

Case # <b>2011-COA-356 (ONS) 2011-VHP-016</b>	<b>INDIANAPOLIS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT</b>	Hearing Date <b>OCT. 5, 2011</b>
<b>1249 N Alabama St. and 229-241 E. 13<sup>th</sup> St. OLD NORTHSIDE</b>		NEW CASE
<b>Applicant: DAVE GIBSON WITH A3 DESIGN</b> mailing address: 5150 N. Delaware Street Indianapolis, IN 46205 <b>Owner: Deeper Life Christian Church, Inc</b> mailing address: 3300 N Nebraska Ave Tampa, FL 33603		Center Township Council District: 9 Jackie Nytes
<b>COMBINED CASE</b>		
<b>IHPC COA: 2011-COA-092 (ONS)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site improvements at 229-241 E 13<sup>th</sup> Street for a parking lot</li> <li>• Variances at 1249 N Alabama and 229/241 E 13th</li> </ul>		
<b>Variances:</b> <u>1249 N Alabama:</u> <b>2011-VHP-016</b> Variance Of Development Standards of the D-8 Zoning Ordinance to allow: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Floor Area Ratio of 1.725079687 when a maximum ratio of .60 is required.</li> <li>• Open Space Ratio of 0.13568219 when a minimum ratio of 1.180 is required.</li> <li>• Livability Space Ratio of 0.13568219 when a minimum of .660 is required.</li> <li>• Major Livability Space Ratio of 5.69782 when a minimum ratio .110 is required.</li> <li>• Total Car Ratio of zero when 1.0 is required.</li> </ul> <u>229 and 241 E. 13<sup>th</sup> Street:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Variance of use to allow a parking lot as a primary use on a D-8 zoned site.</li> <li>2. Variance of Development Standards to allow: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less maneuverability space on-site then required as per the D-8 zoning district development requirements</li> <li>• Less screening and landscaping then required</li> </ul> </li> </ol>		
<b>STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval with stipulations</b>		

<b>STAFF COMMENTS</b>
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**Waiver of Notice**

The applicant sent notice two-days after the required notice deadline. Therefore, a waiver of notice is being requested.

**Background of the Properties**

These properties are on opposite sides of N. Alabama St., but for many years have been owned together.

1249 N Alabama – The Church Building

The church was constructed c. 1895 as the second location of the former Friends Church. It contains fine Romanesque Revival detailing, including terra cotta insets, wheel windows, round arch and jack arch lintels. The Friends sold the church in 1955 and since then there have been several owners. Presently, the building is owned by Deeper Life Christian Church, Inc., and is zoned D-8. The church has been underutilized and vacant for years. It is in poor condition and actively deteriorating.

229-241 E 13<sup>th</sup> – The Parking Lot

These two lots create an “L” shaped site that was originally occupied by three houses. The houses were removed sometime between 1956 and 1962 and paved for a parking lot, in all likelihood for the Church across the street. A 1962 aerial photography shows parking. The lots presently are paved, but in poor condition.

## **Proposed COA Request**

The applicant is proposing to convert the existing church structure into affordable housing (27 units). The applicant needs variances to convert the structure into housing as well as variances to use the lot across the street at 229/241 E. 13<sup>th</sup> Street as parking. No exterior work to the church structure is proposed at this time.

## **Variances Requested for the Church Building at 1249 N Alabama:**

Variance Of Development Standards of the D-8 Zoning Ordinance to allow:

- Floor Area Ratio of 1.725079687 when a maximum ratio of .60 is required.
- Open Space Ratio of 0.13568219 when a minimum ratio of 1.180 is required.
- Livability Space Ratio of 0.13568219 when a minimum of .660 is required.
- Major Livability Space Ratio of 5.69782 when a minimum ratio .110 is required.
- Total Car Ratio of zero when 1.0 is required.

The church building is zoned D-8, which permits the multi-family use being envisioned. However, because it was not originally built for housing, it needs to meet contemporary development standards if it is converted. Because of the building type and the fact that it covers the site, it is impossible to meet most of the development standards without demolishing all or part of the historic building and starting over again. As an example, there is no way to provide open space or parking on site without seriously damaging the historic integrity of the church building.

## **Variances Requested for the Parking Lot 229-241 E. 13<sup>th</sup> Street:**

1. Variance of Use to allow a parking lot as a primary use on a D-8 zoned site.
2. Variance of Development Standards to allow:
  - Less maneuverability space on-site then required as per the D-8 zoning district development requirements
  - Less screening and landscaping then required

The church building is an architectural landmark in the neighborhood. Saving it from deteriorating further will probably require finding a new use, and any new use will need parking. While this parking lot is not ideal, it does provide sufficient parking to justify re-using the church building without having to create any new parking in the neighborhood. It is reasonable to grant a Variance of Use to allow this site to be used for parking for the use of residents of the church building for these reasons:

- The site is currently paved with asphalt and has been used as a parking lot  $\pm$  50 years.
- Granting the variance will result in physical improvements to the parking lot.
- Granting the variance will not result in any expansion of the parking lot.
- Retaining the parking lot should have no significant negative effect on any surrounding properties, since it has been there for  $\pm$  50 years.
- The parking lot has been associated with the church building for many years before the Old Northside was designated a historic district.
- There has never been a variance granted to allow this use, but there may be an argument for supporting a legal non-conforming use certificate since the parking appears to have existed since before the 1969 zoning ordinance.

Staff and the applicant have discussed the possibility and functionality of parking agreements with owners of existing parking lots such as the Knights of Columbus. The applicant has reached agreements with other owners for use of additional parking. However, the location of the primary parking across from the site is a critical element to the success of the development.

## **Parking Lot Design**

Currently, the site consists of deteriorated asphalt and metal bollards that are not maintained. A few large street trees also exist. Two light poles illuminate the site. The proposed redesign of the site includes new asphalt, striping, ground cover, hedges, metal open-style fencing, wooden privacy fencing, and trees. A new section of privacy fencing will be added so that all sides except those facing streets will be screened by a

privacy fence. The plan also shows a hedge at the east end of the site for additional screening as well as a new tree near the front (by Alabama Street).

Staff believes four aspects of the site plan need to be looked at closer:

1. A 6 foot tall ornamental open-metal fence is proposed along Alabama St. and 13<sup>th</sup> St. Although the zoning ordinance allows a 6 foot tall open-style metal fence at the front of a parking area, staff believes a 42 inch high fence will be more compatible with the kinds of front yard fences seen in the surrounding residential areas.
2. Additional shrubs and other landscape screens should be included to provide extra screening.
3. The existing bollards are not shown on the plan, but staff believes they should remain along the south side of the site adjacent to the neighboring house.
4. Staff drove the site in a standard size vehicle to see how usable the site would be with the proposed layout of 16 spaces. Maneuverability is an issue on the site largely because there is only one entrance/exit. Staff does not believe it is appropriate to add a second entrance to the site to solve this issue. However, the angled parking spaces and one accessible parking space are angled such that the driver will have to drive backwards to exit the parking lot. Staff believes the layout should be further studied to see if there is a way to improve the situation, even if it means losing a parking spot.

**Old Northside Preservation Plan**

The Plan does not give a lot of guidance for parking lots. Although parking lots are not encouraged, the Plan seems to anticipate that they will be built and provides some guidance:

- There is a recommendation to avoid *“Destroying the relationship of buildings and their environments by ...introducing poorly designed and poorly located new... parking lots... .”*
- The Parking Guidelines appear to anticipate the need for parking by stating: *“The demand for parking space in the Old Northside will increase as vacant properties are restored and occupied [and] new buildings are built... .”*
- The need for residential parking was anticipated: *“The shortage of land in some parts of the Old Northside for residential off-street parking has increased the need for well designed and well located residential parking.”*

**Approval with Stipulations**

Staff supports the variances particularly since the granting of the variances will make the development of the church structure more feasible, but only if the changes mentioned in the report are made. Staff believes these are small but meaningful changes that will positively impact the site development.

**STAFF RECOMMENDED MOTION**

**Case #2011-COA-356 (ONS):**

**To approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for variances of development standards for 1249 N Alabama St. and 229-241 E. 13<sup>th</sup> St. and for re-development of an existing parking lot with site improvements as per submitted documentation and subject to the following stipulation:**

**A final site and landscape plan must be submitted to IHPC staff for final approval showing the changes directed by the IHPC at its October 5, 2011 meeting. *Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_***

**NOTE: The above stipulation must be satisfied prior to the issuance of any building permits.**

**Variances-2011-VHP-016:**

**To approve the following variances:**

**For 1249 N Alabama:**

**Variance Of Development Standards of the D-8 Zoning Ordinance to allow:**

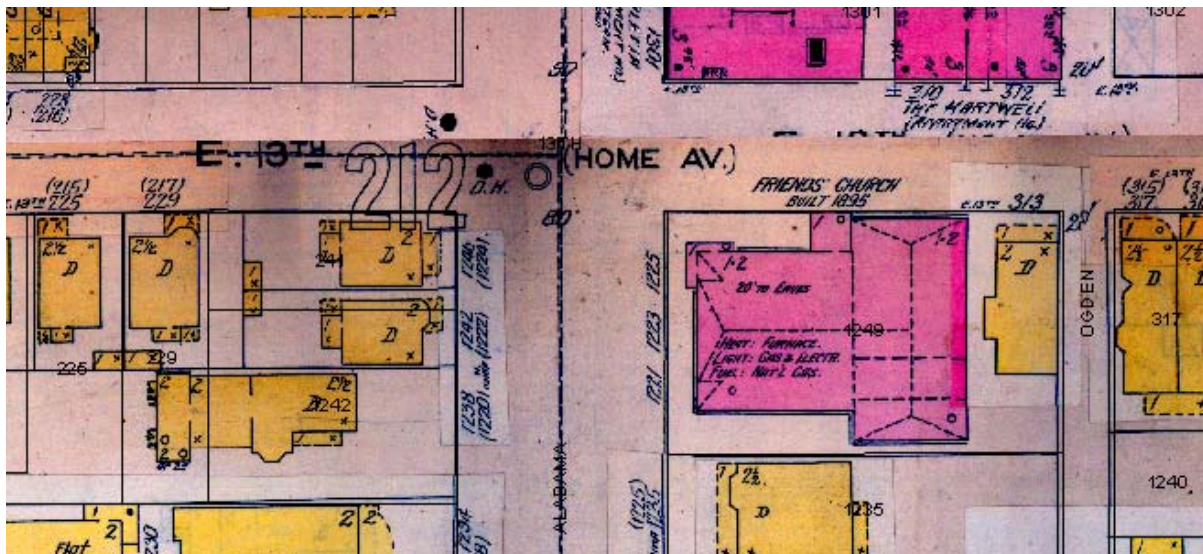
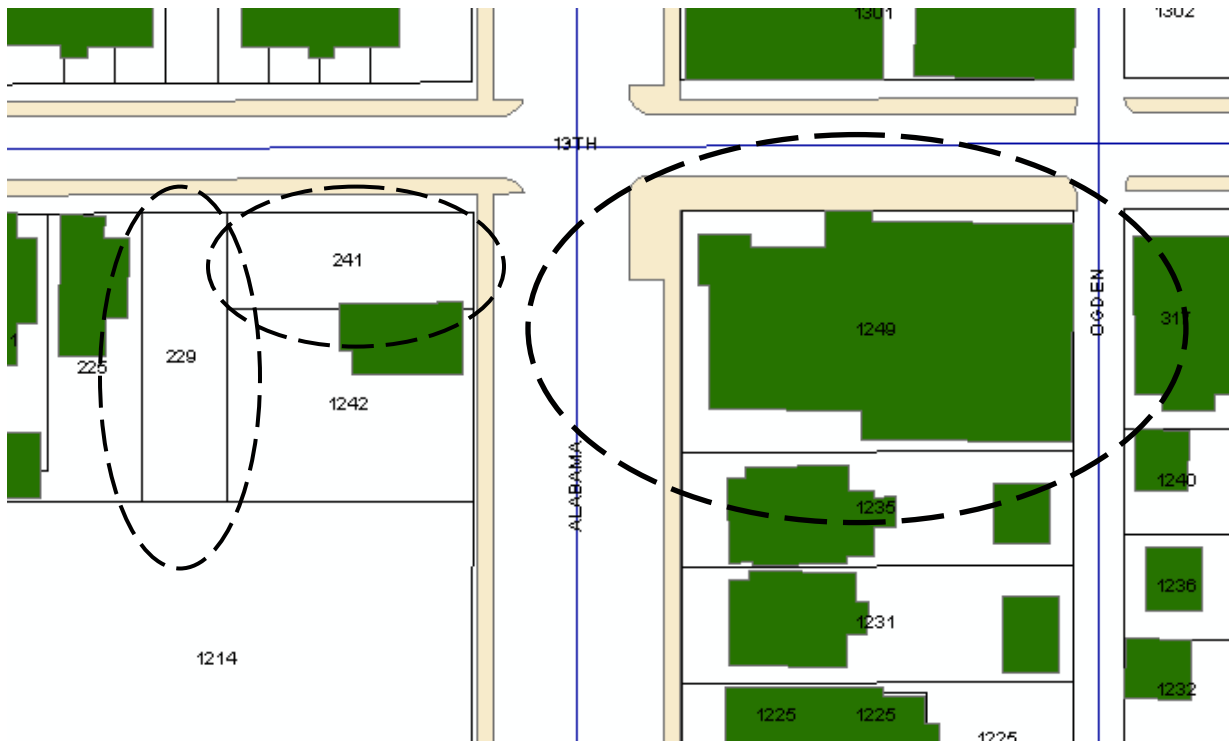
- **Floor Area Ratio of 1.725079687 when a maximum ratio of .60 is required.**
- **Open Space Ratio of 0.13568219 when a minimum ratio of 1.180 is required.**

- Livability Space Ratio of 0.13568219 when a minimum of .660 is required.
- Major Livability Space Ratio of 5.69782 when a minimum ratio .110 is required.
- Total Car Ratio of zero when 1.0 is required.

**For 229 and 241 E. 13<sup>th</sup> Street:**

1. Variance of use to allow a parking lot as a primary use on a D-8 zoned site.
2. Variance of Development Standards to allow:
  - a. Less maneuverability space on-site then required as per the D-8 zoning district development requirements
  - b. Less screening and landscaping then required

**Staff Reviewer:** Meg Purnsley



**1898 Sanborn of the church structure and the three houses on the parking lot site.**

