

TO: Oklahoma City Historic Preservation Commission

FROM: Heritage Hills (Historical Preservation, Inc.) Design Review Committee

MEETING DATE: June 5, 2024

Comments from the neighborhood. These include comments generated at a meeting with representatives from Jefferson Park, Mesta Park and Paseo regarding issues in those neighborhoods that have an impact across the districts.

HPCA-24-00023 at 424 NW 27th Street

Heritage Hills agrees with Jefferson Park that there is no evidence that this historic house or garage apartment needs demolition. The units were occupied as recently as several years ago and were bought by the current owner over 14 years ago. Any deterioration is due to neglect by the present owner and needs to be repaired. The house was well constructed and is an integral part of the historic district. Failure to maintain a structure is not grounds for demolition, and granting such a request will only encourage more poor maintenance of historic structures. We urge denial with prejudice.

JEFFERSON PARK NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION

PO BOX 60612 OKLAHOMA CITY OK 73146



June 2, 2024

Historic Preservation Commission

City of Oklahoma City

To: Commissioners

Re: 424 NW 27th Street HPCA-24-00023

We are writing to advocate for the preservation of the historic structures at 424 NW 27th street, rather than their demolition.

As stewards of our community's heritage, your commission plays a vital role in safeguarding our architectural legacy and promoting sustainable development practices.

Historical Significance: The historic home in question, though currently clad in white vinyl siding, still represents a unique piece of our local history, showcasing historic design elements. Preserving this home would maintain a tangible link to our past for future generations to appreciate.

Environmental Impact: Renovating an existing structure is inherently more sustainable than demolition and new construction. By preserving the historic home, we reduce waste, conserve resources, and minimize the carbon footprint associated with new builds.

Current state of structures: The current Texas based owner, purchased the property in 2009. Any neglect to maintenance of the buildings which allowed them to substantially deteriorate is the fault of the current owner. It may be costly to restore the structures, but deferring maintenance does not exempt the owner from curing the faults. JPNA has restored many historic properties in Jefferson Park and most all issues that these structures could be suffering from can be remediated.

Community impact: If these structures are allowed to be demolished, it seems very likely that the owners will pursue building with greater density than the existing structures. This block already hosts two 8 plex apartment buildings on each end, while the remainder is filled with Bungalow style homes. Keeping the existing structures and density is the right thing to do for the neighbors.

In light of these considerations, we urge the Historic Preservation Commission to prioritize the restoration of this historic property as a valuable asset to our community's cultural and architectural landscape and to not approve it for demolition.

Respectfully,

David Bigham

David Bigham

President- Jefferson Park Neighbors (JPNA)

From: Frantz, Ron

Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 12:34 PM

To: Kathryn Friddle (kathryn.friddle@okc.gov) <kathryn.friddle@okc.gov>

Cc: Tammy Donnell [REDACTED]

Subject: Concern about proposed demolition of 424 N.W. 27th Street, Jefferson Park Neighborhood, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Dear Katie,

I send this e-mail to you due to my concern for the proposed demolition of 424 N.W. 27th Street, Jefferson Park Neighborhood, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

For 40 years, I have heard of this house from my former neighbor, current Paseo resident, and current friend, Tammy Donnell. She talked about how her grandfather built this house. He and her grandmother lived there for many years. She talked about how her dad, grandfather, and relatives built the detached garage and garage apartment to the rear of the building. I will let her cover more of that story as she has the details.

I write to you about the potential loss of this from the architecture, planning, and historic preservation perspectives.

First, this house is in the Jefferson Park Neighborhood, which is only 1 of 7 Historic Preservation Districts in Oklahoma City.

Second, this house is in the Jefferson Park Historic District that is part of the National Register of Historic Places. When the nomination was prepared, this property was considered a contributing property. The Period of Significance for this area is 1905-1959. It seems the construction date of this house falls within this time period. This is listed as # 134 and #136 on the list of properties. The excerpt from the nomination is as follows:

"134 & 136 424 Northwest 27th. 1917. This is a one-story National Folk frame house with a steep roof and boxed eaves that have been covered with vinyl soffits. The full width dropped roof front porch

may not be original. The original porch columns have been replaced with wrought iron supports and railing. The entrance is off center. The foundation is made of rusticated concrete block. There is a

garage apartment in the rear. (Photo #152)" NOTE: The date on the National Register listing states 1917. On the Oklahoma County Assessor's Property List, the date is noted as 1909 which would make it one of the oldest remaining houses in the area.

Since 1995 (submission of the nomination), it looks like there have been some other alterations. However, the basic house is still there.

Further research on the house, using Virginia Savage McAlester's *A Field Guide to American Houses*, reveals that this may fall into the category of the "Folk Victorian" type of house that was constructed

roughly between 1870 and 1910. NOTE: On the National Register nomination this is noted as “National Folk” which just further defines the house. The important factor here is that it has a prominent “pyramidal roof” covering the roughly square floor plan. This is not a common roof type in this area of town. In most places, this roof type would pre-date the Arts & Crafts or Craftsman bungalows and the later brick English-inspired cottages.

From the Oklahoma County Assessor’s Property List, the floor plans show that this property has the following:

- A one-story frame house of approximately 1,100 square feet.
- A two-story added garage and garage apartment with:
 - 960 square feet on the first floor (most likely a double-car garage that has been converted to one or two apartments).
 - 984 square feet on the second floor (garage apartment).

This is a perfect arrangement for someone who would like to have a house with some rental income in the back units or for someone who wants a smaller house with an adjacent live/work or studio space. This is conveniently located in a historic neighborhood. It is not far from the bustling commercial districts of Uptown 23, historic Route 66, Paseo, Midtown, Asian District, Automobile Alley, and downtown.

Currently the AARP Livable Communities information promotes the development of ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units) on properties that are historic or newer. This property already has this in place—that has been in place for at least 70 or 80 years.

Currently The Congress for the New Urbanism promotes increased density, walkability, and bikeability in older neighborhoods and new ones. With ADUs (or garage apartments or live/work spaces or granny flats), this is a way to insert more living units into existing neighborhoods such as Jefferson Park. In March 2022, CNU30.Oklahoma City, the annual national conference for The Congress for the New Urbanism, was held in downtown Oklahoma City. There were many tours all over the City of Oklahoma City for leading design professionals. Had this group toured this property—a historic house with a historic added structure that sits in a National Register of Historic Places District that is protected by a local Historic Preservation District—they would have immediately realized that this is absolutely the most perfect property for rehabilitation! Since it is on the National Register, any portions of this that may become rental possibly could qualify for federal and state tax incentives for rehabilitation—bonuses for the person who is doing the work. This would have had the tour group talking and dreaming!

How the original owners built and developed this property over 110 years ago is now just as relevant today. To simply scrape these buildings away would be a shame.

This 400 block, south side of N.W. 27th Street is a cohesive row of early houses that contributes to the “overall feeling” of the Jefferson Park Neighborhood. To remove this house and rear building from the middle of the block is like ripping a hole in the historic fabric of Jefferson Park. Although this fabric may appear to be a little frayed and a little worn, it is a neighborhood fabric that is durable....and can be mended for the future.

Sincerely,

Ronald H. Frantz, Jr., AIA

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTE: This e-mail message and any attachments are intended solely for the person to which it is addressed and may contain privileged and confidential information protected by law. If you have received this communication in error, please notify the sender immediately by telephone or e-mail, destroy this message and delete any copies held in your electronic files. Unauthorized use and/or re-disclosure may subject you to penalties under applicable state and federal laws.