

STAFF REPORT

REGIONAL CENTER HEARING EXAMINER - HIGH IMPACT CASE

Case Number	2023-REG-095
Address (approx.)	838 Greer Street
Location	Center Township, Council District # 16
Petitioner	EGG Realty, LLC, by Andrew Brindley
Zoning	D-8 (RC)
Request	Regional Center Approval to provide for demolition of an existing single-family dwelling in order to construct a proposed two-story single-family dwelling.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Existing Zoning	D-8 (RC)	
Existing Land Use	One single-family dwelling	
Urban Design Guidelines District Typology	Neighborhood Residential	
Regional Center Plan	Traditional neighborhood development	
Surrounding Context	Zoning	Land Use
	North: D-8 (RC)	Residential
	South: D-8 (RC)	Residential
	East: D-8 (RC)	Residential
	West: I-3 (RC)	Single- and two-family dwellings / vacant commercial
Thoroughfare Plan		
	Greer Street Local street	48-foot right-of-way existing and proposed
Site Plan – Submittal Date	File-dated November 14, 2023; revised December 1, 2023	
Elevation– Submittal Date	File-dated November 14, 2023; revised December 1, 2023 (conceptual)	
Hearing Date	December 14, 2023	

DETAILED SUMMARY OF REQUEST

This petition would provide for demolition of an existing single-family dwelling to be replaced with a two-story single-family dwelling. The petitioner submitted a structural assessment report of the existing dwelling and a Renovation Proforma statement. The site is mid-block between McCarty Street and Buchanan Street, and one-half block east of East Street.

The subject site is within the Holy Rosary / Danish Church Historic District, which is a *National Register of Historic Places* designation, however, the area is not within a locally designated historic district.

The subject dwelling is identified on a map of the neighborhood in the *National Register of Historic Places* Nomination Form as a ‘contributing’ structure, therefore, per the *Regional Center Design Guidelines*, the demolition request is considered a “High Impact” project and requires a public hearing.

It was noted in the *National Register of Historic Places* nomination form that the Holy Rosary / Danish Church neighborhood is “significant because of its unique ethnic development during the period 1854 to 1909”. The statement further reads: “Platted by businessmen who were prominent in the first period of Indianapolis’s settlement, the area was first inhabited by German, Irish and Welsh immigrants who were responsible for the construction of the earliest residences”.

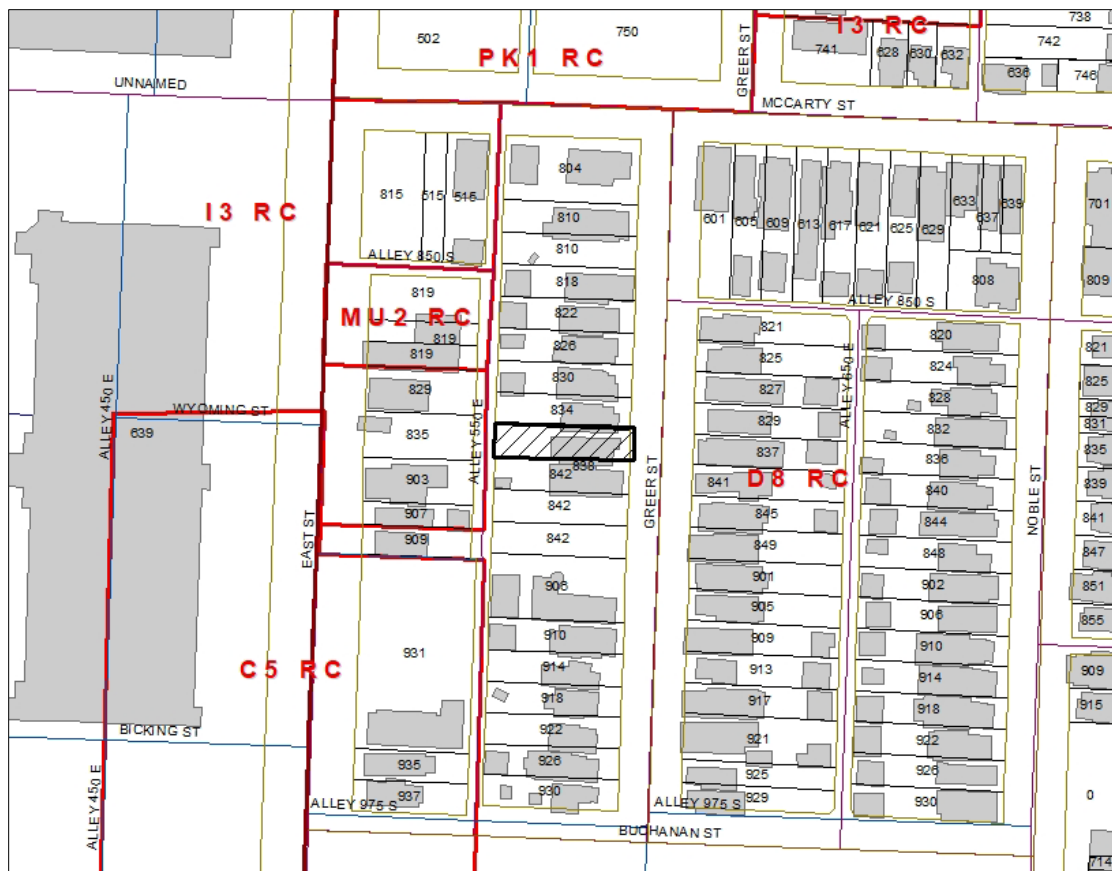
No detailed information on the subject structure is noted in the *National Register of Historic Places* nomination form. However, the subject structure abuts 834 Greer Street, to the north, which is rated as a ‘significant’ structure. A photo of a portion of Greer Street was included in the nomination form and is included in this report, below.

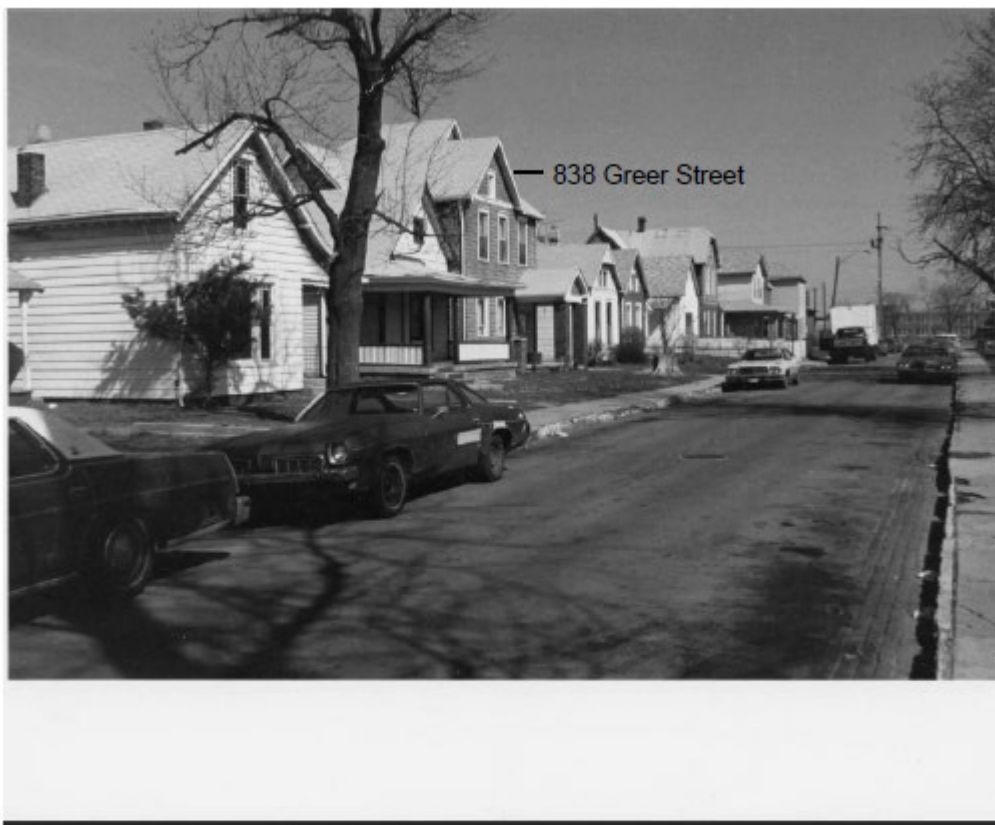
As part of a pre-filing consultation with the petitioner, staff requested supportive documentation to substantiate the demolition of the dwelling. Staff received a seven-page structural engineer’s report for the structure. The submitted information indicates that the firm that conducted the report was to make “a determination that need to be addressed to make the home structurally sound for a restoration...” The report notes that the date of construction was “1885... set upon brick masonry foundation walls and was not of insect-resistant lumber”. Furthermore, the report notes that siding was becoming detached after years of decay of water intrusion. The engineer recommended that the structure be demolished. It is clear that significant work to restore the structure would be required.

A revised Proforma statement was submitted to the file on December 1, 2023. It indicates that to remedy structural issues, the cost to repair would be \$968,755.68. The proposed construction cost of a new structure would be \$509,921,99.

The petitioner proposes to construct a two-story single-family dwelling. A revised site plan also notes a proposed detached garage; however, no elevations have been submitted to the file for the detached garage. Proposed single- and two-family dwellings and accessory structures are exempt from The *Regional Center Design Guidelines*. Instead, staff would utilize the *Infill Housing Guidelines* to review the design of the proposed dwelling and detached garage. Staff has included a preliminary design of the proposed structure in this report, below.

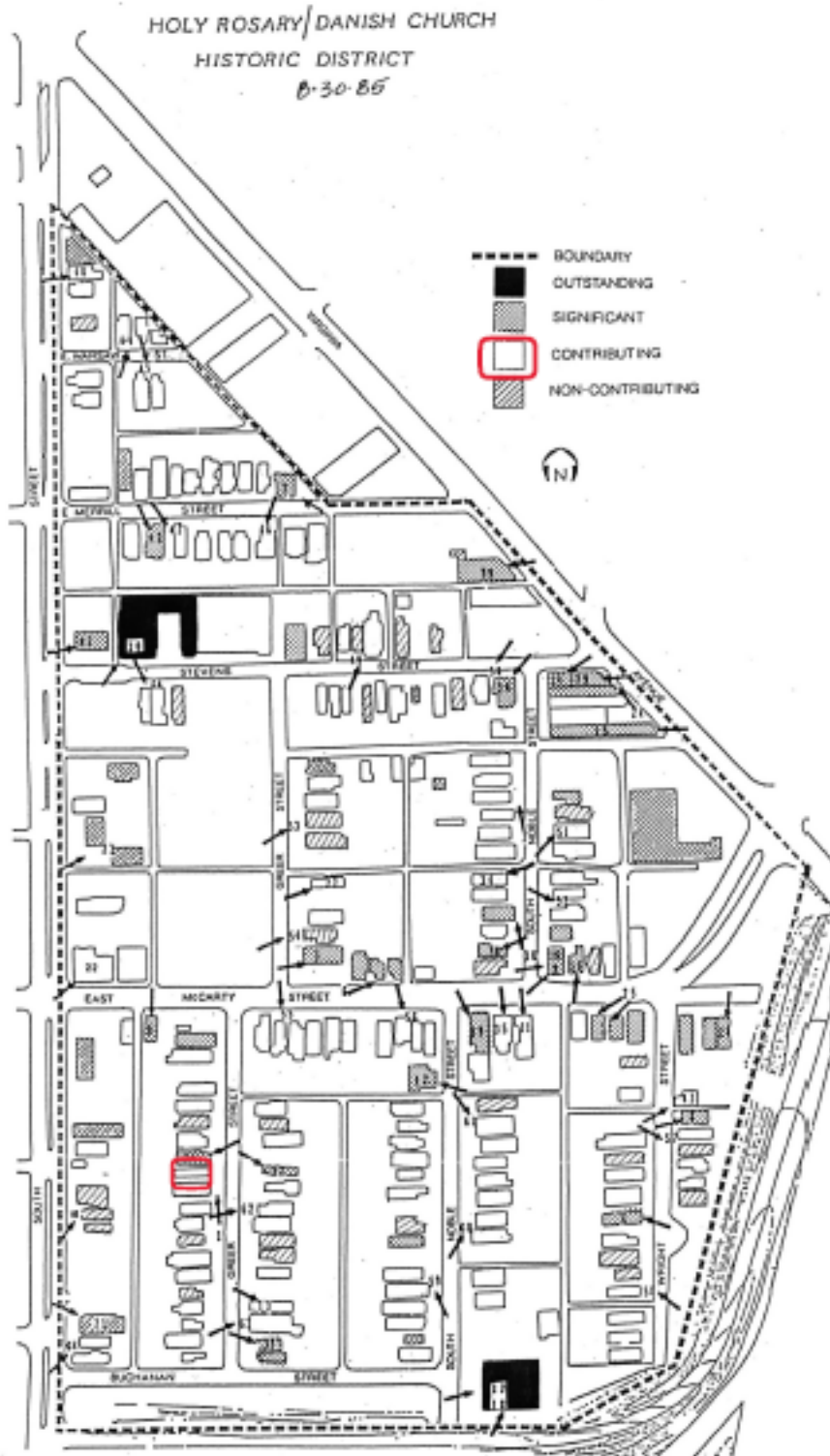
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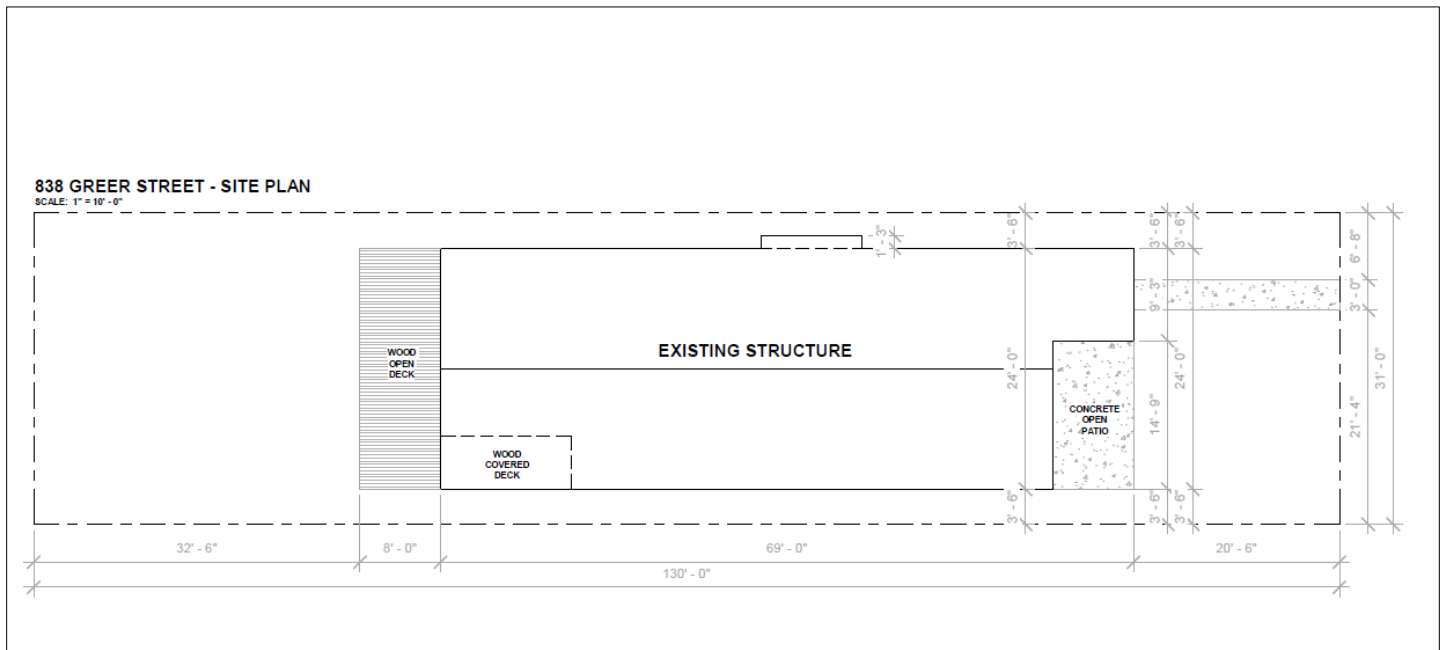


800 Block Greer Street
Holy Rosary/Danish Church Historic District
Indianapolis, Indiana
Photographer: Diana R. Elrod
Spring, 1984
Negative location: Historic Landmarks
Foundation of Indiana - Kemper House
View: Looking northwest
Map/photo #1

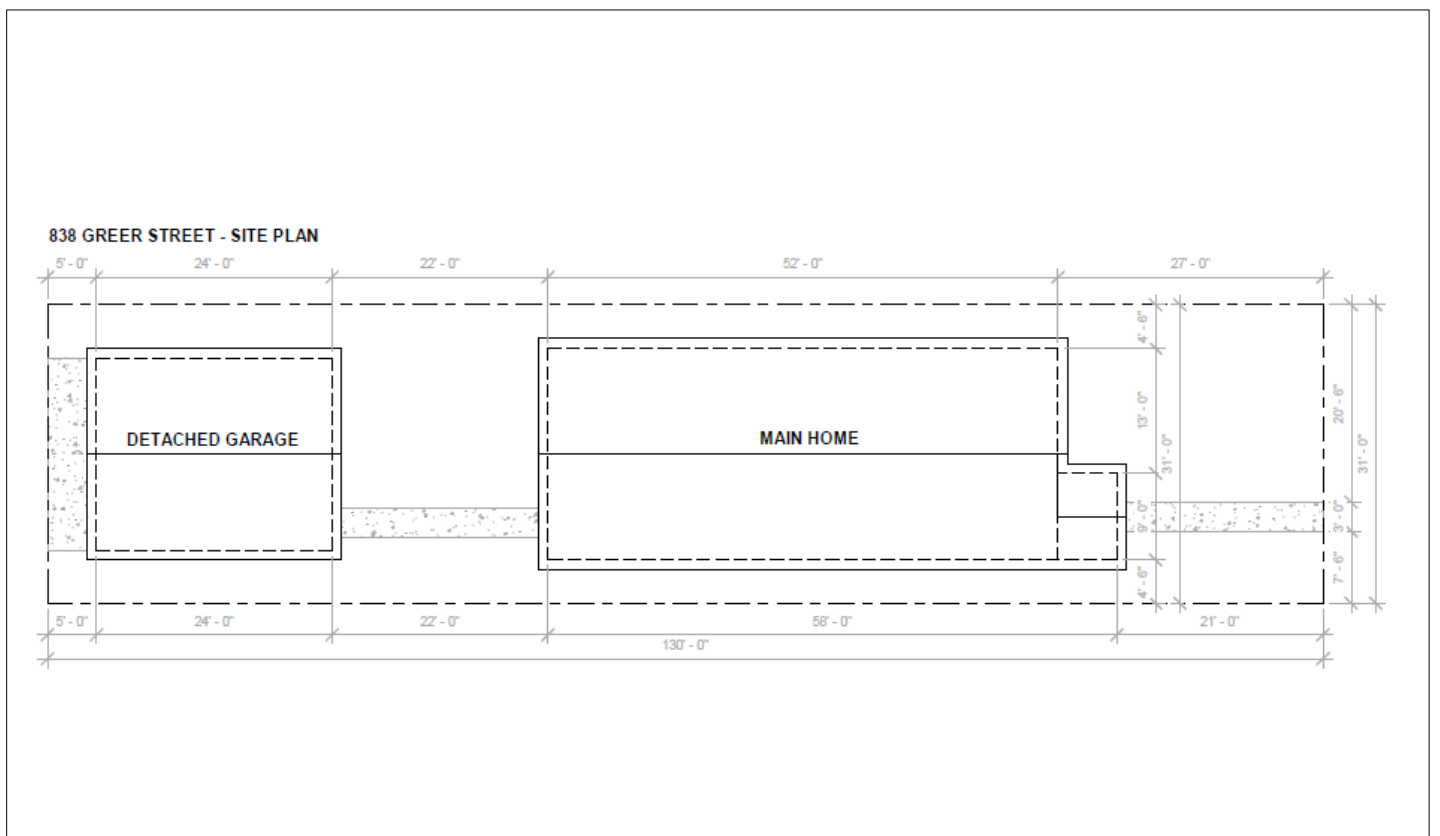
Photo from the *National Register of Historic Places* Nomination document, with subject site identified.



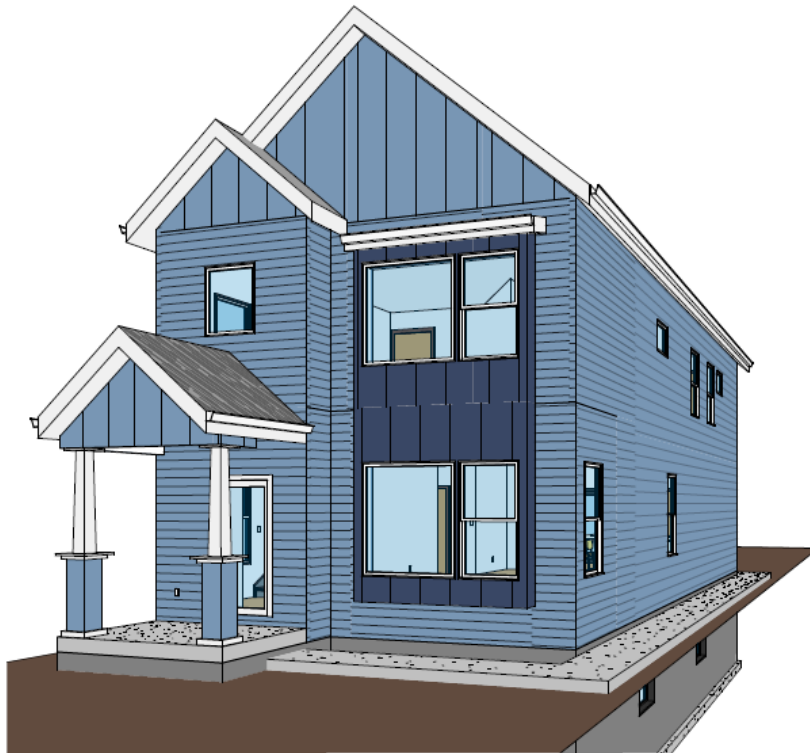
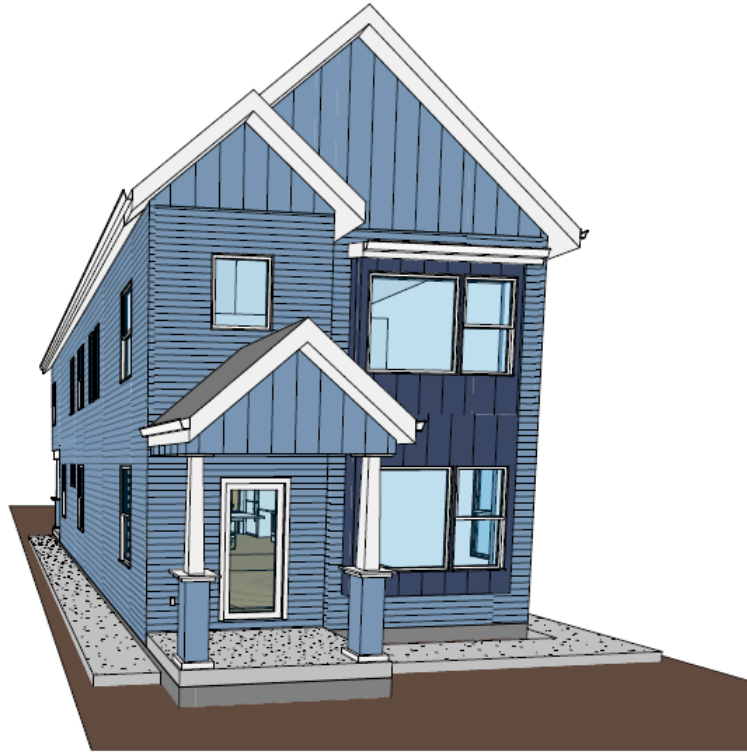
Map of Holy Rosary / Danish Church Historic District, identifying the subject structure as 'Contributing'.

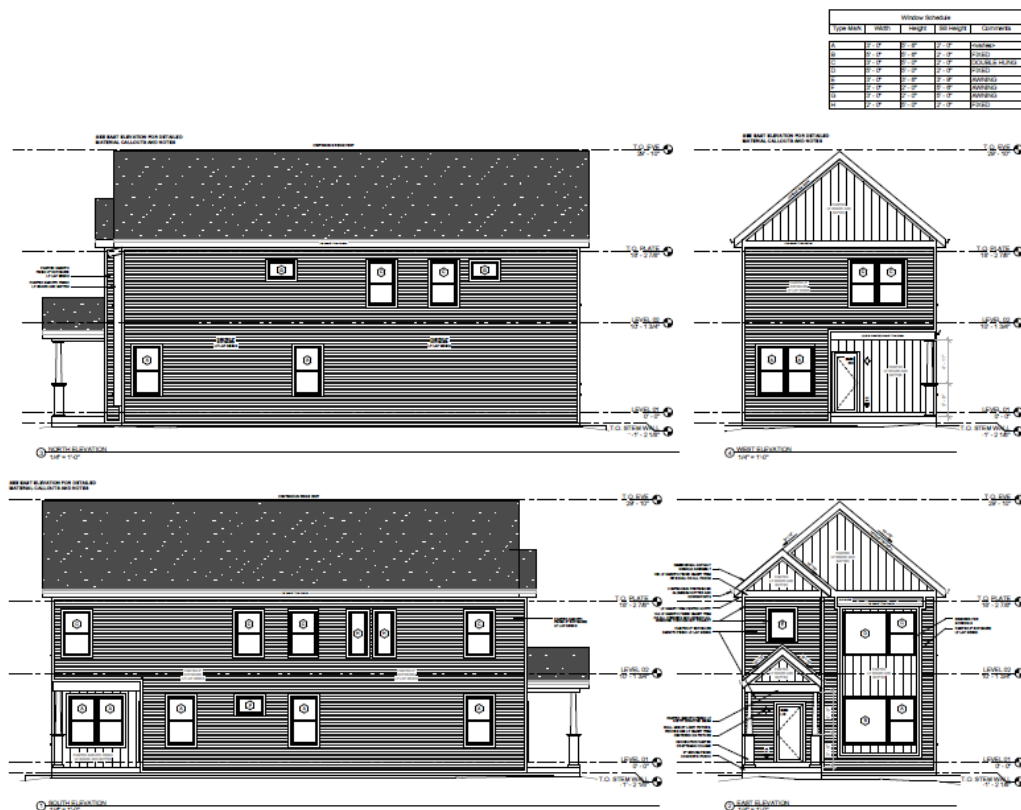
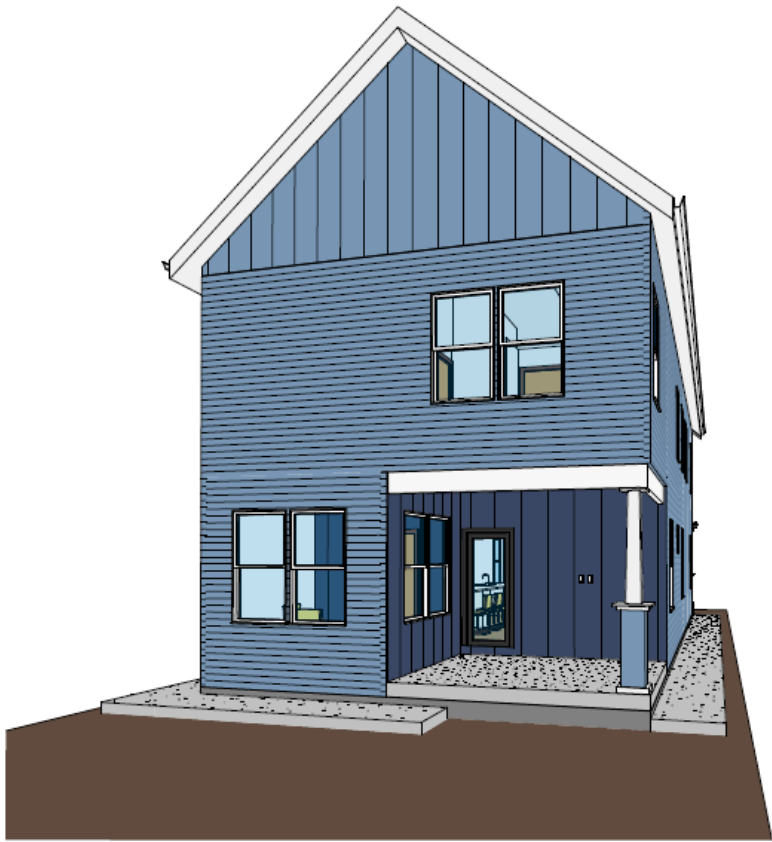


Existing site plan



Proposed site plan





ELEVATIONS

"Animate Model"
ZUNARELLI RESIDENCE

A02

Concept design and elevations

APPLICABLE DISTRICT TYPOLOGY – *Typology description directly from the Regional Center Design Guidelines.*

Neighborhood Residential (NR)

The Neighborhood Residential typology occurs in neighborhoods with houses that are medium-density and primarily pre-WWII construction or areas of new housing construction developed in a similar pattern. Homes are in single-family, townhome, or apartment configurations. Parcels are typically deep with narrow street frontage. Homes have small setbacks and front yards. The environment is pedestrian in nature. Examples of the Neighborhood Residential typology are Stringtown and the Valley.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

URBAN STRUCTURE (US) GUIDELINES

Urban Structure Guidelines relate to large-scale urban design components like viewsheds, landmarks, public spaces and historic resources. Guidelines also relate to historic and current plans for the Downtown area.

REQ = Required guideline; ADV = Recommended (Advised) guideline; INFO = Informational; NA = Guideline does not apply.

US1.1 - Consistency with Adopted Plans	The Regional Center Zoning Ordinance is the legal basis for the review of development activities in the Regional Center, and the Indianapolis Regional Center Plan 2020 is the legal articulation of the plan components, goals, and standards for the area. The specific guidelines contained in this document are directly related to the implementation of the Indianapolis Regional Center Plan 2020 adopted by the Metropolitan Development Commission. The Indianapolis Regional Center Plan 2020 document contains proposed land use, proposed housing development, pedestrian and bicycle routes, land use framework and other relevant information.	APPRAISAL
REQ	<p><i>US 1.1.1 – Proposals subject to Regional Center review shall be consistent with the following adopted plans, where applicable:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Indianapolis Regional Center Plan 2020</i> <i>Sixteenth to Thirtieth Street Meridian Street Corridor Land Use Plan</i> <i>Subarea Plans</i> <i>Redevelopment Area Plans</i> <i>Marion County Thoroughfare Plan</i> <i>Indianapolis Regional Pedestrian Plan</i> <i>Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Area Multi-Modal Corridor and Public Space Design Guidelines</i> <i>Indianapolis Marion County Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan</i> 	Satisfied
US1.2 - Boundaries & Edges	The mixed-use nature of the Regional Center sometimes produces incompatible land use neighbors, and the incompatible elements should be minimized. Frontage streets and landscaped corridors also function as buffers, boundaries and edges.	APPRAISAL
ADV	<p><i>US 1.2.1 – Buffers consisting of berms, evergreens and/or walls should be constructed in cases where the Indianapolis Regional Center Plan 2020 land use plan indicates residential development or campus development adjacent to industrial development, railroads or Interstates and as the right-of-way or site permits.</i></p>	Not Applicable
REQ	<p><i>US 1.2.2 – High- or medium-density development adjacent to, or near to, low-density residential development (6 to 15 Units/Acre and/or 16 to 27 Units/Acre) is to be designed to minimize traffic congestion on local streets, noise, glare and other negative impacts.</i></p>	Not Applicable
REQ	<p><i>US 1.2.3 – In areas undergoing transformation in land use (such as from industrial to residential), new development should consider the character and impact of existing development. New development should consider mitigating the impacts of existing noise, traffic, service access and other undesirable conditions.</i></p>	Infill Housing Guidelines

US1.3 - Viewsheds, Vistas & Landmarks		<p><i>Views of landmark buildings, monuments and plazas and of the downtown skyline are public assets that should be protected. Views of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, the Capitol Building, the World War Memorial Plaza and the Public Library are the top priorities considered here.</i></p> <p><i>For the purposes of these guidelines protected viewsheds are: (1) Meridian Street from Washington Street to Fall Creek, (2) Market Street from New Jersey Street to Capitol Avenue, (3) Capitol Avenue from Washington Street to Ohio Street, (4) Pennsylvania Street from Ohio Street to St. Joseph Street and (5) Monument Circle.</i></p>	APPRAISAL
NA	US 1.3.1 – Protected viewsheds shall not be obstructed by signs, canopies, awnings, bus shelters, pedestrian bridges, banners, utilities or traffic control signs. A maximum projection of four feet from the property line with a minimum Clear Height Zone of nine feet is not considered to be a visual obstruction.	Not Applicable	
NA	US 1.3.2 – Only deciduous trees are permitted to be planted in the public sphere (right-of-way) or adjacent to the Pedestrian Way.	Not Applicable	
REQ	US 1.3.3 – Hotels located along protected viewsheds are to develop any covered vehicle “drop off and pick up” areas on side streets. Hotel pedestrian entrance canopies may be permitted along a viewshed because the hotels provide 24/7 sidewalk activity and access. Design must minimize view obstruction, have no side “curtains,” and be of high quality, durable materials. No pull through drop-off permitted along a protected viewshed. Curbside designated areas are permitted if curbside parking restrictions are compatible.	Not Applicable – not a hotel	
US1.4 - Gateways		<p><i>Gateways create a sense of arrival at a place. They can be (1) transitional corridors such as the West Washington Street corridor adjacent to the Zoo linking the downtown and the west side neighborhoods, (2) a physical element marking a point of transition between districts, such as the Interstate underpasses approaching the downtown or (3) the sequence of views leading to a destination, such as views of the downtown skyline starting at 121st Street when southbound on North Meridian Street.</i></p>	APPRAISAL
REQ	US 1.4.1 – Existing physical elements in the public sphere, such as bridges and underpasses, are to be designed to be safe for pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles.	Not Applicable	
ADV	US 1.4.2 – The design of bridges, underpasses and other gateways should incorporate unique lighting, painting, graphics and materials.	None proposed	
ADV	US 1.4.3 – All gateway projects that are proposed by “grassroots” initiatives will be reviewed for contextual relationships, durability and cultural relevance to the area.	None proposed	
US1.5 - Public Art		<p><i>Art should be an integral part of infrastructure improvements and new construction. Interactive art, fountains, paving, landscaping, graphics, lighting and sculpture can communicate our culture’s values and create a more vital environment. Art (for the purposes of these guidelines) is defined as original works created by an individual or team that is experienced in their discipline. The following disciplines are included as having the potential for producing original creative works:</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>(1) Artists - visual arts, performing arts and literary arts,</i> <i>(2) Craftsmen - glass, metal, weaving, quilting, pottery, etc., or</i> <i>(3) Design professionals - architecture, landscapes, interiors, engineers, etc.</i></p> <p><i>In general, art is a creative expression by an individual or design team that also ultimately controls the aesthetic outcome.</i></p>	APPRAISAL
ADV	US 1.5.1 – Support for the arts is recommended to be integrated into the design of every new public and new commercial project with a floor area over 50,000 square feet in size or having a construction cost of over \$1,000,000.	None proposed	
ADV	US 1.5.2 – Public Art is recommended to be integrated with all new public institution and government construction projects greater than \$1,000,000 in value. Public Art is art that is located on public property and/or integrated with public construction projects. Public Art can include all forms of original works of art, exterior or interior, which are accessible to the public during normal hours of operation.	None proposed	

	REQ	<i>US 1.5.3 – All permanent installations of art located in the Public Sphere or Quasi-Public Sphere shall be constructed of durable materials, not interfere with public safety, and be free of advertising. The installation shall provide access for as many individuals as possible (the provision of access for the mobility, hearing and vision impaired is encouraged), consider public safety and liability issues; consider vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns; consider the relationship to architectural and natural features, landscape design, environmental impact, and future plans for the area. Petitioners are encouraged to develop a long-term maintenance program for all permanent installations.</i>	None proposed
	REQ	<i>US 1.5.4 – All temporary installations of art shall not interfere with public safety and be free of advertising. Petitioners are encouraged to develop a long-term maintenance program for any such installation that uses recurring temporary or non-durable elements (such as flags or banners).</i>	None proposed
	NA	<i>US 1.5.5 – Large scale installations of landscaping (environmental art), urban graphics or art consisting of dispersed components are encouraged. Projects will be reviewed for compatibility with these guidelines.</i>	None proposed
US1.6 - Festivals, Ceremonies & Parades		<i>The Regional Center contains many of the primary festival and celebration spaces in the Central Indiana region, including World War Memorial Plaza, Military Park, Monument Circle, the City Market, White River State Park and the Central Canal Corridor.</i>	APPRAISAL
	NA	<i>US 1.6.1 – Projects over 150,000 square feet in size should consider developing space for receptions, special events and related activities. The space can be located in the Public, Quasi-public or Private built environment sphere. Ensure that all areas are ADA Accessible.</i>	Not Applicable
	REQ	<i>US 1.6.2 – Ensure that the responsibility for maintenance of all improvements located in the quasi-public sphere or public sphere is established.</i>	Satisfied
US2.1 - Historic Districts		<i>The Regional Center has many of the most historic resources in the Central Indiana region, and these should be preserved and reinforced. Development in a National Register or locally protected historic district should be contextually sensitive.</i>	APPRAISAL
	REQ	<i>US 2.1.1– In historic districts designated by the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) that are not designated by the IHPC, new development shall be contextually sensitive to the district. The Infill Housing Guidelines will be used in reviewing single-family proposals in these districts.</i>	See Summary
US2.2 - Individual Historic Resources		<i>The Regional Center has many of the most historic resources in the Central Indiana region, and these should be preserved and reinforced. Reusing and preserving older buildings provides a unique frame for new development, reinforces our sense of place, and environmental concern for recycling.</i>	APPRAISAL

REQ	<p><i>US 2.2.1 – Changes to the exterior of historic resources shall be reviewed for negative effect to the historic character of the building. Historic resources shall be defined as buildings or areas:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Listed on the Center Township, Marion County Interim Report – Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory (published July 1991) as notable or outstanding.</i> • <i>Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.</i> • <i>Determined by the Indiana State Historic Preservation Office as being eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.</i> • <i>Determined by the Director of DMD in consultation with the administrator of the IHPC to be potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.</i> <p><i>When reviewing historic resources, Planning staff shall consult with IHPC staff and shall consider the general principles in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation: See General Principles for Historic Preservation.</i></p> <p><i>When considering the general principles of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, staff may consult the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for further detail, but those guidelines are not incorporated in these Regional Center Guidelines and staff is not required to impose every treatment suggested in them.</i></p> <p>General Principles for Historic Preservation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.</i> <i>2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.</i> <i>3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.</i> <i>4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.</i> <i>5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.</i> <i>6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.</i> <i>7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.</i> <i>8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.</i> <i>9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new</i>
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**See
Summary**

	<p>work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.</p> <p>10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in a such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.</p>	
REQ	<p>US 2.2.2 – All proposed development which is located on a site that is intersected by a 200-foot buffer around an historic site, as determined to be historic under Guideline US 2.2.1, are to be reviewed for contextual sensitivity. The potential for the reinforcement of exterior space (corridors, plazas, and historic sites), the incorporation and allusion to details in the existing environment, the use of contextual colors and materials, the reinforcing of landscape precedents, the contribution to the social environment and the design response to seasonal change and the day-night cycle will be considered in the design review. This is not meant to restrict creativity, but rather to encourage development that does not destroy or damage those surrounding characteristics that are important and positive. At one end of the spectrum, this may result in new design that is highly reflective of the surrounding built environment, at the other end, it may result in new design that contrasts, but complements the surrounding built environment. In either case, or all cases in between, new design should make a conscious effort to relate in some meaningful way to its surroundings. Where the immediately surrounding built environment is weak or conflicts with the goals of the Regional Center guidelines, one should look beyond the immediate surroundings for context.</p>	See Summary
<p>US2.3 - “Mile Square” Plan</p> <p>Indianapolis is a planned city, platted by Alexander Ralston in 1821. This historic plan is highly unique and should be preserved.</p>		APPRAISAL
REQ	<p>US 2.3.1 – New development is to be designed to reinforce the original Ralston “Mile Square” Plan. Original rights-of-way are to be retained or restored to preserve the historic character of the “Mile Square.”</p>	Not in Mile Square
ADV	<p>US 2.3.2 – Development of the triangular sites on the diagonal avenues should reflect the site configuration.</p>	Not Applicable
<p>US3.1 - Demolition</p> <p>Demolitions are necessary for the evolution of the urban environment. Buildings that are functionally obsolete, unsafe or economically obsolete can negatively affect the potential for orderly transition in growth areas. Demolitions must be done in a manner that is supportive of proposed land use, environmental goals, conservation goals and does not significantly impact the community’s cultural heritage preserved in historic buildings. A demolition should be pursued only out of necessity and not simply out of convenience.</p>		APPRAISAL
REQ	<p>US 3.1.1 – Demolition requests shall receive Regional Center Approval prior to issuing a permit. Demolition requests will be reviewed (1) to determine if the structure is in a Redevelopment District or a special economic development district and might be eligible for incentives, (2) to determine if the proposed reuse of the site is consistent with the Indianapolis Regional Center Plan 2020 and/or Redevelopment Plans and (3) to determine if the property is historic (as defined in US2.2.1) so that interested parties may solicit development alternatives.</p>	See Summary

SUMMARY

- Guideline US 2.1.1 indicates that there are two different historic district designations in the Regional Center: *National Register of Historic Places* (a federal registry of historically significant areas and buildings) and locally designated historic areas governed by the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission (IHPC). This site is located within the Holy Rosary / Danish Church Historic District and listed on the *National Register of Historic Places*. The site is not within an IHPC district.

2. Guideline US 2.2.1 indicates that sites listed on the *National Register of Historic Places* shall require consultation with the IHPC staff for review. Staff consulted with IHPC staff during review of this request. IHPC staff indicated that the structure is a ‘contributing structure’ in that it was constructed in the style and design consistent with other single-family dwellings in the neighborhood.
3. Guideline US 2.2.2 indicates that proposed development located within a 200-foot buffer of an historic site, as determined under US 2.2.1, is to be reviewed for contextual sensitivity. The site is entirely within the *National Register of Historic Places*, recognized as Holy Rosary / Danish Church Historic District.
4. Guideline US 3.1.1 indicates that “Demolitions must be done in a manner that is supportive of proposed land use, environmental goals, conservation goals, and does not significantly impact the community’s cultural heritage preserved in historic buildings... demolition requests are reviewed 1) to determine if the structure is in a Redevelopment District or a special economic development district and might be eligible for incentives, 2) to determine if the proposed reuse of the site is consistent with the *Indianapolis Regional Center Plan 2020* and or the Redevelopment Plans and 3) to determine if the property is historic so that interested parties may solicit development alternatives”.
 - a. This dwelling is not located within any Redevelopment District or special economic development district.
 - b. As proposed, the new structure would be a two-story single-family dwelling.
 - c. This site is within Holy Rosary / Danish Church Historic District neighborhood, which is listed on the *National Register of Historic Places* as a significant area because of its unique ethnic development during the period 1854 to 1909.

While the cost to repair the structures would be significant, the potential loss of this historic structure may impact the neighborhood’s inclusion in the *National Register of Historic Places*.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff **recommends denial**, as submitted.

If demolition is approved, the plans for the new dwelling shall be subject to planning staff review and approval and subject to the *Infill Housing Guidelines*.

ZONING HISTORY

None.

JY
