

Benjamin Buckley

From: Robert Andersen <robert_andersen@mac.com>
Sent: Monday, April 8, 2024 6:23 PM
To: Historic District Commission (Staff)
Cc: CouncilmemberGabriela
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment on 1180 Vinewood Violation of work w/o approval

Robert Andersen
1100 Vinewood St
Detroit, MI 48216

Dear Historic Commission,

While I'm disappointed the owners of 1180 have ignored the rules and regulations regarding their redevelopment of the property to fit squarely within the guidelines established, this structure has been empty for nearly 20 years. For the last several years it appeared as a burned out hulk. Frankly, I was waiting for demolition. Instead we have what would seem to be a project that will restore the premises as a residence.

I am fearful, and I have no way of knowing one way or the other, that by requiring the changes that are described in the denial recommendation, this project will be abandoned due to additional cost. That would be a tragedy because it may be another 20 years until someone will want to improve the property to what are described as "remedies" to the historical accuracy of the structure. I think, at the very least, there is some compromise that can be worked out between the DHC (who is essentially acting on behalf of the residents of this neighborhood) and the property owner. Please don't toss away the good for the perfect.

I also want to challenge the stated arguments as to why these regulations are in place as it relates to your mission. The denial report states,

"The designation of historic districts by the Detroit City Council, and their subsequent administration by the city's Historic District Commission and enforcement by the Buildings, Safety Engineering, and Environmental Department, serves a broader public purpose from which all Detroit residents benefit. Historic districts protect the city's cultural heritage, improve property values in both the districts themselves and the surrounding areas, and strengthen the local economy. Inappropriate or incompatible work within historic districts undermines this broader public purpose."

Furthermore... *"Staff is concerned that, over time, each building in the historic district that is destroyed or inappropriately altered brings the district closer to a loss of certification and, consequently, a loss of the eligibility of buildings within the district for the associated credit"...and..."The substantial alteration of this resource, without approval and with no regard for historic character, further imperils the integrity of this district."*

I've included here an image of a structure on the very same block that has been abandoned for nearly 40 years! This is Alteration by NEGLECT. I would like you to consider if the changes to 1180 Vinewood more greatly undermine the broader public purpose of the historic district, or further imperils the integrity of this district, or brings the district closer to the loss of associated credit, than this abandoned duplex at 1116/1118 Vinewood. This is not "whatabout-ism". If the Historic Commission truly believes that they serve the public good through their enforcement, and I believe it can to an extent, and they help improve property values, it cannot ignore other structures that "undermine their broader public purpose", or "imperil the integrity of the district". To fully deny the continued work on 1180 Vinewood, and to not seek compromise, is hypocritical.



Robert Andersen