

# STAFF REPORT FOR THE HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING OF NOVEMBER 12, 2020

FILE NO: HRC-2020-0009

AGENDA ITEM: E-1

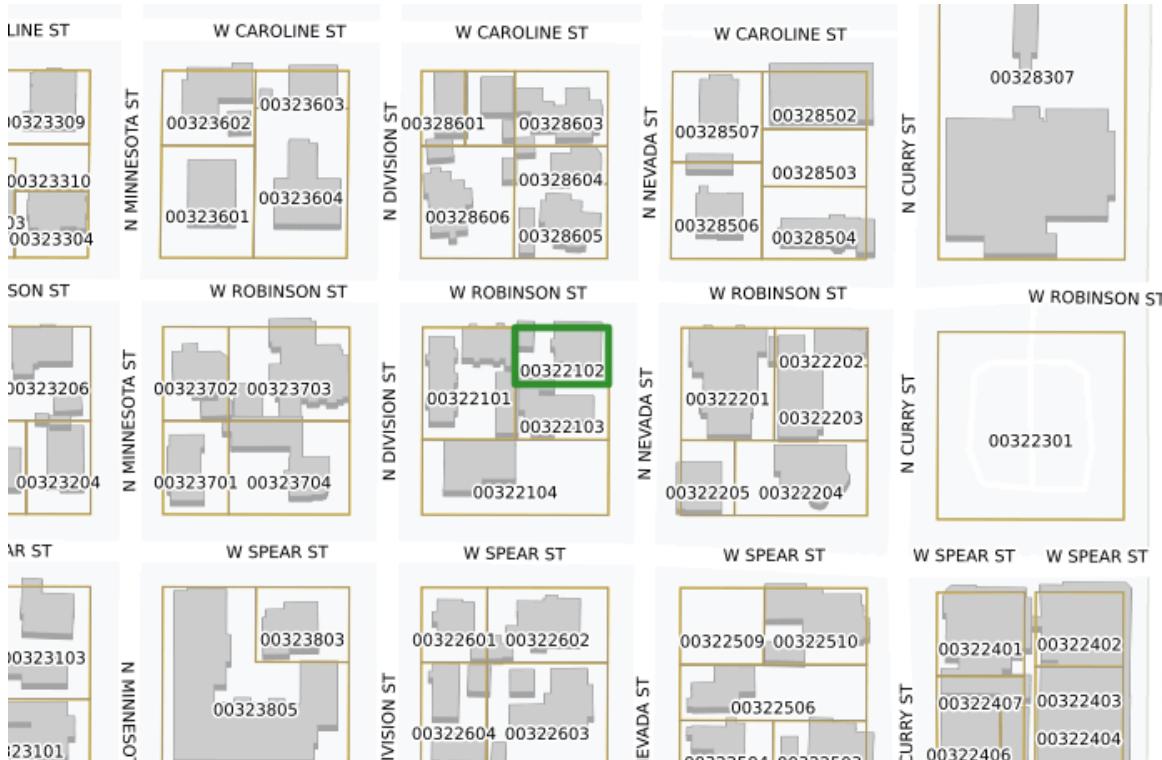
STAFF CONTACT: Hope Sullivan, AICP, Planning Manager

**AGENDA TITLE:** For Possible Action: Discussion and possible action regarding a request to remove an outbuilding, modify a front porch, replace fencing and landscape the front and side yards at property zoned Residential Office (RO), located at 512 North Nevada Street, APN 003-221-02. (Hope Sullivan, hsullivan@carson.org)

**STAFF SUMMARY:** This project involves removing an outbuilding, modifying a front porch, replacing fencing and placing pea gravel in the front and side yards. The property owner has already removed the outbuilding and started work on the porch and fencing without permission from the Commission. The Commission will review the request for compliance with the guidelines for the historic district.

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** I move to approve HRC-2020-0009 subject to the conditions of approval included in the staff report."

## VICINITY MAP:



**RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:**

1. All development shall be substantially in accordance with the attached site development plan.
2. All on and off-site improvements shall conform to City standards and requirements.
3. The use for which this permit is approved shall commence within 12 months of the date of final approval. An extension of time must be requested in writing to the Planning Division 30 days prior to the one year expiration date. Should this request not be initiated within one year and no extension granted, the request shall become null and void.
4. The applicant must sign and return the Notice of Decision within 10 days of receipt of notification. If the Notice of Decision is not signed and returned within 10 days, then the item may be rescheduled for the next Historic Resources Commission meeting for further consideration.
5. HRC approval is based upon the project complying with the Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation, Carson City Historic District Guidelines, the Historic Resources Commission Policies and that the plans as submitted are in general conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.
6. The fence along the northern property line is required to be set back five feet from the property line and back of sidewalk.
7. Trees within the planting strip between the sidewalk and the curb are to be retained.
8. The walkway from the sidewalk to the front door is to be maintained in its current configuration.

**LEGAL REQUIREMENTS:** CCMC 18.06.015 (Procedure for Proposed Project)

**MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION:** Mixed Use Residential (MUR)

**ZONING:** Residential Office (RO)

**PREVIOUS REVIEWS:**

- HRC-17-002 – Re-roof

**DISCUSSION:**

The subject property is known as the Childs House. Per the State Historic Preservation Office, the home was constructed in 1864.

On April 11, 2020, the property owner demolished an outbuilding on the property, and over the next few days removed fencing and began work on the porch. The City stopped work and required that the property owner apply to the Historic Resource Commission for all exterior work.

The Historic Resource Commission reviewed the subject request at its meeting of May

14, 2020. At that meeting, the Commission found that the application materials submitted were inadequate to make a decision, and requested that the applicant present professionally prepared plans.

The applicant proposes the following:

- Demolition of an outbuilding located at the northwest corner of the property due to deterioration;
- Replacement of a fence on the northwest side of the property.
- Request to install a three foot tall fence on the south side of the home.
- Request to return the front porch to an open air porch.
- Request to add pea gravel to the front and side yards.

Staff finds that with the incorporation of conditions of approval, the applicant's proposal to remove the outbuilding, modify the porch, install fencing, and install pea gravel can be consistent with Carson City Development Standards, Division 5 (Historic District) for the applicable sections outlined below:

### **Demolition**

The applicant is proposing to demolish an outbuilding because "it has deteriorated beyond a safe level to attempt repair or use." The applicant has provided photographs of the building to demonstrate the condition of the building.

Demolition of buildings in the historic district is governed by Carson City Municipal Code 18.06.075. This code section states the following:

1. *Any application for demolition or removal of a cultural resource located in a historic district shall be approved when the HRC finds that one (1) or more of the following conditions exist:*
  - a. *The cultural resource is a hazard to public health or safety and repairs and stabilization are not feasible as determined by a professional with demonstrated experience in historic preservation rehabilitation projects; or*
  - b. *The cultural resource does not meet national register significance criteria.*

The applicant has advised that the building was a safety hazard, and repairs were not feasible. The applicant has provided photographs to show the condition of the building before the demolition. Based on the photographs, the staff agrees with the applicant regarding the condition of the building.

It is unknown when the outbuilding was constructed. There is no evidence of building permits for the building. Based on a photograph of the exterior of the building, it does not appear to have been built when the house was built. The National Register Nomination for the West Side Historic District identifies the early 20<sup>th</sup> century garage as a contributing building. That nomination was prepared in 2011.

Provided the Commission agrees with the applicant regarding the condition of the building, the Commission may approve of the demolition.

### **Fencing**

Section 5.24 of the Development Standards addresses fences, stating the following.

## **5.24 Guidelines for Fences**

Fences serve a variety of purposes for a property owner. They can define property lines, provide security and protection from trespass, furnish safety for children and pets, provide visual screens for privacy and serve as protection from the elements. The design of a fence is a critical element in the overall visual quality of a property and how it relates to its neighbors. It can also be important from a public safety standpoint, particularly on corner lots. Typically front yards in the district were delineated by low profile, wood picket style fences. A few metal and masonry fences can be found as well.

A fence design must be considered in context. Scale, rhythm, material and style are the critical design elements of a fence. The fence design must be compatible with the building as well as with the surrounding property. A fence can provide a delicate design element which will greatly enhance a property.

### **5.24.1 Guidelines for Historic Fences**

Original fences must be retained and repaired whenever possible. When reconstruction is necessary the original fence must be matched in color, material, size, scale, texture and composition. New fences should emulate historic styles and designs found in the district. (Standard Number: 2, 4, 5, 6). In accordance with this requirement, and unless an exemption is granted under circumstances deemed appropriate at the discretion of the historic resources commission, when reconstruction of a fence occurs:

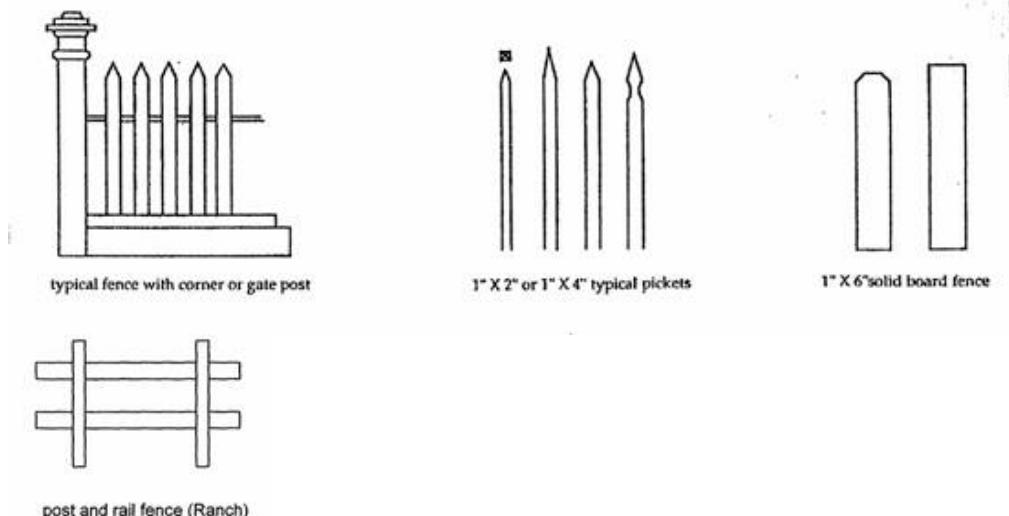
- a. The historic characteristics of the property must be preserved, including, without limitation, any distinctive feature, finish, construction technique or craftsmanship and any individual feature not originally part of the property but which, over time, has acquired historic significance.
- b. The removal of any historic feature or finish, or the modification or alteration of any such material, feature or finish that contributes to the historic character of the property, is prohibited.
- c. A deteriorated feature or finish must, whenever possible, be repaired in lieu of replacement.
- d. A historic feature or finish that has severely deteriorated or is otherwise in a state of disrepair such that replacement in lieu of repair is necessary, the replacement feature or finish must, to the greatest extent possible, match the original feature or finish in material, design, color, texture and all other visual aesthetics.

### **5.24.2 Guidelines for New Fences**

The appropriate design for a new fence must be determined by its intended function and its location. A new fence must not be constructed in any manner which adversely affects the primary views of any building. A fence should consist of a design that will enhance the overall visual presentation of a building and be made from material which is traditionally associated with fences located within the historic district, including wood, wrought iron, decorative woven wire and, in limited circumstances, masonry. A fence should also contribute to the character and defining features of any building in a positive manner. (Standard Number: 9). Unless an exemption is granted under circumstances deemed appropriate at the discretion of the historic resources commission, the use of

*vinyl for the construction of a new fence is prohibited. If material other than material which is traditionally associated with fences located within the historic district is proposed to be used for the construction of a new fence, the person proposing the use of such material must include in his or her application to the historic resources commission an explanation describing how the material to be used is:*

- a. *Compatible with the massing, size, scale and existing architectural and construction materials of the property and the property site.*
- b. *More compatible with the property and the property site than if material which is traditionally associated with fences located within the historic district is used.*
- c. *Consistent with the historical features of the property and the property site.*
- d. *Consistent with the massing, size, scale and existing architectural and construction materials used within the historic district.*



The applicant is proposing a six-foot tall wooden fence on the southside of the house from the house to the southern property line, and a six-foot tall solid wooden fence along the northern property line from the house to the western property line.

Neither fence will compromise to primary view of the building, and both fences will utilize wood, which is an acceptable material in the district.

Per Development Standards 1.13.5.a, the six-foot fence along the northern property line must be set back five feet from the property line, which is the back of sidewalk. If the fence height is limited to three feet, it may be located on the property line.

## **Porches**

Section 5.19 of the Development Standards provides the guidelines for porches as follows.

### *5.19 - Guidelines for porches.*

*Porches constitute a significant architectural feature of any building; they are a character defining design feature. The placement, style, scale, massing and trim detail of porches*

*in Carson City reflect a wide range of architectural styles. Because of their architectural impact porches are of particular concern in the historic district. A porch of inappropriate scale, placement and/or design, added to a historic building which did not have a porch originally, can be particularly detrimental to the historic integrity of the building and the character of the district as a whole. Conversely porches can be effectively utilized as a building feature in new construction to create a contemporary architectural design compatible with the historic district's character.*

**5.19.1 Guidelines for Historic Buildings.** *A porch that is part of the original design of a historic building shall be maintained in its original configuration, design, style and detailing if at all possible. If suitable documentary evidence can be presented which demonstrates the original existence of a porch which no longer exists, the porch may be reconstructed to match the original as best as possible. If a porch cannot be demonstrated to have originally existed on the building, a porch may be added with the condition that the configuration, design, style and detailing are suitable and compatible with the architectural style of the building and does not adversely impact the historic integrity of the building. Any new additions to the building shall be performed in such a manner that if removed in the future the original building will not be adversely affected.* (Standard Number: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10)

**5.19.2 Guidelines for New Construction.** *New construction in the district shall be encouraged to utilize porches as suitable character defining architectural elements. The configuration, design, style and detailing of the porch needs to be suitable and compatible with the architectural style of the building and the buildings in the immediate vicinity. Porches shall not be approved when their design would adversely affect other buildings in the immediate vicinity or the district as a whole, or where the design is obviously incongruous with the building.*

*NOTE: The roof style and slope are critical design elements of a porch. Careful attention to these elements is necessary in both historic and new buildings with porches.*

The applicant is seeking to modify the front porch from an enclosed porch to an open porch, primarily by removing the windows and door.

Staff believes that the modification will cause the porch to function more like a porch. It is not known what the original porch looked like. However, the proposed modification will significantly retain the historic character of the building, and not substantially change the appearance of the building consistent with the guidelines.

## **Landscaping**

Section 5.25 addresses landscape elements, stating the following.

### **5.25 - Guidelines for landscape elements.**

*The Carson City Historic District is characterized by a typical rectangular grid street system without alleys. The streets vary in width, but all are characterized by "L" shaped concrete curbs and gutters, a sidewalk and planting strip between the street and sidewalk. Generally this planting strip contains a row of deciduous trees and lawn. Individual lots are usually rectangular in shape with the main building centered on the parcel and a front setback which allows for a modestly sized front yard. Front yards are typically delineated by a low profile fence, with a gate and walkway leading to the front entry. Accessory buildings are often found in rear yards. These basic elements create a strong visual quality to the district which is consistent and should be encouraged.* 2

*unique landscape elements in the district are hitching posts (generally of cast iron) and carriage steps (generally of cut stone). These are most likely to be found in the planting strip between the Street and the sidewalk. These should be retained.*

**5.25.1 Guidelines for Historic Properties.** *Historic landscape features should be retained when at all possible. Fences, trees, hitching posts, carriage steps, sidewalks and walkways provide a visual consistency and harmony of setting to the district. (Standards Number: 2, 3, 4, 5, 9)*

The subject site has many of the character defining landscape features of the district including concrete curbs and gutters, a sidewalk, and a planting strip between the street and sidewalk. The planting strip contains a row of deciduous trees on both West Robinson Street and North Nevada Street. The lot is rectangular in shape, and there is a modest sized front yard. There is a walkway that leads to the front entry.

Currently, the front and side yards are dirt. The applicant proposes to place pea gravel in these yard areas. Staff finds that provided all of the character defining landscaped features are retained, the placement of the pea gravel will be consistent with the guidelines.

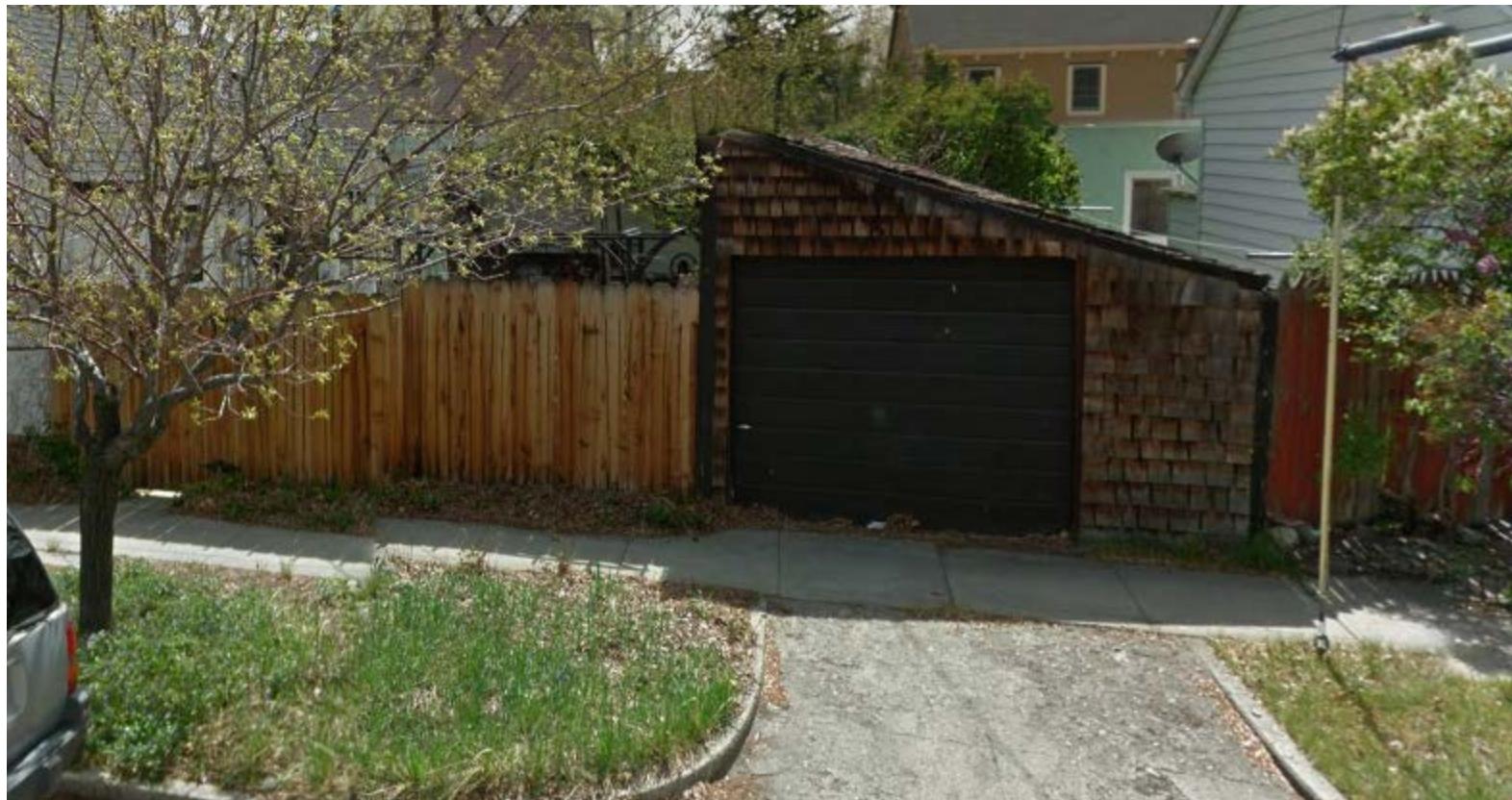
Attachments:

Photograph of the demolished outbuilding from Google

Photograph of the front porch before it was modified from Google.

Survey

Application





Historic Survey 1860-1948  
Occupational & Residential  
**HISTORICAL SURVEY**  
**CARSON CITY HISTORICAL DISTRICT**  
**CARSON CITY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**



**NAME:** Childs House

**ADDRESS:** 512 N. Nevada

**LOCATION:** Southwest corner N. Nevada and W. Robinson

**CONSTRUCTION DATE:** 1927 (assessor); 1864 (SHPO)

#### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The individual who purchased this property on the corner of N. Nevada and W. Robinson Streets from Edson Harkness in 1863 is something of an unknown quantity. Thomas W. Childs probably built this house, but he wasn't counted for the census, and he didn't list his name or occupation in the city directories.

Childs sold the property in 1866 to John J. Spencer, who was equally anonymous. Spencer didn't keep the property long, and sold it the following year to Patrick McCarty. McCarty was a fireman at the U. S. Mint, and his new home was located just a block behind his place of work. In 1878 McCarty was still working at the Mint, but as a sweepcellar.

McCarty sold the property in 1882, and moved to another

house at 901 N. Minnesota. The new owner of 512 N. Nevada was Morris W. Starling. Starling remodeled the house, doubling the size in 1890.

Starling sold in 1914 to Anna M. Meder. The city directory of 1917 indicates that Anna Meder was the widow of Lewis, and was boarding at 308 N. Nevada, probably with her son Lewis Meder, who was an agent for Guarantee Sales. Frank Meder, who had a sporting goods store at 412 N. Carson, was living in the house at 512 N. Nevada.

In 1920 Anna Meder was still living down the street with Lew M. Meder, who by this time was a clerk at the State Highway Department. Three years later Mrs. Lew M. (Zita D.) Meder was a stenographer at the Highway Department, and the living situation was unchanged. Frank Meder was now in the business of autos and accessories, and still living in Anna Meder's house.

In 1930 Annie Meder had moved into her house with Frank Meder and his wife Caroline Meder. Frank Meder was still in the auto business, but was also postmaster. Augusta Meder, widow of J. P. Meder also moved into Anna Meder's home. Lew and Zita Meder were still employed at the Highway Department.

That is the last mention of Anna Meder in the city directory, however, and in 1935 the property was transferred to L. W. Meder, then in 1939 to Zita D. Meder. Lew Meder was deceased and Zita Meder was an office supervisor at the Highway Department by 1948, and was still living at 512 N. Nevada.

The property was sold to M. R. Blake in 1965 by the estate of Z. D. Meder.

#### OTHER NAMES ASSOCIATED WITH PROPERTY:

1939, J. J. Spencer

#### SOURCES:

Stewart Title; Ford; Carson City Directories; Carson City Telephone Directories

Carson City Planning Division  
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Phone: (775) 887-2180 • E-mail: [planning@carson.org](mailto:planning@carson.org)

## FILE #

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<i>SAME</i>	
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EMAIL ADDRESS	
APPLICANT AGENT/REPRESENTATIVE	PHONE #
MAILING ADDRESS, CITY, STATE, ZIP	
EMAIL ADDRESS	

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OCT 08 2020

**HISTORIC RESOURCES  
COMMISSION**

CARSON CITY  
PLANNING DIVISION

FEE: None

SUBMITTAL PACKET - 4 Complete Packets (1 Unbound Original and 3 Copies) including:

- Application Form with Signatures
- Written Project Description
- Site Plan
- Building Elevations
- Proposed Building Materials
- Documentation of Taxes Paid-to-Date

CD or USB DRIVE with complete application in PDF

Application Received and Reviewed By:

Submittal Deadline: Historic Resources Commission application submittal schedule.

Note: Submittals must be of sufficient clarity and detail for all departments to adequately review the request. Additional information may be required.

Project's Assessor Parcel Number(s):	Street Address	
<i>APN: 003-221-02</i>	<i>512 NORTH NEVADA STREET CARSON CITY</i>	
Project's Master Plan Designation	Project's Current Zoning	Nearest Major Cross Street(s)

briefly describe the work to be performed requiring Historic Resources Commission review and approval. In addition to the brief description of your project and proposed use, provide additional page(s) to show a more detailed summary of your project and proposal. NOTE: The Historic District Ordinance and Historic District Design Guidelines, as well as Policy Statements, are available in the Planning Division to aid applicants in preparing their plans. If necessary, attach additional sheets.

- REQUEST REMOVAL OF BUILDING LOCATED AT NORTH WEST CORNER OF MY PROPERTY AS IT HAS DETERIORATED BEYOND A SAFE LEVEL TO ATTEMPT REPAIR OR USE. PLEASE REFER TO PREVIOUSLY PROVIDED PICTURES OF CONDITION
- REQUEST REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT OF FENCE - NW SIDE OF PROPERTY - REFER TO PREVIOUSLY PROVIDED PICTURES - REPLACE FENCE AS IT WAS ORIGINALLY - NOTED BY PICTURES
- ADD PEA GRAVEL TO FRONT YARD AND SIDE

Reason for project:

TO RESTORE THE HOME AND PROPERTY TO ITS BEST CONDITION

Will the project involve demolition or relocation of any structure within or into the Historic District?  Yes  No If Yes, please describe:

#### SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Each application requires one complete original packet and three copies, folded to 8 1/2 x 11 inches, including a quality site plan and drawings showing work to be performed on the subject project which requires Historic Resources Commission approval. This is any work which will affect the exterior of any structure and any modifications to the site, i.e., fences, walls, or major landscaping. The name of the person responsible for preparation of the plans and drawings shall appear on each sheet.

After the initial review and acceptance of your application by staff, an additional 14 copies will be required to present your project to the Historic Resources Commission.

Attached is a Plan Checklist to aid preparation of plans and architectural drawings. It is understood that all checklist items may not be included in all projects. The list is intended to give the applicant an idea of the breadth of review by the Commission on those items which are included in the subject project. Photographs can be used for illustration and discussion, but are not acceptable as substitutes.

D Brower

Owner's Signature

Applicant's/Agent's Signature

Doug Brower

Owner's Printed Name

Applicant's/Agent's Printed Name









PHOTO #1

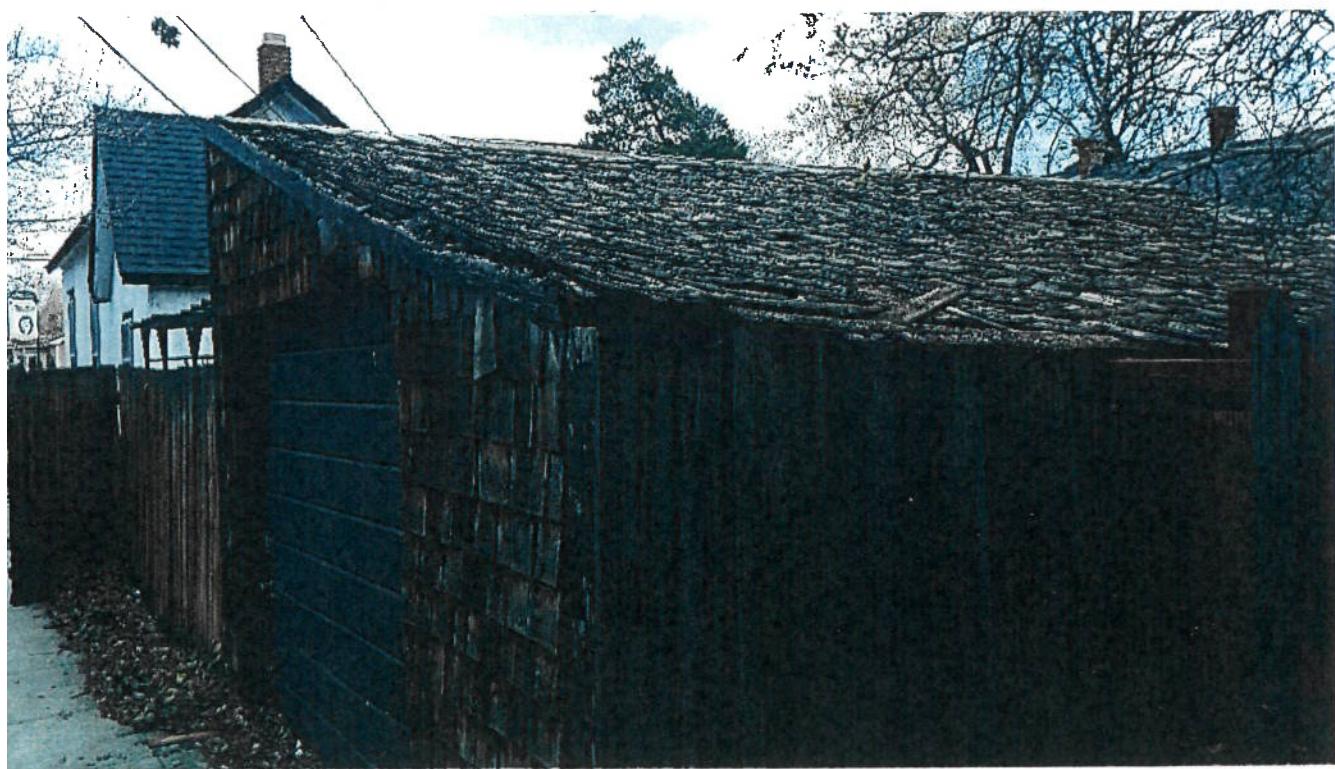


PHOTO #2

PREP OF SITE AND PLANS - DOUG BROWER



