



Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission (IHPC)
Minutes

Wednesday, October 1, 2025, 5:30 P.M.
2nd Floor, Public Assembly Room, City-County Building
200 East Washington Street, Indianapolis, Indiana

Commission

Present: William A. Browne, Jr. (WB), David Baker (DB), Susan Williams (SW); Anson Keller (AK); Krystin Wiggs (KW); Michael Bivens (MB); Annie Lear (AL), and Anjanette Sivilich (AS); Disa Watson-Summers (DW).

Staff

Present: Meg Busch (MEG), Christopher Steinmetz (CS), Emily Jarzen (EJ), Shelbi Long (SL), Morgan Marmolejo (MM), Caroline Emenaker (CE) and Grace Goedeker (GG).

BUSINESS

I. CALL TO ORDER 5:30

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES 5:30

AUGUST 2025 IHPC HEARING MINUTES *Page 3*

SEPTEMBER 2025 IHPC HEARING MINUTES *Page 13*

Motion: AL

2nd: AS

Unanimous Approval

III. OLD BUSINESS – NO PUBLIC HEARING 5:31

2024-COA-356 (IRV) 5814 BEECHWOOD AVENUE *Page 21*

Motion: KW
YOVANI MONDRAGON (YM)

2nd: SW

Unanimous

Approval

Violation correction deadline extension.

SL: This is for a violation case the commission saw last July. They have started the corrections but they are waiting on the windows they ordered so they are asking for a two-month extension.

55 MONUMENT CIRCLE

CIRCLE TOWER

Interior Designation update from Meg. Meg stated once the developer closes on the property, staff will be back with a request to designate the lobby and historic barber shop spaces only.

IV. NEW BUSINESS – NO PUBLIC HEARING

NONE

PUBLIC HEARING

WB: Introduces commission members and staff; reads rules of procedure

V. REQUEST TO WITHDRAW OR CONTINUE APPLICATIONS 5:37

NONE

VI. EXPEDITED CASES 5:37

2025-COA-282 (HMP) 2106 NORTH TALBOTT STREET *Page 23*

ALEC NEU (AN)

Construct new duplex.

AS: I request you look at the living room windows and adjust the head height because it sits higher than the rest.

MEG: Staff can look at that at the preconstruction meeting.

Motion: SW

2nd: DB

Unanimous Approval

VII. APPLICATIONS TO BE HEARD (CONTINUED) 5:

**2017-COA-049
AMENDMENT 8 (CAMA)**

**901 CARROLLTON AVENUE
RYAN STAUDE (RS)**

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Amend previously approved plans for Building 2.

JG: The only change we made was to move the entry and exit from tenth street to Bellefontaine and left an entry only on tenth street. Our floor plan is similar to last time but the ramping is a bit different. Everything else has stayed the same since last time. We have a few images to show the new entry/exit.

EJ: The sticking point with this project has been the entry/exit on tenth street and waiting on DPW comment. The applicant went ahead and changed the entry to what was approved previously with the entry/exit on Bellefontaine and DPW is in support of these changes.

AS: Two meetings ago we had some talk about pushing the building down and creating a sublevel. Has that been looked at?

JG: Yes we did look at that and it was somewhat problematic, but we did lower the building a little bit.

AS: There was also concern about the transparency of the garage screening have you investigated that further?

JG: Yes, we are hoping we can work that detail out at the staff level. The choices are limited but we are hoping to work with staff on the best solution for that.

WB: I am assuming we will be getting mock-ups as it progresses.

EJ: Yes, this will be subject to all the original stipulations including mock-ups.

DB: One of the issues has been the proportion of the top in comparison to the garage. I am still struggling with that. I am going to throw this out. I am suggesting a heavy cornice that helps tie it to the original building and makes the garage stand out less.

SW: David alluded to one of my three concerns. One of these was to give a nod to the historic building and it did not seem there was any attempt to do that. I suggested you beef up the planting beds to give a nod to the cultural trail which did not seem to happen. I also suggested we think about balconies to give it that interest and feel of the building having balconies on them as it is a very flat front. The answer was that Ice Miller did not want them, which we have heard before but we were able to get them put on college and people do use them. I would like to know where the no residential came from and what we as a commission can do about it.

AK: I want to circle back to AS point about the screening. We have talked about the fact that we did not want the tenth street side to be completely transparent, which is how it is shown on the elevations. There is no screening element which I feel is inappropriate, especially moving to the Monon trail.

JG: One factor is that it has a certain level of openness. We did place a park and landscape element, including a dog walk, that helps

activate the pedestrian level.

AK: I really could not support the façade as it exists.

LE: I think that rendering does not pick up the landscaping we are going to do that will help screen the garage.

AK: I think if it's a simple material change, we have concerns about lights in the garage and screening those. Since the bumper wall is required on the first floor, there is nothing to screen those at all. There needs to be something there to screen it from the public.

LE: I think we can find some precedence to work off for that. I think the landscaping on Bellefontaine is also not picked up on the rendering.

WB: Thank you for solving the vehicular circulations. Any final comments?

LE: There will be residential at Bottleworks in the last phase, and it is still a stipulation in our COA. If you think back to 2017 there was not the residential downtown that there is now. There is new residential because of this development. We are not multi-family developers and as things changed this shift to office happened.

SW: That is very good news, thank you.

WB: Can you geographically describe the last phase?

LE: At the corner of 10th Street in college, the northwest corner of the project, we'll do a development there with a central parking garage, and then wrap that with units. I think there'll be a small retail component to that as well, but primarily residential.

Meg: Yes we will work with the applicant and if we feel it is something we cannot approve then we can bring it back.

SW: I do. I'm very serious about the historic building. If nobody else thinks that's a problem.

WB: Yeah, I guess my question is for you, Susan, is, do you think David's sketch starts to address that with the scale?

SW: I think it's a start. But at the pedestrian level, there's, you know, those straight lines that we like to see, that that acknowledge the historic building. It just seems like it would be an easy thing to do, and it might be something that staff can work on. I'd be happy, but I'm the only one crabbing about it, and so if it's not a big deal to my

DB: Just to subtly make the proportions relate and breaking up the façade.

WB: I'll take a motion to approve.

Meg: Reads staff recommendation

Motion: DB

2nd: MB

Opposed: SW

Motion Passed 8-1

2025-COA-301 (CAMA)

**656 EAST ARCH STREET
ABBAY ROBERTSON (AR)**

Demolish the majority of the existing home, leaving the street facing façade & segments of the west & east walls. Reconstruct the house & enlarge building footprint & increase overall building height at rear of structure. Replace windows & doors. Repair/replace foundation where necessary. Repair/replace siding & trim where necessary. Retain original rafter tails where existing. Construct new wrap-around front porch. Demolish existing garage in its entirety & construct new 2-car garage & carriage house.

AR: We are representing our clients. On this project, the owners have

lived in CAMA for ten years. They have poured themselves into the fabric of the neighborhood. There are five letters of support from the neighbors and a letter from the CAMA Neighborhood Association. There is a petition for approval from the neighborhood. This project is for them to have a long-term home so they can stay a part of the neighborhood. They purchased the property in November and the home has been vacant for twenty years.

They want to add on enough functional space for more bedrooms and a home office including more functional spaces. We would like to point out the lot size and that we are working as a compact lot. We had to file this as a demolition which is very jarring language. We do believe in restoring historic homes and their features.

Where the addition would start is where you see that cross gable, so we are keeping the front 40 percent of the house. The reason for placing the cross gable in this location is for the staircase so it can be more central in the house. When we are dealing with the total livable square footage, it is under 2000 square feet, so we are being intentional with every foot. The second floor on the existing structure is under eight feet. This makes it not functional, so the cross gable allows us to maximize the square footage. Another consideration is maintaining greenspace in the backyard. There is only eighteen feet between the house and the garage. If we were to push this back, we would be negating that greenspace. In addition, we are proposing removing the existing garage and adding a new garage with unfinished space above. We are also proposing a front porch. We want to reopen the existing porch and adding a front porch. We included other examples of where a front porch was added where they did not exist before. We show how the original existing side porch has been enclosed and has non-historic material. There is also the fact that the house next door used to have a front porch and now it is just a stoop. Finally, the existing chimney is going to be kept. It is a little higher on our rendering, we are still working through the details as it will be a decorative chimney. The current chimney is tapered and has been modified and is no longer original. We would love to be able to remove that if the commission allows. I think there are others who want to speak on behalf of this project. This is going to be beneficial to the neighborhood. Renovations are very expensive, but it will be well invested with them staying in this neighborhood. Tonight, we are requesting approval but if the commission does not see fit to that we are requesting a continuance.

TH: I am two doors down and I am here with my neighbor. We have been dealing with this eyesore for many years. The neighborhood has changed. It used to be people who look like me and renters. Now we are getting a lot of Airbnbs, but we want these vibrant neighborhoods. We ask that you give consideration to this project.

ONGF: I agree with what Tom had to say. I think these two people are really committed to turning this neighborhood into the same thing that we had hoped had happened 30 to 40 years ago. And if you look at what we're our hair is a little bit wider than when we came aboard, or less then we came before the before a board of this nature a long time ago, hoping we could come and be allowed to create the my new home, our new over that's nice new hope Tom's variety homes that we put together. So we would just support this entire project.

TE: I am across the street from this property. I think they did a great job in covering the pros of this. We do want to have some permanent fixtures. I think if it does not turn into a long-term home it will be an

Airbnb.

PH: I am the owner of this property. I had a little less grey hair before we started this project. I know we are looking for some exemptions. We already invested a lot in this property. Part of the reason we are asking for the exemptions is to have the space to live the rest of our lives. We want to respect the architecture of the neighborhood while it is also financially feasible.

MM: Staff is recommending denial for the seven reasons outlined in the staff report. I have no additional comments.

DB: Well, your client is clearly very popular in the neighborhood but that cannot be the basis for our decision. I read the staff comments and sort of knew the house. It is not surprising to me that the condition is poor. The thing that struck me when I looked at the house and the proposed renovation is I did not get a sense of the form of the original house. I know a lot of it will go away, but I understand that may just be the case. I understand it needs to get bigger for modern use but before this meeting I went over there. I peaked in the window of the porch and there is not a whole lot of original detail on the house but along the wall there are two intact door openings with transoms and between there is an intact window with two-over-two sash. That is pretty character defining, more so than the front. I think I would say that I understand the need to be a cross-gable, but you need to try and get that to start at the end of that porch to preserve the two doors and that window. Those are the most character defining features on that. I do not have a problem with the cross gable or that it will be bulky on the back, I can maybe go along with the wrap around porch but I would like to see you try to preserve the side of that building.

AR: There is a window proposed there on the side porch. Our proposal would be to use that double sash window throughout the home, specifically adding them back on to the front of the house. Would retaining those windows but moving them to the front of the house be enough?

DB: It would be my choice to have you find a way to design this thing so you can restore that one section. The front probably had two over two windows. I guess I would need to be convinced there is absolutely no way of designing something to preserve that.

AR: If we pull up the floor plan view, showing were the stairs tie into the cross gable, it allows for a living room and ample room for the kitchen and banquette. We would end up having to push all of that back significantly further on the house, probably another 10 feet back, which then currently we have, we have 18, little under 18 feet of backyard space. So it would end up resulting in a significant either we're significantly reducing the backyard space or we're significantly limiting how the function we would be reducing, ultimately reducing the square footage of the addition and having to make these spaces a lot more compact to fit the staircase in and still have an adequate living space in kitchen and dining so that was the reason for the cross Gable placement.

DB: There is no doubt that it would not be just a tweak you would need to rework the design. To me, if I were identifying something important to keep that is what I would identify.

SW: I apologize I was not at the last meeting. I think we are talking about this backwards. We are talking about demolishing a significant portion of a cottage. This is a facadectomy. I have always seen potential there. In order to demolish you have to meet criteria, and it's a long list. I notice you took a picture of a house on Broadway which

was not demolished only the back wall was. The amount of demolition is my concern. I can get behind the wrap around porch but it needs to conform to even be considered. The floor plan needs to conform to what makes sense for the retention of this house.

AK: The porch space you identified with the doors, is that now considered an interior space?

DB: I don't know.

Meg: David is correct we would not consider that interior space as it is not heated and cooled.

AK: And that is all there is to that? I want to get an understanding for this case but also so I know for the future.

Meg: It is not quite that simple. We look at what is remaining, but if you can easily remove the enclosure and it be exterior then we would treat it as such.

AK: Okay, I think the reason I bring that up is because I was just looking up and down the streetscape, and I saw 626 Arch Street, and that house seems to be almost unprecedented for this. It's very similar, and it looks almost exactly like the end product that they've gone for here. It seems very appropriate as far as the wraparound porch, and So I'm a little bit torn, because I myself renovated a house that was 30 years vacant, and I understand the amount of work and also the investment that goes into that, because you can't just put that kind of money into a house that's going to be 1100 square feet or less. It's probably, what, 800 square feet? The money doesn't make sense. And so there's a problem there. Even though they want to stay here, it's still not a wise investment to put a bunch of money into something that you're not going to be able to sell for what you've invested into it. So I'm sensitive to that concern, and I really like to find a way to help them get to an approval on that, because it seems like they've been diligent about, at least trying to make it fit into the neighborhood, and engaging the neighborhood in the process.

WB: I will offer some comments myself. Our job is to protect historic resources. We have seen a lot of small cottages in worse condition than this and people have found a way to add on to them and make them usable. It is hard to think there is not a solution out there where you can keep more of the existing property and accomplish what you want. These are things that I think David is getting at. I think you should look at how much you can do with it instead of how much you need to demolish. We have found a way to be comfortable with large additions. You talk about needing a porch and this house has a porch. I am more interested in seeing how you can work with the existing product and do as much as you can with the existing structure then adding onto that. Our first charge is to protect historic resources. You are not going to get an approval tonight, so you are heading towards a continuance with you working with staff.

AR: We are definitely taking the comments, but I would like to provide reasons for our choices. A lot of the examples we have been given had much larger lots. Which is not what we are working with. It is little things like that which impact the end result. Another thing on that side porch, on the scale of maximizing square footage we did not lean to incorporating the closed porch and we did want to reopen that. Things like having a covered outdoor space could have an impact on the owners if it is worth the investment. We have genuine concerns of long term livability. If we were able to move that back a few feet would that significantly impact the result?

WB: We are not going to sit here and design this with you. Staff

understands our comments so just work with them to find a middle ground. Demolition is kind of the final act and we do not want to get there is we do not have to. We understand the dimensional constraints, but we have seen a lot of situations come to good solutions.

AR: Our preference would be one month.

WB: Motion to continue to the November 5th Hearing.

Motion: SW

2nd: AS

Unanimous Approval

VIII. APPLICATIONS TO BE HEARD (NEW)

2025-COA-345 (CAMA) & 2025-VHP-009

922 NORTH COLLEGE AVENUE

MATTHEW PEYTON (MP)

Construct single-family residence & detached carriage house with living unit & a Variance of Development Standards for construction in the required clear sight triangle & for a reduced corner side setback.

MP: The owner does own the entire property. It originally had three parcels before the right of way expanded. On the other two parcels, there was a parcel on the corner that had a single-family residence and one along the alley that had a duplex. All that was demolished, and the turn lane was added. With my design we are working with the awkward shape of the property. The city did combine them all but I have a written letter that they will be re-established as three separate parcels. The design of the home will have the house facing college. The carriage house above will have a unit with one bedroom. The basement allows for a second family room and another bedroom with a bathroom. This will add to the variety of the street. The angled addition on the side will reclaim some of that space. It will have a clean seamless look. The garage will have a similar flat roof design. All windows will be Anderson Fibrex series windows. There is a sliding glass door on the back. The panel infills will add a more contemporary aesthetic and will all be one color so it will be more for texture. All the parapet walls will have a

SL: Staff finds the front setback, narrower form, and modern design elements of the proposal to be inappropriate rather than them settling into the streetscape. We believe the structure will stand out and be incompatible with its surroundings. We are recommending the commission discuss the proposal and be continued to come back with any changes. There were some internal discussions about the right of way on Tenth Street but nothing has been decided yet.

DB: I have known the site for a long time. I am a big proponent of if there was a building on a site there is a right to put one there. The lot has changed since one was placed there. Speaking for myself I do not have a problem with the modern design. Given the quirky siding, it calls for something that is different from the traditional. I kind of like the design what I am concerned about it all that cement board. I would like to see a different material, maybe brick. That is a lot of cement board right on the street. I will say the staff made a comment about the findings of fact, they seem a little weak. They are basically saying you can find the same thing somewhere else; you might want to consult someone on that.

AS: I can appreciate the challenge that you have. My concerns are when you look at the front, it is kind of jarring. The windows and doors

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seem clumped together, you might want to think about respacing those. I also have a concern with the paneling on the side. It looks great at first but after a few years it warps and fades.

MP: The exposure is going to be smaller than what they typically see. I was bringing to light the fact that the paneling on the side of the house will be smaller sections with a varying pattern and dynamic that you would not see on the large, formatted apartment buildings.

WB: Are you using medium or high density? What you might look at is a high-density product that has a higher propensity for longevity.

MP: It is the James Hardy panel product. I do not know what density it is but it is fiber cement board.

WB: You might look into a high-density product that will last a while longer, it is a little more expensive, but it has a much higher propensity for color, fastness and longevity over the medium density product you are describing.

MP: A lot of these multi family houses that we see that are hardy paneled deteriorate over time due to the fact they do not have the proper rain screening behind them, and we will ensure that we do. I understand that there are some brick in using this material but I have a high confidence that if you do a board and baton, it looks way better than you see with the bolts and sheeted panel houses.

MB: I like the design. It is creative. The massing and scale is good. The setback is the weak part. I understand you are doing what you can with what you have. I like that you addressed why the house is not oriented the other way. I do not know that your reasoning is not enough to sell me yet. I worry about the materials on this busy intersection. There were a few instances of automobiles jumping the curve. I would urge you to think about masonry, something more resistant to vehicles and noise.

MP: I will say I like a brick veneer house, but it is obviously not going to stop a car so maybe a thicker concrete wall would be required and there is an economic barrier to that. It makes it better that this house sits back from the corner.

AK: I appreciate the difficulty of this site. That being said, there is a combination of things going on that make me feel that this is not quite appropriate. There is not really a recognition of the shape of the site. Another issue is the large box shape, as it is so visible at tenth and college, you are going to see that shipping container looking siding. It is dominating that side so that portion is going to be way too dominate for the façade. I think it is successful on the carriage house but not the main house. The lack of recognition of the angled corner, it feels like you have just taken a house from any other site and pushed it back. This feels like a remnant of a site that has been altered. This does not feel designed for the site, rather it has been fit on the site.

MP: Okay, yeah I understand. This is a residential structure not a multi-floor commercial building.

AK: I am just saying there could be a more creative solution making a more creative use of that corner space. Rather than putting a normal looking modern house on a site it does not really fit on.

MP: Could I ask, would you agree that doing something that's more addressed onto that corner farther to the front of the existing home would be inappropriate at two stories?

AK: I think it needs a more creative approach. It feels like there needs to be something more celebratory of the oddity that you have.

MP: I understand.

AL: Regarding the siding, if it does go forward using the high density.

I am not a fan of the product. I think the good thing is that corner is unique. It is an extremely visible corner and requires a little bit more responsiveness to what it is. I feel like the design is okay, but there is something about it that feels overwhelming. Having some sort of Masonry on it might be better. That corner is only going to get busier. I am sure you can come up with something from our feedback.

WB: I think it is going to be improbable to move the building up to college. I don't think we can address the potential changes of the street. I think the two-story façade comes out of scale with the pedestrian sidewalk on tenth. For the materiality, there is a number of options out there for you. Overall, I think your approach is good. Perhaps something in the corner with landscaping to help bring the two buildings together better. I think take the comments that have been offered and see where you want to come back.

DW: I want to add a comment. I rely heavily on the information staff provides. I think you need to work closely with them. I know you have a vision on what you have for that property, but you need to think about how the building will impact the building. I think if you work with staff they can guide you.

MP: When we were engaging with staff the feedback was mixed which is why we came here.

WB: Motion for continuance to November 5th.

Motion: AL

2nd: AS

Unanimously approved

**2025-COA-351
(HOLY CROSS)**

**125 NORTH ORIENTAL STREET
ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS
Demolish historic church & historic rectory.**

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Paul Carroll (law office at 13 N State St Greenfield IN) representing the Roman Catholic Archdiocese Properties Inc trustee for St. Phillip Neri Church and Parish located at 125 N Oriental St known as the Holy Cross Campus. I am joined by Father DuFresne of St Philip Neri Parish and Al Pulley from Arsee Engineers.

Paul Carroll stated they are asking for a COA to demolish the church and rectory building as well as vacate the historic designation.

President Browne stated that the Commission will not be able to hear anything on the vacation of the property and will need to stick to the removal of the property. Paul Carroll said that's fair and continued his testimony.

Paul Carroll: The local parish has owned and controlled the Holy Cross campus for over a century. Parishes such as St Philip Neri are governed by laws, regulations and limitations of the Catholic Church, and Holy Cross Church is a place of worship which is dedicated, pursuant to canon law, to the worship of God and the sanctification of its members. Given the poor structural condition of the church, as well as waning attendance, Holy Cross Parish was merged into Saint Philip Neri Parish in 2014 and stopped using the real estate for worship services altogether in 2018. As part of the union of these parishes, the assets, as well as the obligations of Holy Cross parish, became the assets and obligations of St Philip Neri. In 2015, months after the

merger of Holy Cross and St Philip Neri, the portico of Holy Cross Church collapsed into the street and sidewalk. Fortunately, no one was injured. At that time, Father Chris Wadelton of St Philip's Neri engaged Arsee Engineers to inspect and analyze the condition of the Holy Cross Church. Arsee generated its findings in a 2015 report, which has been submitted as part of our filing packet. Unfortunately, even in 2015 and almost a decade before the historic designation was placed on this single parcel over the objection of St. Philip Neri, the cost of repair were well outside the means of St. Philip Neri Parish. Today, we have asked for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of this structure and make it a determination of whether or not demolition is appropriate. This Commission considers three factors, the satisfaction of any one of which would support the Certificate of Appropriateness. First, is that the denial of the Certificate of Appropriateness would result in substantial hardship. It would. Second, is the denial of the Certificate of Appropriateness would deny the owner all reasonable use and benefit of the subject property. And third, that the effect upon the historic area would be insubstantial. The first thing, I think, the one that weighs the heaviest in favor of St. Philip Neri is the substantial hardship to St. Philip Neri in maintaining this property. After the designation of this parcel, St. Philip Neri engaged local commercial contractors as well as engineers to inspect the property and provide estimates for the repair to make this a usable and safe structure. Namely, we engaged Brandt Construction, who's done work with the Archdiocese before, as well as Wells Masonry, which provides commercial masonry work. The estimates to make this a usable and safe structure were 7.5-8.5 million dollars. We obtained an appraisal of the property. It's as-is value today is 1 million dollars; that's for the property which includes this church, the rectory, the gymnasium, and former school. The former school and the gymnasium are not part of this request. If the repairs were made, the 7.5-8.5 million dollars spent at the parish, the fair market value of this property would go up from \$1 million to \$1.1 million so consider the math. And I heard reference to economics earlier, and I think that's important to the decision. The repair costs are 750% to 850% of the increase in value to the structure. And that is not a viable or economically justified decision that St. Philip Neri can make both because it makes no sense that it furthers the mission of St Philip Neri, but St Philip Neri does not have 7.5-8.5 million dollars to repair the structure. The other hardship here is continued ownership of this site costs St Philip area, approximately 20% of its budget. It has since the designation of this historic district, incurred approximately \$80,000 to maintain the site. That's the fencing, insurance, the boarding and re-boarding and re-boarding of the site, and numerous repairs as well as just site maintenance, mowing, things like that. All those costs should be unnecessary. If St. Philip Neri is allowed to demolish the church and the rectory, those costs go away and St. Philip Neri can then market this property to an end user, can revitalize this area and redevelop this site. Second factor to be considered is that denial of the Certificate of Appropriateness would deprive the owner of all reasonable use of the subject property. Staff and several remonstrators have argued that St Philip Neri can simply sell this site to another user who may be able to be develop it at considerable cost. That option is not on the table. St Philip Neri and Father Dufresne specifically, is obligated by Canon Law, the church's laws, regulations, and limitations in how to dispossess itself of property. This property

being sold outside of the church is simply not going to happen. While St. Philip Neri has been approached by a number of parties with proposals, and after considerable discernment, Father Dufresne has determined that the property is not going to be sold. That removal is the only option at this point. While St. Philip Neri and Father Dufresne will not ignore the regulations and limitations of church law, I had reached out to local developer, Flaherty and Collins for their opinion. They looked at this site and considered repair costs in the amount of 4.5 million dollars, which is just north of half of the actual repair costs. And their letter is provided as part of our filing materials. They called this redevelopment of the site with the church on site a "non-starter". It is, it is just not a viable project. The third consideration is the effect of approval upon the historic area would be insubstantial. It's important here tonight to distinguish this historic district from all the other historic districts that have been considered tonight. This is not a neighborhood designation. This was a single parcel designation. The area consists of only the Holy Cross parcel. There's not an adjacent parcel that's affected by this designation. The only effect of removal of these properties to the area, and by statute, that's what we look at, is the removal of a structure that's been fenced for 10 years, that is falling apart, that is in disrepair, is frankly blank. The benefit of removal to this area is redeveloping this site and revitalizing the area, the neighborhood. Again, we've asked for a certificate of appropriateness. We believe that is the only option here tonight. The only other option to St Philip Neri is to continue to incur the burden of maintaining a church that is not used, provides no benefit to the mission of St Philip Neri. It will not be sold. And we request approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness. I brought Fr. Dufresne, who has some remarks, and then Mr. Pulley with Arsee Engineers to discuss further state of the structure. Thank you.

Father DuFresne (Pastor St. Philip Neri Church/ 550 N Rural Street): As Paul mentioned in 2014 Holy Cross was merged into Saint Philip Neri because it was too small to exist on its own. At that time, our parish gained responsibility for all Holy Cross assets and liabilities, making us the owners of the church, rectory, school and gymnasium. Our parish serves a majority Latino immigrant population on the Near East Side, some of our members are former Holy Cross parishioners, including some of our members here supporting us today. Our parish family is rich in faith, but our financial resources are limited. I want to briefly underscore what has been said about the current condition of the former church. The building's deterioration, including the collapsed archway over the north entrance has made its restoration no longer realistic. It was unrealistic for us long before this commission hastily designated the property as a single parcel Historic District last year, without so much as visiting the interior of the church, meeting with me or engaging any expert to provide an opinion on the cost of repairs. Recent estimates that we have obtained put the cost of restoration at seven and a half to eight and a half million dollars, an amount which, which, as Mr. Carroll stated, far exceeds our parish's annual budget of savings. Furthermore, the building's unnecessary preservation placed a significant financial burden on the people of St Philip Neri during the last fiscal year. The historic designation cost our parish over \$80,000 nearly 20% of our annual budgeted expenses. In other words, just under 20% of our annual budget was spent on a vacant and deteriorating property which does not serve our mission. Continued

restrictions prevent us from exercising responsible stewardship with our parishioners hard earned dollars as they force us to maintain an unsafe building which requires constant fencing and is regularly subject to break ins, vandalism and arson. Money and valuable time spent maintaining the Holy Cross property could be invested in our mission at St Philip Neri. Any proceeds from the eventual sale of the property will support the mission of St Philip's. They'll fund substantial deferred maintenance on our Rural Street church, which is actually on the National Register of Historic Places. For some, the solution seems simple. The parish should just sell the church building so that it can be repurposed, however, the laws, rules and limitations of the Catholic Church require that any reuse of a former church building must be consistent with its inherent dignity as a former place of worship. As the pastor, the responsibility falls to me to ensure that these values are upheld, not only for the subsequent owner, but for as long as the building stands. For that reason, having carefully considered all the available information, we announced our decision to remove the church building and attach rectory in March of 2024. We announced it so that it would not take neighbors by surprise. This Commission's surprising historic designation followed soon after. Anyone is welcome to disagree with our prayerfully discerned decision. I understand if others, especially non-Catholics, aren't able to see quite where we're coming from, but the local government has usurped our decision in this matter, and that is not acceptable. The decision of what to do with Holy Cross belongs to St Philip Neri parish. The disposition of sacred buildings and the determination of sacred or profane use is the sole jurisdiction of church authorities. This Commission's involvement in the matter is an egregious overreach and an infringement on our constitutional rights. Attempting to pressure me and St Philip Neri to abandon our religious discernment is unnecessary. We cannot and we will not compromise when it comes to our churches, laws, rules and limitations, even if the faithful exercise of our religion comes at an increasing cost. This petition today is about religious liberty and responsible stewardship, the future of another historic urban parish that is just trying to make ends meet hangs in the balance. I'm grateful for all of those who have come here to support us today, and I know that many of our parishioners have gathered to pray in our church, because in the current climate, they don't feel comfortable entering a government building. On behalf of the 560 families that make up our parish, I ask you all to acknowledge these realities, recognize our right to religious freedom and allow us to move forward according to our religious discernment, by granting us the certificate of appropriateness and eventually removing the historic designation.

Tom Ditmer (122 Oriental Street): I live across the street from the church. I cannot help but notice that when I look out here a lot of us fall into the senior citizen category. I would like for us to set aside our emotions for a second to consider something more important today. The importance of our religious freedom. I heard people behind me laugh when he referenced his religious freedom. There is nothing more important than our freedom. Throughout the ages, worship continued. If you go into that church today you can feel that spirit alive within that space. The church built that space and consecrated it as sacred. If the catholic church decides they want to tear the building down because they believe within the guidelines of their religion the building should not be used for anything else then we have to honor

that. There are groups out there who are working to chip away at our constitutional rights. If you think our constitutional rights are funny then you should not be voting here today. If you cherish your freedom then you have a sacred obligation to vote in favor of freedom. The freedom of the catholic church to do what falls into their right.

Al Pulley with Arsee Engineers: I have been asked to speak to the report I produced. Believe it or not the structure has not healed itself. We have a multi-wide brick building. The primary concern is the large dimensional pieces of stone that have deteriorated over time. Overtime the pieces that hold the stone in place has been deteriorated over time. The most troublesome part is picture twenty. The critical point here is that there is a crack on the inside face of the stone. When it lets loose there is no advanced warning. The results could be disastrous.

CLOCK RAN OUT OF TIME FOR SUPPORT

Tim O'Sullivan: I'm the chair of the Holy Cross land use committee. Preservation. It's more than simply stopping something beautiful from turning into a pile of rubble. It's about history. It's about safeguarding memories of the past. It's about honoring what and who came before us. We preserve old and significant buildings such as churches, to honor them, to learn from them, and to help build a brighter and richer future for the community that surrounds them. The Holy Cross Church is one such important building. It is not merely a collection of carefully stacked brick and stone. It is the memories of those who grew up within its walls, it is the soul and symbol of the neighborhood that surrounds it and which bears its name. And while its primary tenant may no longer have a use for it, the building is still part of our community. For it is the community that gives a building life but is the Holy Cross Church beyond saving. Well, let's start with some finances. Maybe there's no interest from developers to purchase and redevelop a property. Maybe it's too expensive, it's too daunting to take off. Well, that's just simply not true. To the contrary, there was a proposal and an offer made to the Archdiocese recently by the ORL Foundation. And actually, this occurred just around the last time we met to discuss the Holy Cross Church. The plan was to transform it, to transform it into a performing arts center with a coffee shop and a bookstore along with educational and athletic programming, a nice plan for adaptive reuse. Unfortunately, that offer landed on deaf ears and the developer never received a response. Make no mistake, there is interest in this property. So let's talk about reuse. Can you even sell and redevelop a Catholic Church and give it new life? Is there any precedent for this? Yes, there is. After all, there's St Mary's in Greensburg, which became the beautiful Heritage Hill Event Center purchased from the Archdiocese in 2022 then there's our lady of providence in Brownstown, which, as reported in the criterion in March of this year, was decreed to be able to be sold as it had merged with a nearby parish years prior, and the church building was not in good shape and they no longer had a use for it. Kind of sounds familiar. Then there are official documents from the Vatican in the forms of letters and guidelines which encourage the reuse of decommissioned churches, especially when those reuses have cultural or social aims, such as museums, conference halls, bookshops, libraries, meeting places, etc, again, preserving a church is not only allowed but encouraged

over demolition. The Holy Cross Church should be given that same opportunity. Lastly, what about its importance to the community? Does the community want to see the Holy Cross Church carry on in early 2024 our neighborhood sent out a petition for those who wanted to help preserve the church and oppose its demolition. We gathered over 750 signatures, and as you may recall, we also received a letter of support in saving the church from Joe Donnelly, who, at the time, was US Ambassador to the Holy See. In the past week, we have received several letters from fellow downtown and Eastside neighborhoods and organizations opposing demolition and looking to save the church. But what truly matters right now is that many concerned citizens have come here tonight to make their voices heard, to urgently oppose this demolition and to fight for the preservation of Holy Cross before it's too late, people want to stand up. Thank you. That right there is why this church property should be preserved, should remain standing and should live on. Thank you.

Mark Dollase (Indiana Landmarks): I am here on behalf of Indiana landmarks. Our corporate address is 1201 north central avenue here in Indianapolis in the old Northside Historic District, a great example of a historic church building that has been adaptively reused for other purposes. It comes as no surprise today when I stand before you to say that we oppose this application to demolish the Church of the Holy Cross and its rectory. It was our organization that brought forward the emergency designation request before the commission just a year and a half ago, and you all approved that unanimously. The Metropolitan Development Commission approved it by a vote of six to one. So, there was a strong sense that this building needed to be protected. And I have to quickly add the woe is me about our site being an individually designated property. Believe the staff can tell you that there are a number of individually designated properties under your oversight. This is not the first. It's not like you took an action that was directed at them alone. My organization owns an individually designated property in the city of Indianapolis, under the purview of IHPC, called the Kemper house at 1028 North Delaware street. So this is not alone at them. I have to also add, I very closely read the staff report. It is excellent commendations to staff. I want to note that one of the most important things in there is that when you look at the criterion upon which a decision like this should be made by the commissioners, they this application does not conform to those criteria of the of the preservation plan, so I would hope that that would inform your all's decisions as you move forward.

We all know that churches are amongst the most historically significant types of buildings, and one of the things Landmarks has done is worked with congregations who are struggling or who need to move on from their historic places. I fully respect the values and belief system of the catholic church and the decision they feel they need to make. Those would be further reinforced if we did not know of other examples of churches in the archdiocese that have closed and been marketed for sale. Some notable ones are St. Micheals was sold to Historic Madison and is being used as a museum. I want to circle back to the decision by Archbishop Thompson that has authorized the sale of a catholic church since the designation of Holy Cross. I guess I need some convincing as to why that cannot work in the case of Holy Cross. I had a wonderful conversation with Indiana's former first lady, Judy O'Bannon, so I felt compelled to bring forward a portion of her commentary, she brought it back to faith. Holy Cross is a sacred space

to all Hoosiers so add my name to the list of people supporting reuse of churches. It is a spiritual commitment to use the resources of this planet to serve in the advancement of life. She is in great company. Other parties that are also opposed to this application are the National Trust for Historic Preservation, HUNI and others are opposed. In closing, we will always have Indiana Landmarks keep an open door to the archdioceses as a matter of fact we would welcome that. To figure out how to move forward while respecting canon law. Despite our many requests for that conversation to happen that the archdiocese has never responded to. Thank you for your time and good luck in your deliberations.

Evan Hanson-Hammans (4347 Yarrow Court): I think to deem Holy Cross not historic is to rewrite history. I believe it says everyone has changed the definition of historic or they were unanimously wrong last year. Members of St. Philip Neri state the IHPC has no business meddling in church matters but boasts its national register status. I think preserving the historical status is not a violation of religious freedoms but recognizes its cultural significance outside the church. The church has to be separate from the state but removing the historic status prioritizes church laws over state laws. I suggest the church sell the building with contingencies on future uses. All that to say this parish should not parish.

Councilor Jesse Brown (2022 Riley Ave): Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in about the heart and soul of the neighborhood. I represent Holy Cross neighborhood as the City County Councilor. Immediately after I testified in support of the designation, a former choir director and members of the church told me to stand in my convictions. Since then, I spoke to hundreds of people that have stood in support of keeping the church. I do not recall a single person who spoke to me about supporting the demolition of the church. Neighborhood leaders and scholars have made the following point more eloquently than I am. There is direction from the Vatican itself that suggest it's not only permissible but desirable to reuse historic church buildings for community purposes. It hurts me to believe the church is creating tension and disagreement here. I believe many in this room share the same values. Not everyone in this room may call themselves Christians. I can say for myself these are the core of my Christian values. It saddens me that the archdioceses has chosen to ignore the supermajority of the neighborhood who desire to retain the church building. I want to end my comment by repeating my comments from last spring. The etymology of the word church has nothing to do with a building but instead has to do with the community. Disregarding the needs of the community and instead treating the building as the most important thing flies in the face of Christianity. I would challenge you to find another issue with so many community partners on one side and a single land-owner alone on the other. Please stand with the community tonight and stop the demolition of Holy Cross.

William Selm (401 E 41st Street): I am the second historian to serve the IHPC. This is an ongoing issue for me as a proud practicing catholic. I have seen the destruction of interiors and grand buildings. When I think about the nickles and dimes that my parents and grandparents saved to build these places and how second generation Irish to build the church. They paid the architects and builders to build something lasting. I am sympathetic to the other side's argument. What do regular people do, they sell it and they let someone else

handle the money. There is also the issue of demolition by neglect that we are all aware of. In Indianapolis, we have four churches that have been sold and reused. Old St. Vincent had its chapel. St. Agnes apartments had its own chapel. Old St. Joseph where my first cousins were all baptized. I am happy the building is there, and the church reused it and then rescued for a glorious use. The interstate killed the parish of St. Francis, what he did was brilliant. He gave the parish to Martin University. That is their campus. Now they've also built other buildings. Now I am going to conclude with something I thought was funny. In the 1980s I was trying to save the Franciscan Friary, I called the person in real estate and he said to me the church isn't in the monument business. I said, have you ever been to St. Peter's in Rome? There are people who want to save the building and keep St. Philip Neri from the burden. We have attorneys that can help use with the use of the building. There is an answer out there if we are willing to work together. I have been to other cities where the buildings are reused. These buildings are monuments to the faith and to the people who saved their money to build them. Then they had the pride of their own spiritual home. That is all I have, thank you.

Alice Selm (1201 Shannon Ave): I served as the last school librarian. While I am a newcomer in the grand timeline, it was immediately apparent it was a special place. It is a landmark and I always check to make sure it is still there. It's interesting that Fr. Dufresne brought up dignity. In my opinion, dignity for those folks would be to give these buildings a new life.

Tom Abeel (781 Woodruff Place Middle Dr): I am president of HUNI and I would just add there has been quite a list of churches mentioned but I would like to add a few more. The former Holiness Church, 719 E St Clair St; the former Fletcher Place United Methodist Church, the former Trinity Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Old Centrum and 749 N Park Ave. There is precedent for reuse of church buildings.

Emily Jarzen (Staff Comments): As the commission knows multiple remonstrance letters have come in since notice went out. Staff does believe it is important to highlight documentation submitted by the applicant. They submitted an engineering report that indicated the building is repairable. The property appraisal from 2025 states demolition was considered however the estimated cost does not make this a feasible option. There is no data to suggest that the value of the subject land supports demolition of the improvements. It is the appraisers opinion that the highest and best use for the church to repair the church. The demolition quote submitted is from 2023 and is for \$251,000 plus \$35,000 to retain rectory. Staff believes that there is a conversation to be had about other church reuses. It has also come to staffs attention that multiple interested parties reached out for purchase. The application does not comply with the plan or meet the criteria for a certificate of authorization. 1) **Denial would result in substantial hardship:** The submittals repeatedly indicated that the buildings are repairable, and demolition would come at a high cost and that the value of the land would be higher with the buildings retained. 2) **Denial would deprive the owner of all reasonable use and benefit of the property:** the applicant states they have no use for the property and wish to sell it. Denial does not preclude the owner from not using the property, selling it or for someone else to use it. **The effect on the historic area would be insubstantial:** The church is the centerpiece of the district and the namesake of the

neighborhood demolition erases the history of the site, the neighborhood and the city and in no way can the demolition of this church be insubstantial. In terms of the criterion from the plan, the demolition does not with criterion A “Any development, construction, reconstruction, restoration, or alteration of the subject structure’s interior, exterior, or site shall be appropriate to the property’s historic and architectural values and significance.” Or Criterion B: “Any development, construction, reconstruction, restoration, or alteration to the exterior shall be visually compatible and appropriate in function, general design, arrangement, color, texture, and materials to the design and character of the historic area. The application to demolish the church and structure do not follow the secretary of interior standards as it recommends an historic building shall be use as its historic purpose or a use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building sit or environment. Staff recommends denial of the application of demolition.

DB: I have a question for the applicant. What specific effort has the church undertaken to find a buyer and or appropriate reuse?

Fr. Dufresne: Since the designation due to the religious freedom issues with our situation, we have not been able to enter into conversations with perspective buyers until this has been resolved.

Krystin Wiggs: I was not here when this previously came before us. It seems nothing has changed as far as movement on the churches side. Demolition by neglect is something that is concerning to me. For homeowners, DBNS will cite owners. Is that an option here?

Meg: Yes, DBNS can site the property owner for necessary work that needs to be done, just like any other.

Disa Watson: Do you currently have an entity that says they will purchase the property if the church is gone?

Paul Carroll: No we do not have that.

Disa Watson: The church closed ten years ago? You gave financial data what has been spent to maintaining the property, what maintenance are you talking about?

Fr. Dufresne: As I mentioned, since the designation we have been unable to enter into any conversation. And the costs are all costs that have been incurred due to the historic designation, specifically to the school and the gymnasium so they can be reused.

Disa Watson: Give me an example of what you’ve done. Was the brick never addressed during this ten-year period? Was any of that ever looked at to maintain the property?

Fr. Dufresne: I have only been pastor since 2019, so I could not speak to anything before that. As we have no use for the building, we have not done anything besides what is necessary for the whole campus.

Annie Lear: I have to say, I do not know where to begin. I have no different feeling than I did a year and a half ago. The sadness of the missed opportunity for the church to serve the community. It’s not that I do not respect the cost, but the church is the people, these people. What I find so frustrating is the lack of desire. What I do not understand is the lack of desire to work with the people in the neighborhood and Indiana Landmarks. I feel that this is a missed opportunity. I do not get why you are holding the line on this when there have been other examples of these buildings serving the community. So that is what I do not understand. Back to Fr. Dufresne, this is not a matter of if you can be objective whether you are catholic or not. We should not be shamed or put down because we are prioritizing the history of a building when we all stand on the backs of the history that came before

us.

Anjanette Sivilich: I have a lot of thoughts on this. I am fully for the freedom of religion, and I was trying to understand your point of view as a catholic and how that fits into the world catholic view. Current canon law was enacted 42 years ago. One of the secondary goals of preservation is to preserve world resources and to be a good steward to our planet. There is energy that would need to be used to demolish an existing structure and build a new structure. This is a key point when trying to reduce carbon emission. In June 2015, Pope Francis stated the encyclical is for everyone, not just Catholics. In this message it stated Pope Francis added the voice of the catholic church to decarbonize our society as a matter of urgency. The science on climate change is clear and Pope Francis has made clear that everything is interconnected and that everyone has access to the world's resources. In Nov 2018, the pontifical council for culture and other authorities held an international conference discussed this issue for two days. The resultant guidelines regarding the decommissioning and reuse of resources was clear. It states the church and community are to dialogue and work with the local community and civic authorities to find a new use for that asset instead of destroying valuable local heritage sites. Planning for the reuse should account for at least a medium-term timeline and efforts should be made with the local community to find a realistic and appropriate solution. The civil authority should be involved to ensure the dignity of the area. This can be done through zoning and covenants. As far as compatible use, examples have been provided and there are several more in the conference report. The 23 official delegations at the conference believed the care of religious cultural heritage is the responsibility of the entire community. The thoughts, ideals and goals from the 2018 conference were reiterated in Pope Francis's 2022 message at the conference where he stated there is a need to focus on the reuse of disused real estate. From the evidence provided in the structural and appraisal reports the existing damage does not require demolition. Looking at the number provided, the as-is appraisal is 1 million dollars. If the building is sold as-is, the cost of asbestos remediation would fall to the developer. The appraisal for the vacated property was \$865,000, not subtracting the demolition cost of \$286,000 or asbestos remediation, leaving a net value of \$579,000 for the property. It seems it is in the best interest of the church to work with the community to find a developer that could be the building to an appropriate profane use.

Only one developer rejection letter has been presented. This is not enough for me to find the development of the site is not possible. It does not appear there has been much effort to connect with the community to find an acceptable profane use for the property.

Paul Carroll: You said that one developer's letter that it was a non-starter is not enough, what would be enough?

Anson Keller: The fact that they did not mention the potential funding mechanisms tells me that they did not really look at it. They just took a cursory look and issued a letter. Also, the conflation of the numbers leads me to believe the letter is fairly incredible. I have some questions as well. I want to get into some of the foundational issues. I wanted to

establish some things. Has the archdiocese owned it since its establishment?

Paul: The roman catholic archdiocese has the trustee of St. Philip NeiriNeri.

AK: Has that always been the case.

Paul: The ownership is always held by the holding company for the parish.

AK: So the parish has sole ownership of the property, which means the maintained of the property has always been on the parish. So you are asking us to believe that it is hardship when the deferred maintenance has caused these problems. It is a self-inflicted wound and if we allow that to be used as an argument for demolition we would have no historic building left.

Paul: I think it is worth pointing out it was not a historically protected structure until last year.

AK: Does that relieve you of your responsibility to maintain your properties? I would say you are trying to have your cake and eat it too. Which is it, is it a dignified space that needs to be saved or is it a structure that has fallen into disrepair that is beneath its dignity. So which is it?

Paul: There is a reason that the parish closed. Its attendance dwindled. It's a hundred year old building and it can only expend what it has.

AK: While that is understandable, we cannot find that to be a hardship. Allowing it to fall into this state and the deferred maintenance is not something we can consider to be a hardship. If unchecked it will destroy the building. There is a lot of problems created by the lack of stewardship. You went to a reputable developer but I do not think they looked at this very closely. There are funding mechanisms where you can control the funding and the end use. That argument that there is no control once you sell it does not make sense. If they did not explore those funding options, how can the commission conclude that financially rehabilitation is infeasible.

PAUL: Admittedly I am not a developer and I asked a developer what they thought.

AK: That report is not the end all be all. The report is not the full story. The justification for demolition, you site the risk of the property falling into sordid use. The fact that you believe that it is such an imminent risk can you site a property that has fallen into sordid use.

Paul: I am not a canonist so I cannot say for sure but some would say St. Joseph's brewery is a sordid use.

AK: The brewery? Someone should notify the Trappists.

FD: I am able as the pastor, to act in this case. I cannot speak to the archdiocese. I am also not a canon lawyer, but I can say the fact that we are discussing this shows our concern about these proceedings have wandered into church matters and outside the jurisdiction of the IHPC.

AK: I am just asking you to give an example as it is such an imminent risk as you say.

Paul: It's a for profit business which can be a potentially sordid use.

AK: Potential, when does it move from potential to actual?

Paul: Once ownership is left control there is not control left. A fireworks stand would be inconsistent with the dignity of the church.

AK: Forgive us, but the term dignity is given less weight as it has fallen into disrepair, some people would view that as desecration of a sacred space. You want us to respect your religious freedom but are unable

to site sordid uses, which makes it seem that the risk is not as you presented.

MB: I do not want to speak for Anson but I think what his question to be is could you give us an example of what could happen. We are trying to help so many congregations over the decades solve the problem they have and it seems the applicant has come in looking for a fight that does not exist. We are going to look at our guidelines and mandate and make an educated decision based on our mandate and wish everybody well. Tell us what you need to help get you to where you need to be and we can find a way. I do not think anyone wants to make social commentary or ideological debate. We have our guidelines, if you tell us it is against your religion to let anyone else use your church for any reason but we can only look at our rules. With that said, I have a few questions. What would be wrong with the church selling the property with some sort of covenant?

Paul: Restricted covenants are more enforceable if you own adjacent property. I cannot tell the archdiocese they are going to be enforceable in that case.

MB: In the event a covenant is violated there are next steps. I guess I am trying to figure out why a tool that has been used in other locations cannot be used here.

Paul: It would depend on the enforceability. The only 100% guarantee I could give is that they continue to own the property and they find a donor to restore the property. I cannot tell them with absolute certainty that it would be enforceable.

MB: So something like a 99 year lease wouldn't work?

Paul: A 99 year lease would be enforceable.

MB: There was a comment about staff rushing to designate the church. Can staff remind us why there was a rush to designate the building.

GG: The first designation effort was started by staff in 2014. In that effort communication with the neighborhood and neighborhood stakeholders were spotty at best, according to our records, which is why the designation did not move forward. I can ask Meg to speak more to your question.

Meg: The commission has the ability to do what we call an emergency designation when demolition is imminent. We consider how much time there is to react to that. A designation effort is a relatively quick process in reaction and it is the only process in place to protect a structure with imminent threat of demolition. That is how we moved forward with that. I think you have heard this evening that there were many attempts prior to that to sit down and have a conversation. We would have loved to been able to do that but we were not allowed that and the short period of time we had to react did not allow for conversation.

MB: It sounds like there was a timing issue. One more question to the applicant, is there any reason that would not be obvious outside of the church that demolition would make more sense ~~thenthan~~ trying to sell it provided you could =ensure no sordid use would take place. Is there some reason that is not obvious where it makes more sense to tear it down?-

Paul: I rely on the pastor and their church leadership with what needs to happen with a church property. I cannot weigh in on that. Heavy restrictions restricts the use and financing of a building. Beyond that, I cannot weigh in on why church leadership had made that decision.

MB: Just to clarify, I am just wanting to know why it is not more obvious

to sell it with covenants. That would help us understand.

Paul: I believe it is straight forward.

FD: We have come here to request a COA to demolish the church, not to discuss church doctrine. I would be grateful for a vote on our request.

MB: Then I would assume that there is a reason not obvious to us.

FD: The reason is the one you cited. It is a church and we want to protect it from sordid use.

Disa: I have just two more items. You both addressed freedoms that you felt designation stopped the archdiocese from having the freedom to do what it wanted. My question is when the church was closed did the priest tell his parishioners they had a choice or did they tell them you are going to St. Phillip.

Paul: When there is a distinctive union, there is an appeal process. In terms of the merger of parishes and parish property. I don't think it has anything to do with what your asking.

Disa: If the parishioners where told by their priest you go to St. Phillip. Then that took away the parishioners choice. You the archdiocese can't say that our freedom is being taken when you closed the church and took away those parishioners freedom. When he said you are going to St. Phillip that's where they went. They weren't told that even though the church is closing you can select your new parish. That's a freedom that if it wasn't handled that way, they did not have. Your stating that your freedom is being stifled because they cannot tear down the property because you want to. I know you have been given a directive but maybe if you have a discussion point not only do you have a freedom but the parishioners have a freedom. You have already closed the church which took away their connection to the church they chose to attend. That took away their connection to the church they chose. The next step you want to take away the building. You brought in canon law but you also mentioned that when you step in that place you can feel the prayers that have taken place over the years. What better place would that be to reestablish another entity. Could you image being in a building where prayers have been prayed and felt. You are actually putting something positive into the community and atmosphere. Mark do you have issues when you place covenant?

MD: No we have hundreds of covenants.

Disa: You have people you can connect with that can guide you and you are not having those conversation. Some discussion on some level needs to be had. If you start having that conversation it will have a positive impact with the community. There is nothing like prayers and that feeling.

AL: Just a quick circle back, if any entity anywhere allowed something to decay due to inaction they would still have some level of responsibility. When you willfully chose by the absence of action to allow things to decay. Then it is hard because you use the benefit of the doubt and entities like us get involved.

WB: I will finish with just a few comments. It's obvious that the historic neighborhood takes its name from the church. Its understandable that there is a strong feeling of wanting to retain this. We are up here trying to deal with historic resources like a historic church. Looking at why this should be saved or why it should be demolished. I have not heard anything to suggest we are convinced that the criteria has been met to allow for demolition. When I hear the testimony of other churches that have been reused or sold. It begs the question of how is this

different. Can you site why this is different then the other church sold since the designation that makes it such that this needs to be handled differently?

Paul: I think that was the parish in Brownstown. They authorized the sale and the pastor of that church made that decision. The property has not yet been sold but that pastor will make a decision.

WB: From our standpoint we look at precedent with a fair amount of frequency. Hearing that and seeing these other examples, we see that there are different ways to do this. Obviously one person has control over the situation but we have a body with a different opinion. It does not seem realistic to have an entire neighborhood wanting to take care of it and one person saying they want to demolish it. That really is not going to hold a lot of water with me personally or this commission. It is unfortunate that we have gotten to this point. You have your ten minutes of rebuttal/

Paul: Given the comments of the commission I do not think a long rebuttal is necessary. St. Phillip is a modest parish and will continue to be burdened. With that I will close.

WB: There are other options, other than putting your head in the sand and walking away. I think there is clarity that people who have testified that they reached out and was met with stonewalling. I do not understand why there is not cooperation. It does not seem reasonable when there are paths forward. I think you need to reflect on that.

Meg: Staff recommends to deny a Certificate of Appropriateness or Authorization to demolish the church building and rectory.

Motion: AL

2nd: MB

Unanimously approved

IX. PRELIMINARY REVIEW

NONE

X. APPLICATIONS TO BE HEARD – WORK STARTED WITHOUT APPROVAL

NONE

XI. OLD BUSINESS – TO BE HEARD

NONE

XII. CLOSING BUSINESS

NONE

Adjourned 9:18PM