

**Property located at:** 31 N. 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
**Old Business Agenda #1**  
**Historic District:** West Park  
**Case #HDC-2016-00024**  
**Meeting date:** March 6, 2017

**Property Owner:** Kellar Properties LLC  
**Owners Address:** 3029 College Heights Blvd., Allentown, PA 18104  
**Applicant:** Kenneth "Buddy" Kellar  
**Applicant's Address:** same

**Building description, period, style, defining features:** This structure is a 2 1/2 story detached dwelling with cross gambrel gables, a full front porch with simple Doric columns and plain picket railing at the roof level, pebble dash stucco wall finish with unique half timbering detail on the front and side upper gambrel façade. The house dates from c. 1900 and is Dutch Colonial Revival in style with Tudor influences. There is a rear balcony above a rear porch.



**Proposed alterations:** It is proposed to eliminate existing unsafe rear balcony and build a wood porch with stairs to ground to provide a second means of egress for the second floor apartment. It is also proposed to put vinyl siding on back of home to correct leaking situation

**Background:** HARB Case No.: 10-WP-9, Approved Alterations: 1. Replace the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor front wrought iron railing with vinyl railing system of square stock. 2. Replace 2<sup>nd</sup> floor rear balcony "flooring" with tongue and groove wood, 1/2 glass door and full view screen door.

HARB Case No. 01-WP-3, was withdrawn; as the satellite dish on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor front balcony was grandfathered when the district was formed.

**Violations:** none

**Guideline Citation:** **SIS 9.** New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment. **SIS 6.** Deteriorated features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. **Allentown Guidelines for Historic Districts:** Chapter 5. Guidelines for Existing Buildings and Structures, 1. Repairs, Replacement and Alternate Materials; 7. Porches and Stoops

**Evaluation, effect on historic district, recommendations:** New plans have been submitted for the construction of a porch and stair at the rear. The new proposed porch is 15' wide and 7'-9" deep and constructed of pressure treated 2 x material. The deck is to be supported with 4" round posts and will have a metal guard and railing. The proposed steps to ground have similar pressure treated materials for stringers and steps and metal posts, guard and railing. The proposed work is historically appropriate as simply a deck or a deck with steps to grade. It is recommended that the wood and metal be painted to blend with the colors of the house (after the pressure treated materials are appropriately dry). The details of the guard should be discussed. Are the balusters round or square? Is there a bottom rail for the guard?

From the previous evaluation in January:

*The proposed alterations need clarification to be deemed appropriate. More detailed, scaled, drawings should be submitted for review if the proposal is approved:*

1. *Size of porch (extension out from house) and how it relates to the porch and porch railing below.*
2. *Materials to be used to construct the steps and railings.*

*Installation of vinyl siding on this stuccoed house is not historically appropriate. Note- covering the stucco with siding would not "correct leaking situation" as noted by applicant. The cause of the leaking needs to be addressed and stucco repaired. Covering with siding will not solve the real issue(s). It appears that the horizontal cornice was cut and removed on the rear gable. The stucco above and below the cornice were at different planes and a poor transition made to between the surface levels. It is suggested to rebuild the cornice across the façade to the porch and to properly flash the cornice and new porch/balcony to eliminate water infiltration.*

**Discussion:** The applicant explained details of the new balcony and steps. He said the new porch size would be 15' x 7'-9" and the depth approximately matched the existing first floor stoop. He also corrected the submission to request the use of wood railing and guard on the balcony and steps instead of metal as shown on the drawings. The HARB asked that the new railing/guard be traditionally designed with a top rail, square balusters and a bottom rail. The applicant went on to explain that he might not be installing the exit stairs and had found a location inside the building where he might put an exit stair. The reason, he said, was the requirement to change almost all the windows on the rear within 10' of the stair to fire rated. He asked if the HARB could approve the balcony with the stairs and without. There was a bit longer discussion of the windows and what they would replace by. Because the windows are at the rear Mr. Kimmerly could review the potential window replacements and give staff approval if they met the Design Guideline requirements. It was verified that the applicant was not still requested to install vinyl siding on the rear of the building. He said he would be repairing the stucco and not installing vinyl siding since the HARB did not permit it at the last meeting.

**Motion:** The HARB upon motion by Mr. Berner and seconded by Mr. Sell adopted the proposal that City Council issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed work described herein:

1. The proposal to eliminate existing rear balcony and build a wood porch with stairs to ground at 31 N. 17<sup>th</sup> Street was presented by Kenneth Kellar.
2. The new rear balcony will be 15' wide and 7'-9" deep and constructed of pressure treated 2 x material.
3. The balcony will be supported with 4" round posts and will have a wood guard and railing.
4. The proposed steps to ground, in built, will have similar pressure treated materials for stringers and steps.
5. The guard and railing will be wood with square balusters (approximately 2" in size), bottom rail and top rails.
6. The balcony and steps will be painted to blend with the house colors as soon as the wood is adequately dry. Opaque stain could be used instead of paint.
7. Any changes to the windows will require staff approval.
8. The proposal to recommend a COA was unanimously approved. (6-0; motion carried; Berner, Huber, Jackson, Renaut, Roberts, Sell)

**Property located at:** 726 W Gordon Street  
**Old Business Agenda #2**  
**Historic District:** Old Allentown  
**Case #HDA-2016-000183**  
**Meeting date:** March 6, 2017

**Property Owner:** Lakeview Loan and Servicing LLC  
**Address:** 4425 Ponce DeLeon Blvd,  
Mailstop M55/251, Coral  
Gables, FL 33146  
**Applicant:** City of Allentown  
**Applicant's Address:** 435 Hamilton St,  
Allentown, PA 18101

**Building description, period, style, defining features:** This 2½-story painted brick end-of-row house, ca 1870 is Federal in style. The gable roof has asphalt shingles, dentilated cornice and a single chimney. The windows are 1/1 sash with brick lintels and louvered shutters. The main entry is a single glazed door with a boarded up transom. The concrete stoop has a railing and there is a basement window grille visible.



**Proposed alterations:** It is proposed to demolish the building. The brick east wall is in poor condition and has a bulge. Interior inspection revealed floor joists coming out of packets due to the outward movement of the wall. The building is owned by a mortgage servicing company and appears to have been a foreclosure in 2015. The building is currently vacant.

**Staff Approvals:** n/a

**Background:** Per HARB Case No. 1983-35, a Certificate of Appropriateness application was withdrawn August 6, 1983.

Per HARB Case No. 2011-47, a Certificate of Appropriateness was approved for:

1. Remove lead paint from exterior of building, clean brick and repoint where necessary.
2. Replace existing downspouts with round galvanized downspout.
3. Remove loose paint, power wash, spot point and apply lead block with 2 coats of masonry paint to seal.
4. Move the paneled shutters from the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor façade, put one paneled shutter on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor window, install the other two paneled shutters on 728 W Gordon Street façade and louvered shutters can be installed on both houses.

**Violations:** August 20, 2007: Side porch door replaced with inappropriate interior door.

**Guideline Citation: SIS 9.** New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment. **Allentown Guidelines for Historic Districts:** 5. Guidelines for Existing Buildings and Structures, 3. Demolition

**Evaluation, effect on historic district, recommendations:** Although originally hoping to repair the existing masonry problems of the building's façade, the bank is now asking to demolish the house. A structural engineering report should be made available. Although this building is not a high style building it is an important part of the fabric of the historic district. The integrity of the historic district depends to a great degree on complete blocks of row houses and

twins. This house is part of a continuous streetscape and is important for that reason. It is recommended to not demolish the building, but to repair as quickly as possible as outlined in the first structural report.

**From 10/2016 meeting: Discussion:** *There was a lengthy discussion of the proposed demolition. The owner's representative explained the difficulties presented in repairing or rebuilding the façade (lead paint, power lines, powdering brick, interior support issues). He stated that the cost of demolition will be approximately \$120,000. The costs for repairing the facade were discussed and the HARB thought that a lot of repair work could be done for approximately the same cost. All HARB members expressed the opinion that the building should be saved and repaired. City Councilman McGuire and Councilwoman Candida Affa suggested alternate uses for the empty lot if the house was demolished: a City park, parking, or giving it to the neighboring property owner. The biggest concern was the lack of maintenance that the empty lot would see. The property would become an eyesore even if demolished. Interested property owners made some comments and expressed concerns about the wall collapsing and killing someone. People still walk down the street even though it is closed. The most vocal neighbor said he thought the building should be demolished.*

**Motion:** *The HARB upon motion by Mr. Berner and seconded by Mr. Huber adopted the proposal that City Council DENY a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the building and offered instead a modification which will be appropriate as follows:*

1. *The proposal to demolish the building at 726 W. Gordon St was presented by Joe Capulish, contractor pricing work for the owner.*
2. *Demolition of this house is not historically appropriate and based on the structural report written for the City, the east wall of the building could be repaired.*
3. *In the effort to help make the repair more cost effective, the HARB will permit the east wall to be rebuilt in CMU (concrete block) with a smooth stucco finish.*
4. *Windows which are currently vinyl may be replaced with new vinyl windows but the windows must match the existing in size, type, and number*
5. *A wood rake board similar to the existing should be installed at the roof edge.*
6. *If another controlling authority were to approve the demolition, the HARB recommended the following mitigation efforts:*
  - a. *Repair and finish the revealed party wall with smooth stucco*
  - b. *The foundation must be filled with compacted gravel*
  - c. *The site must be fenced with a 5' high black, traditionally styled metal fence with double top rail and verticals spaced approximately 4" apart.*
  - d. *The fence at the south and west property edges may be fenced with a stained wood, shadow-box style fence 5' high.*
7. *The owner will immediately shore up, brace and make the property secure to protect the public. The Certificate of Appropriateness will expire on November 30, 2016, after which if the wall is not permanently repaired the case will be treated as a violation and penalties and enforcement will be applied as stated in the Allentown Historic District Ordinance.*
8. *The proposal to deny the demolition was unanimously approved*

**Discussion:** The project was represented by Tom Brodhead of the City of Allentown and the owner of the building was represented by attorney John Goryl. Mr. Goryl said the owner was working with Base Engineering to revise specifications and plans to renovate the building as required by the HARB in the previous COA. He thought the plans would be ready soon. Mr. Brodhead said that the City has been told this and been promised work would begin numerous times without action occurring. Nothing has happen in 6 months, and the COA expired in November 2016. The City thinks the owner is stalling and not intending to repair the building. The City is concerned about public safety and that shoring done by the owner was not effective or adequate. For these reasons the City requested a COA to demolish the building. The HARB thought some more time should be given if the Base Engineering plans were nearing completion and the building had a chance to being repaired and renovated. Mr. Kimmerly told the HARB that he has been regularly checking the building and has not seen any movement in the cracks, but he qualified this by saying he was not a structural engineer and his observation could not be seen as a statement on the building's structural integrity. Ms. Frederick from the State Historic Preservation Office was at the meeting and explained if the City used CDBG money to demolish the building a 106 review would need to be done prior to the demolition. This would take some time to complete. There was some discussion about fines that could be levied against the owner if work not commenced by a stipulated date. It was noted that the Blighted Property process would result in a higher fine and a stronger standing legally for the fines that the

Historic Ordinance. The conclusion of the discussion was to give a limited additional time period for the owner to commence repairs on the building.

**Motion:** The HARB upon motion by Mr. Huber and seconded by Ms. Jackson adopted the proposal that City Council DENY a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the building and offered instead a modification which will be appropriate as follows:

1. The proposal to demolish the building at 726 W. Gordon St was presented by Tom Brodhead of the City of Allentown.
2. Demolition of this house is not historically appropriate and based on the structural report written for the City, the east wall of the building could be repaired.
3. In the effort to help make the repair more cost effective, the HARB will permit the east wall to be rebuilt in CMU (concrete block) with a smooth stucco finish.
4. Windows which are currently vinyl may be replaced with new vinyl windows but the windows must match the existing in size, type, and number
5. A wood rake board similar to the existing should be installed at the roof edge.
6. If another controlling authority were to approve the demolition, the HARB recommended the following mitigation efforts:
  - a. Repair and finish the revealed party wall with smooth stucco
  - b. The foundation must be filled with compacted gravel
  - c. The site must be fenced with a 5' high black, traditionally styled metal fence with double top rail and verticals spaced approximately 4" apart.
  - d. The fence at the south and west property edges may be fenced with a stained wood, shadow-box style fence 5' high.
7. The owner will immediately shore-up, brace and make the property secure to protect the public. The Certificate of Appropriateness will expire on April 30, 2017 after which if the wall is not permanently repaired the case will be treated as a violation and penalties and enforcement will be applied as stated in the Allentown Historic District Ordinance at a minimum.
8. The owner will also immediately get the new engineering report, plans and specifications to Mr. Kimmerly at the City. The documents must include the cost estimates and construction time frame for the repairs.
9. The proposal to deny the demolition was unanimously approved. (6-0; motion carried; *Berner, Huber, Jackson, Renaut, Roberts, Sell*)

**Property located at:** 428-440 N 6th Street

**Agenda #1**

**Historic District:** Fairgrounds

**Case #HDC-2017-00001**

**Meeting date:** March 6, 2017

**Property Owner:** Redevelopment Authority of the City of Allentown

**Owners Address:** 435 Hamilton St., Allentown, PA 18104

**Applicant:** Same

**Applicant's Address:** Same

**Building description, period, style, defining features:** This structure is a large masonry 'twin' with cross gable roofing, hexagonal corner turrets, 1/1 windows, and large wrap-around porch. Considerable alterations and additions have occurred at both halves, particularly at the southern/left side. There are multiple Victorian style details, mainly Eastlake, but much is altered or covered. The building dates from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and is in poor condition.



**Proposed alterations:** It is proposed to demolish the building.

**Guideline Citation: SIS 9.** New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment. **Allentown Guidelines for Historic Districts: 5.** Guidelines for Existing Buildings and Structures, 3. Demolition

**Evaluation, effect on historic district, recommendations:** The proposed demolition would be unfortunate given the site's history and what's left of exterior and interior details, however much of it is in very deteriorated condition. Much of the southern half is completely lost due to alterations over time. Even with a substantial amount of investment, returning to this property to its former glory would be an extremely difficult and expensive undertaking.

**Discussion:** The demolition of the building was represented by Mr. Brodhead and the end user, Dave Evans of HADC. At the invitation of Mr. Evans, Mr. Frank Whelan, a local historian, gave a presentation of the history of the house and the original owners, Mr. Trexler and Mr. Gangware. He noted that Mr. Trexler, noted Allentown businessman of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, had minimal involvement with the house and never lived there. Mr. Gangware, noted builder of the same time period, lived there until 1 year before his death. He said major changes to the building were done by subsequent owners of the funeral home that was located there for approximately 30 years until 1975. Mr. Whelan concluded his comments saying the twin house has been greatly altered and is poor condition.

Studies and cost estimates were done on the building about 5 years ago and the costs were so high that the conclusion was the property would need to be demolished. Mr. Evans explained that because NSP (Neighborhood Stabilization Program) money was used by the City to purchase the property in 2008 the end use will have to be low income housing. The HARB asked Mr. Evans what he planned for the site after demolition. He said HADC would construct 12-18 new housing units as part of a larger development with additional lots that they hoped to acquire. The units would be rental and they would be architecturally consistent with the historic district. He understood that all plans would need to be reviewed and approved by the HARB.



He said he hoped to be under construction and completed for summer 2018. The Historic Consultant recommended row house type infill and also recommended that the historic stone wall on the site be retained if the existing house demolished. Short term plans for the site were also discussed since the demolition would occur well before new construction started. Mr. Brodhead said they would be willing to “green” the site and install a low fence. A metal fence instead of his proposed split rail fence was suggested.

HARB member, Ms. Jackson, said the property is being used by homeless and is a public hazard. She said she was also worried that environmental conditions such as mold will also make the costs to rehabilitate too high. She made a motion to permit the demolition which was seconded by Mr. Berner, but withdrew the motion after Ms. Frederick from the SHPO said that perhaps the HARB should wait until the 106 review process is completed. At that time the HARB would have better documentation on which to make their motion to permit the demolition. The City said they would waive the 75 day HARB review period, and Ms. Jackson made a new motion to table to the case until 106 documentation received on the project.

**Motion:** The HARB upon motion by Mr. Berner and seconded by Mr. Renaut adopted the proposal to table the project for 106 review documentation to support the demolition.

1. The proposal to table was unanimously approved. (6-0; motion carried; *Berner, Huber, Jackson, Renaut, Roberts, Sell*)

**Property located at:** 1136 Chestnut Street

**Agenda #2**

**Historic District:** Old Allentown

**Case #HDC-2017-00002**

**Meeting date:** March 6, 2017

**Property Owner:** Makayla Realty LLC

**Owners Address:** PO Box 525, Wharton, NJ 02885

**Applicant:** Sobrinski Painting Inc

**Applicant's Address:** 128 N 11<sup>th</sup> St, Allentown, PA 18102

**Building description, period, style, defining features:** This structure is the end of a group of three brick row homes with small projecting cornice and low sloping roof, 1/1 windows with segmental arches, wood porch with columns, and ½ -lite wood door at the entry. The rear of the property has a wood frame garage with non-original paneled metal roll up door. The house has Italianate influences and dates from the early 20th century.



**Proposed alterations:** It is proposed to demolish the garage.

**Guideline Citation:** **SIS 9.** New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment. **Allentown Guidelines for Historic Districts:** 5. Guidelines for Existing Buildings and Structures, 3. Demolition

**Evaluation, effect on historic district, recommendations:** The existing garage is in very deteriorated condition and it does not retain any historic features. Demolition in this case is historically acceptable. If a new garage is to be built, plans for work will need to be submitted for review.

**Discussion:** The discussion for the demolition focused on the work to be done after demolition. There was no dispute on the need to demolish the garage due to its very poor condition and the lack of historic character. It was noted that there is siding on the adjacent garage and that they are not attached. The existing concrete pad will be retained and used for parking.

**Motion:** The HARB upon motion by Ms. Roberts and seconded by Ms. Jackson adopted the proposal that City Council issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed work described herein:

1. The proposal to demolish the building at 428-440 N 6th Street was presented by Mark Ackeret from Sobrinski Painting.
2. The existing deteriorated garage may be demolished due to its condition and lack of historic character and integrity.
3. The existing concrete pad will remain and be used for parking for 2 cars.
4. The proposal to recommend a COA was unanimously approved. (6-0; motion carried; *Berner, Huber, Jackson, Renaut, Roberts, Sell*)