CITY OF NORMAN, OK

STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: November 2, 2026

REQUESTER: Joseph Hernadez, Watermark Investment Properties LLC

PRESENTER: Anais Starr, Planner II/Historic Preservation Officer

ITEM TITLE: (HD 26-25) CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF THE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS REQUEST FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 707 JUNIPER LANE FOR THE FOLLOWING MODIFICATIONS: A) DEMOLITION OF THE EXISTING HOUSE AND ATTACHED STRUCTURES; B) DEMOLITION OF AN ACCESSORY STRUCTURE.

Background

Historical Information

2004 Chautauqua Historic District Nomination Survey Information:

707 Juniper Lane (listed as 707 West Juniper Street). Ca. 1948. Minimal Traditional. This noncontributing, one- and two-story, brick and composition board single dwelling has an asphalt-covered, hipped roof with cross gables and a brick foundation. The metal windows are four-light casement. The wood door is glazed paneled. The entry porch has a front-gabled roof supported by white wrought iron supports. Other exterior features include an integral single-car garage on the west side with a glazed paneled overhead door and a second story above. Decorative details include short, boxed eaves and gable returns. There is a flat-roofed carport immediately in front of the attached garage and a rear, composition board, front-gabled outbuilding with a glazed paneled pedestrian door. The house is noncontributing due to insufficient age.

Sanborn Insurance Map Information

The 1925 and 1944 Sanborn Insurance Maps do not show a principal structure on the lot, indicating all present-day structures were constructed after 1944 and are non-contributing to the Chautauqua Historic District.

Previous Actions

There have been no Certificates of Appropriateness requests for this property.

Overall Project Description

The applicant is under contract to purchase this property. With the permission of the property owner, the applicant is requesting to demolish the deteriorated non-contributing house along with the two attached carports and the detached accessory structure. The applicant intends to construct a new house and a detached garage on this property.

The applicant has submitted pictures and an inspection report outlining the deterioration of the existing structures.

The applicant seeks approval to demolish the existing structures before proceeding with more detailed architectural drawings for the house. The applicant also submitted a conceptual site plan and color renderings of two possible designs for a new home, for which the applicant is seeking feedback under a separate agenda item following this demolition request. The conceptual site plan and proposed house design rendering are attached to this request for Commissioners' reference.

Zoning Designation: The property's current zoning designation is R-1, Single-Family Dwelling District. This zoning designation allows for a single-family dwelling.

REQUEST

a) Demolition of the existing house and attached structures.
Project Description:
As stated under the "Overall Project Description" of this report, the applicant proposes demolishing the existing non-contributing structures on the site and constructing a new two-story house with a detached garage. For this request, the applicant proposes to demolish the existing house with an attached garage and two attached carports.

Reference - Historic District Ordinance
36-535.a.2 (g): To safeguard the heritage of the City by preserving and regulating historic district structures in such a way that maintains or restores their historic integrity while allowing modern-day uses and conveniences for their residents.

36.535.c.3: **Reviewing non-contributing structures.** Non-contributing structures should be controlled only to the degree necessary to make them compatible with the general atmosphere of any district with regard to exterior alteration, additions, signs, site work and related activities.

36-535.c.(h) Demolitions
(a) General Provisions. No structure or resource within any Historic District shall be demolished and/or removed unless such demolition has been reviewed by the Historic District Commission and a Certificate of Appropriateness for such demolition and/or removal has been granted.

(b) Procedure and Postponement Orders
1. The Historic District Commission shall hold a public hearing for the purpose of considering Certificates of Appropriateness for demolition or removal. After such hearing, the Historic District Commission may approve the Certificate of Appropriateness authorizing the demolition or may enter an order postponing demolition for up to ninety (90) days.

2. At the conclusion of such period of postponement as specified in the Historic District Commission's order, the Commission shall within forty-five (45) days thereafter hold a second public hearing to consider whether or not to recommend to the City Council that additional postponement of demolition be ordered.

3. In the event that the Historic District Commission recommends additional postponement to the City Council, the City Council shall hold a public hearing for the purpose of considering additional postponement of demolition.

4. After such public hearing, the City Council may enter an order approving the demolition or may enter an order postponing demolition for an additional period not to exceed sixty (60) days from the date of such order. At the conclusion of this final postponement period, the City Council shall hold a public hearing and may either approve the requested demolition or may disapprove such requested demolition. In the event demolition is not approved, no demolition shall occur. For purposes of this Ordinance, the word "demolition" shall include "removal."

36-535(h) (3) Criteria for Review of Demolitions. The Historic District Commission and City Council shall be guided by the following criteria in considering Certificates of Appropriateness and authorizations for demolition or removal of structures or sites within the Historic District:

1. The purposes and intent of this Ordinance.
2. The degree to which the proposed removal of the historical resource would damage or destroy the integrity and continuity of the Historic District of which it is a part.
3. The nature of the resource as a representative type of style of architecture, a socioeconomic development, a historical association, or other element of the original designation criteria applicable to such structure or site.
4. The condition of the resource from the standpoint of structural integrity and the extent of work necessary to stabilize the structure.
5. The alternatives available to the demolition applicant, including:
[a] Donation of the subject structure or site to a public or benevolent agency.
[b] Donation of a part of the value of the subject structure or site to a public or benevolent agency, including the conveyance of historical easements.
[c] The possibility of the sale of the structure or site, or any part thereof, to a prospective purchaser capable of preserving such structure or site.
[d] The potential of such structure or site for renovation and its potential for continuing same.
[e] The potential of the subject structure or site for rezoning in an effort to render such property more compatible with the physical potential of the structure.
6. The ability of the subject structure or site to produce a reasonable economic return on investment to its owner; provided, however, that it is specifically intended that this factor will not have exclusive control and effect, but shall be considered along with all other criteria contained in this Section.

Reference - Preservation Guidelines
5.4 Guidelines for Demolitions
A review by the Historic District Commission will use the following criteria for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA):
.1 A Certificate of Appropriateness. A Certificate of Appropriateness is required to be issued prior to demolition.
.2 Criteria for Demolition. Demolition requests must meet Zoning Ordinance Section 429.3.9(c), Criteria for Demolition.
.3 Procedures and Process for Demolitions. Demolitions must meet the Zoning Ordinance Section 429.3.9(b), Procedure and Postponement Orders.

.4 Site Plan Required. Applicants shall provide the Historic District Commission with detailed site plans for proposed site features of the new parcel, including information about any structures, driveways, site lighting, and parking areas.
.5 Document Thoroughly. Document original context of the historic structure prior to demolition.

Considerations/Issues:
As noted under the "Background" section of this report, the 2004 Chautauqua Historic District Nomination Survey states the principal dwelling on this parcel is non-contributing to the Chautauqua Historic District due to the insufficient age of the structure. The Chautauqua Historic District period of significance ends in 1944, while this structure was built in 1948.

The Preservation Guidelines include protections throughout the document to discourage significant alterations to historic structures, including demolition. The focus of the Historic District Ordinance demolition criteria is for historic structures. Guidance for review of non-contributing structures can also be found in the Historic District Ordinance Section 36.535.c.3, Reviewing Non-Contributing Structures, which states that non-contributing structures are "to be controlled to the extent necessary to make them compatible with the general atmosphere of the district regarding exterior alterations, additions, signs, site work, and related activities."

Section 36-535.9 (h) (3), Criteria for the Review of Demolitions, provides criteria the Commission is to use for the review of a house demolition. Listed below are the six criteria, along with staff comments.

a. The purpose and intent of this chapter.
Section 36-535(a)2. g. of the Historic District Ordinance states the following in regard to purpose:

> "To safeguard the heritage of the City by preserving and regulating historic district structures in such a way that maintains or restores their historic integrity while allowing modern day uses and conveniences for their residents".

This purpose statement indicates that preservation of historic structures is the goal of the Historic District Ordinance. However, the criterion also allows for modern day uses and conveniences, indicating there is room for interpretation under certain circumstances. The Commission has utilized this section of the Historic District Ordinance in the past when reviewing requests for modern day conveniences, such as additions, swimming pools, and solar panels, as well as requests for removal of historic garages. It should be noted that the Commission has found dilapidated historic garage structures that cannot accommodate modern-day vehicles to be eligible for demolition.

The Commission needs to consider whether this request for demolition of this non-contributing structure meets this criterion.

b. The degree to which the proposed removal of the historical resource would damage or destroy the integrity and continuity of the Historic District of which it is a part.
Removing this non-contributing 1948 structure, while changing the streetscape of Juniper Lane, will not remove a significant historic structure from the Chautauqua Historic District.

The Commission needs to consider whether the demolition of this noncontributing structure will impact the historic integrity and continuity of the Chautauqua Historic District.

c. The nature of the resource as a representative type of style of architecture, a socioeconomic development, a historical association, or other element of the original designation criteria applicable to such structure or site.

The 2004 Chautauqua Historic District Nomination Survey Information indicates this structure is a 1948 Minimal Traditional, which is not a typical style of the Chautauqua Historic District; the district is predominantly Craftsman Bungalows. Colonial, Prairie, and Tudor Revival are also frequent styles found in the district. There is no known historical association or element of this structure that is applicable to the original designation criteria for the Chautauqua Historic District.

The Commission needs to consider whether the architectural style, historical association, or elements of this noncontributing structure are significant to the Chautauqua Historic District.

d. The condition of the resource from the standpoint of structural integrity and the extent of work necessary to stabilize the structure.

The property owner commissioned an inspection company to review the structure. The inspector found and cited numerous deficiencies in the submitted inspection report, including:

a. Cracks in walls;
b. Indications of settlement of the structure;
c. Moisture intrusions in walls and ceilings;
d. Separation of windows from walls;
e. Sagging roof indicating framing issues;
f. Warping of floors.

The inspection report also provides pictures of the structure showing the dilapidated conditions.

The Commission needs to consider whether the structural conditions listed are significant to this noncontributing structure.

e. The alternatives available to the applicant.

1. **Donation of the subject structure or site to a public or benevolent agency.**
2. **Donation of a part of the value of the subject structure or site to a public or benevolent agency, including the conveyance of historical easements.**
3. **The possibility of sale of the structure or site, or any part thereof, to a prospective purchaser capable of preserving such structure or site.**
4. **The potential of such structure or site for renovation and its potential for continuing same.**
5. **The potential of the subject structure or site for rezoning in an effort to render such property more compatible with the physical potential of the structure.**

This criterion ensures that all alternatives to demolition have been considered. Alternatives listed in these criteria include the relocation of all or part of the structure. Given the structural issues of the structure, this does not seem to be a viable option.

Another option cited in these criteria is the renovation of the structure. The viability of renovating this structure has been discussed extensively in the submitted inspection report. The Commission would need to consider if this is a viable option.

Lastly, this criterion asks if rezoning would allow for other opportunities for the structure beyond its current use, thereby providing a wider chance for rehabilitation. As noted earlier in the background information of this report, this property is designated R-1, Single-Family Dwelling District, which allows by right a single-family dwelling unit. Given that this structure is in the middle of a residential neighborhood, the AIM Future Land Use Plan does not indicate a path forward for rezoning to an office or commercial use. Additionally, if such a use was allowed for this structure, there would be additional building code burdens for the renovation of the structure, not less.

The Commission would need to consider whether there is an opportunity for another option beyond demolition to retain this noncontributing property.

f. The ability of the subject structure or site to produce a reasonable economic return on investment to its owner; provided however, that it is specifically intended that this factor shall not have exclusive control and effect, but shall be considered along with all other criteria contained in this section.

The applicant has provided pictures of the structure's deteriorated condition and a narrative listing the extensive repairs needed to restore this noncontributing structure. Prospective buyers could have difficulty purchasing this property at the current price for this neighborhood and restoring the structure as required by the Preservation Guidelines in an economically viable way.

The Commission needs to consider the ability of this noncontributing structure to produce a reasonable economic return on investment for its owner.

After reviewing the demolition criteria above from the Historic District Ordinance, the Commission must determine if this request to demolish this noncontributing house and its attached structures meets criteria listed.

The Commission has two options regarding the motion/vote for this request per Historic District Ordinance. The Commission may:

a. Approve the Certificate of Appropriateness authorizing the demolition, or

b. Enter an order postponing demolition for up to ninety (90) days.

If the Commission postpones the demolition request, it should provide the reasons for the postponement and whether additional information is required for further review of the request.

Commission Action:

Consideration of approval and/or postponement of a Certificate of Appropriateness request (HD 26-25) for the property located at 707 Juniper Lane for the following: a) the demolition of the existing house and attached structures.

b) Demolition of detached accessory structure.
Project Description:
As stated under "Overall Project Description" of this report, the applicant proposes to demolish the existing non-contributing structures on the site, including the 216-square-foot detached accessory structure located in the rear yard. The applicant intends to construct a detached garage in the same location.

Reference - Historic District Ordinance
36-535.a.2 (g): To safeguard the heritage of the City by preserving and regulating historic district structures in such a way that maintains or restores their historic integrity while allowing modern-day uses and conveniences for their residents.

36.535.c.3: **Reviewing non-contributing structures.** Non-contributing structures should be controlled only to the degree necessary to make them compatible with the general atmosphere of any district with regard to exterior alteration, additions, signs, site work, and related activities.

2.6 Guidelines for Accessory Structures less than 400 Square Feet
A review by the Historic District Commission will use the following criteria for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA):
.1 Preserve Accessory Structures. When possible, retain and preserve historic accessory structures in their original locations and configurations. Even if the function changes, the exterior appearance shall remain the same.
.4 Request for Accessory Structure Demolitions. A request to demolish a historic accessory structure will utilize the following in determining the eligibility for demolition:
a. An existing structure of architectural or historical significance shall be retained if repairs are reasonably possible.
b. An existing structure is dilapidated, leaning, lacking a solid foundation, or of substandard construction; it may be eligible for demolition.
c. An existing structure is 240 square feet or less; it may be eligible for demolition.
d. An existing structure was built after the period of significance; it may be eligible for demolition.
e. The removal of existing historic structure will enable access to the rear yard where no access currently exists; it may be eligible for demolition.

Issues and Considerations:
The 2004 Chautauqua Historic District Nomination Survey does not indicate the age of this accessory structure. The 1944 Sanborn Insurance Map does not show this structure, indicating it was built after 1944 and is therefore non-contributing to the Chautauqua Historic District due to insufficient age. Section 2.6.4 of the Guidelines for Accessory Structures less than 400 Square Feet provides five criteria for Commissioners to use in determining if an accessory structure is eligible for demolition.

Regarding the demolition criteria, staff has the following comments:

a. An existing structure of architectural or historical significance shall be retained if repairs are reasonably possible.
This structure is not historically significant because it was built after the period of significance and considered noncontributing to the district.

b. An existing structure is dilapidated, leaning, lacking a solid foundation, or of substandard construction; it may be eligible for demolition.
The applicant has provided documentation of the dilapidated condition of the structure.

c. An existing structure is 240 square feet or less; it may be eligible for demolition.
The existing structure is 216 square feet.

d. An existing structure was built after the period of significance; it may be eligible for demolition.
The structure was built after the period of significance for Chautauqua Historic District.

e. The removal of existing historic structure will enable access to the rear yard where no access currently exists; it may be eligible for demolition.
Removing this structure would allow access to the rear yard for the construction of a modern-day garage.

The Commission needs to determine if demolition of a non-contributing accessory structure meets the Preservation Guidelines.

Commission Action:
Consideration of approval, rejection, amendment, and/or postponement of a Certificate of Appropriateness request (HD 26-25) for the property located at 707 Juniper Lane for the following modification: b) demolition of an accessory structure.