate of Appropriateness or Authorization for demolition...if it finds one or more of the following:"

1. Condition. *"The structure poses an immediate and substantial threat to the public safety."*
2. Significance. *"The historic or architectural significance of the structure or part thereof is such that, in the Commission's opinion, it does not contribute to the historic character of the structure and the district, or the context thereof."*
3. Replacement. *"The demolition is necessary to allow new development which, in the Commission's opinion, is of greater significance to the preservation of the district than is retention of the structure, or portion thereof for which demolition is sought, and/or"*
4. Economics. *"The structure or property cannot be put to any reasonable economically beneficial use for which it is or may be reasonable adapted without approval of demolition."*

Justification for Approval

Staff believes the demolition of the garage is justified by the criteria in the Woodruff Place Plan. The condition of the structure, along with the lack of historic significance, and the replacement issues warrants demolition. In order to repair the fire damaged structure the applicant would need to:

- Replace the fire damaged structural roof and wall framing members,
- Disconnect the body of the garage from the existing shed structure,
- Remove the non-historic siding material and reinstall new exterior wood siding where removed during the dwelling unit conversion to match the original,
- Replace/ repair any fire damaged original siding material,
- Install new windows and doors to match the original configurations,
- Remove the interior floor blocking vehicular access to the garage, and
- Reintroduce a replicated set of garage doors,

Staff supports the demolition request based on the following:

- The condition of the structure is severely compromised. A significant amount of the original historic material is missing, fire damaged, water damaged, or potentially termite damaged. The deterioration of the structure is significant enough that replacement of materials would be necessary in order to restore the structure into a sound and working order.
- Over the years the combined accessory structure has lost a lot of its original historic significance. All of the original doors and windows were replaced and/or reconfigured at some point in the past. The

conversion of the structure to a separate dwelling removed large sections of exterior siding. And finally, the fire further compromised what little historic fabric remained.

- Needed repairs of the existing original structures would result in buildings that would be constructed primarily out of new materials. Rehabilitation of the existing historic garage would result in the majority of the building being reconstructed out of new materials essentially creating a mostly new structure only able to store one small vehicle.

Indiana Landmarks and the Woodruff Place Neighborhood Association have submitted letters of support for this request (see attached). Neighbors have also expressed their support in writing for the demolition of the accessory structure.

STAFF RECOMMENDED MOTION

CASE #2011-COA-076 (WP):

To approve a Certificate of Authorization to demolish an historic accessory structure per submitted documentation and subject to the following stipulations:

1. All debris shall be removed from site within seven (7) days of substantial completion.
2. Site shall be backfilled and graded to match existing grades and seeded with grass.
3. Off-street parking requirements must be maintained per zoning ordinance. This certificate does not authorize actions in violation to state statutes or local ordinances.

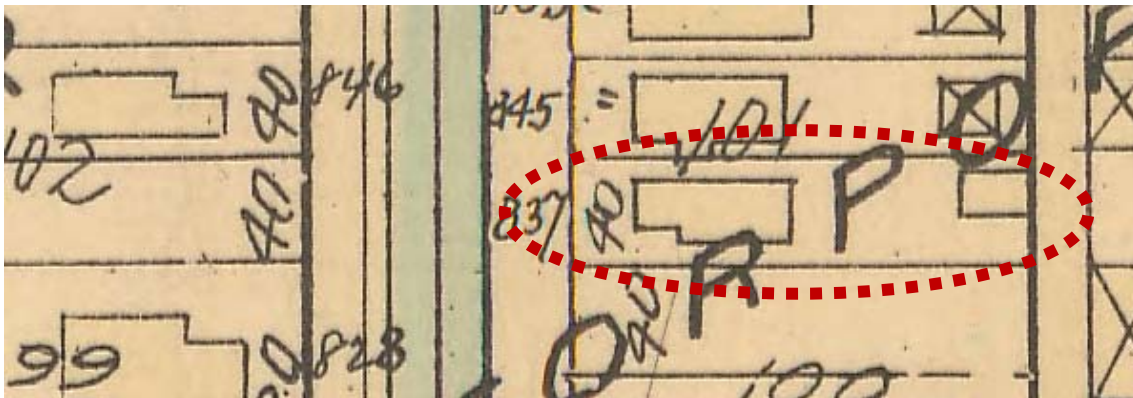
NOTE 1: This property is an Indiana Landmarks covenant property. Please contact Indiana Landmarks at 317-639-4534 to obtain necessary permissions prior to starting any project.

NOTE 2: Permits are required for this work. Please contact the Permits Division at 1200 Madison Ave, (317) 327-8700, to acquire all applicable permits prior to starting any project.

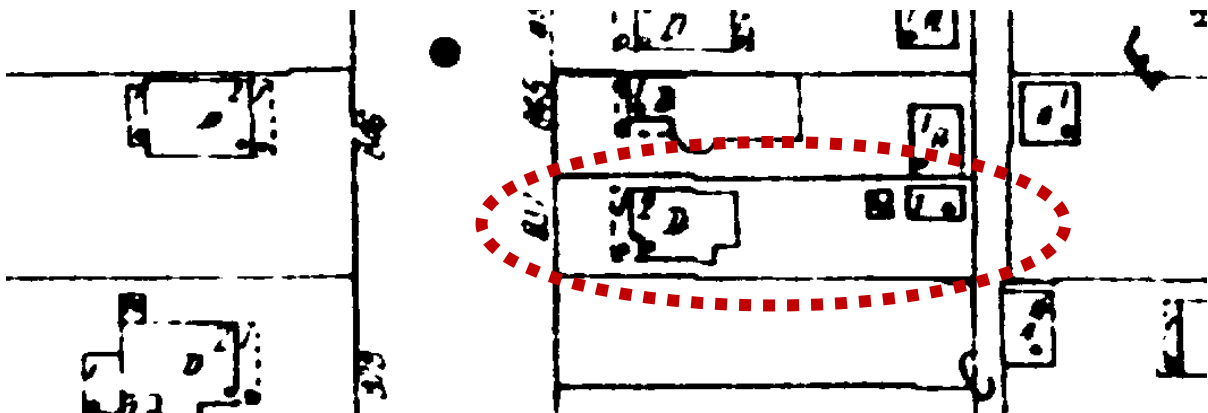
Staff Reviewer: Ann Steadham



Map of subject property



1941 Baist map showing one garage



1956 Sanborn map showing two separate accessory structures



Aerial photo looking west toward back of property



East side of historic garage taken from the alley (Note: original garage door filled in)



West side of accessory structure seen from rear yard



West side of shed structure with modified openings



Connector element between shed structure and historic garage



South side of rear historic garage with modified openings



**Photo showing existing condition of rear historic garage
(taken by staff from neighbor's yard)**



Existing metal siding on historic garage with original wood siding below



Inside of historic garage



Interior condition of exterior walls



Partial collapse of floor near exterior door



INDIANA LANDMARKS

Central Regional Office:

340 West Michigan Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46202

317 639 4534 / 800 450 4534 / www.indianalandmarks.org

May 24, 2011

Ms. Christina Cook
837 Woodruff Place Middle Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46201

Sent via e-mail to: Christina.Cook@anthem.com and cmcook2002@yahoo.com

Dear Christina,

As you know, we hold covenants on your property and review any alterations to the exterior of the house and property as a whole. I received your proposed improvement plans via e-mail on April 7th of this year. As a part of your proposed plans, you mention that you also intend to demolish the existing garage. Having inspected the structure on February 5, 2010, I found the garage to badly deteriorated by previous fire damage, water infiltration and possibly termites. In addition to this damage, severe alterations have occurred over the years thereby making it difficult to ascertain its original features. As a result, Indiana Landmarks finds your proposal to demolish the garage meets with our approval and is subject to the following conditions:

- The garage and all attached structures shall be removed as a part of this of this approval.
- A new garage (final plans yet to be submitted or approved by Indiana Landmarks) must be constructed on the site within 18 months.
- Final placement of the new garage will need to be approved prior to construction.

It should be noted that Indiana Landmarks does not normally authorize the demolition of a historic structure with which we hold protective covenants on, but in this case it is apparent that demolition would be the best option.

If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Chad Lethig
Indianapolis Preservation Coordinator, Indiana Landmarks

ecc: Ann Steadham-Ray, IHPC

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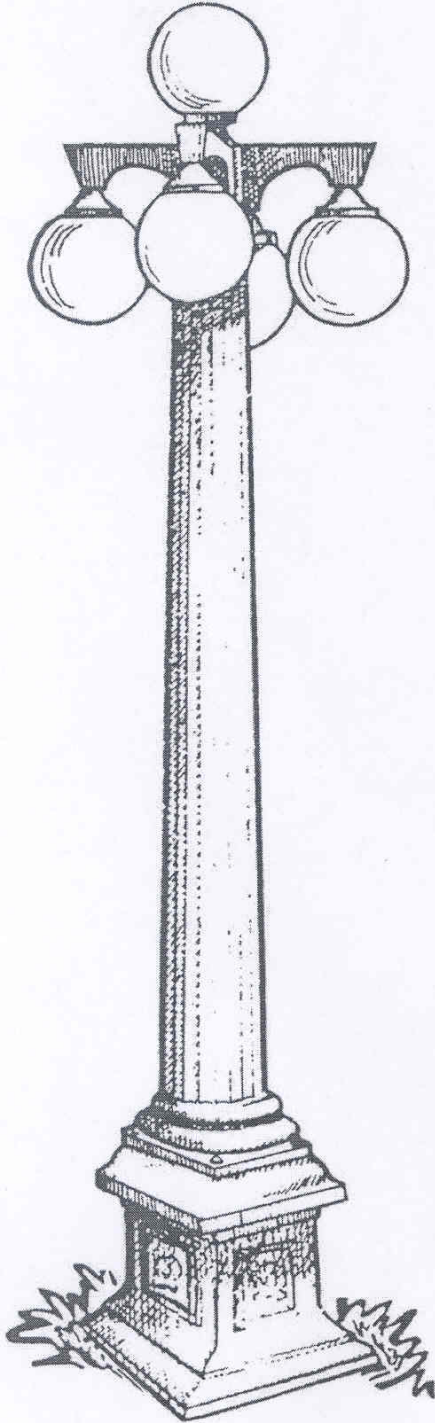
MAY 24 2011

INDIANAPOLIS HISTORIC
PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Woodruff Place Civic League, Inc.

735 Woodruff Place East Drive, Indianapolis, Indiana 46201

www.woodruffplace.com



May 24, 2011

Ms. Ann Steadham-Ray
Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission
200 East Washington Street, Suite 1801
Indianapolis IN 46204

RE: 2011-COA-076 (WP)

Dear Ms. Steadham-Ray:

The Woodruff Place Historic Preservation Committee (WPHPC) has reviewed the request for a Certificate of Authorization to demolish an historic garage at 837 Middle Drive. We do support this petition and we look forward to seeing finalized plans for the new garage that will take its place.

Should you have any questions please feel free to call me.

Sincerely,

Brent Roberts
Chair for WPHPC

CC: Petitioner
WPHPC File

RECEIVED
MAY 25 2011
INDIANAPOLIS HISTORIC
PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Placed on the National Register of Historic Places July 31, 1972

Letter of Support