



Community Development
Department

STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date:	February 22, 2024
Agenda Title:	COA 24-7 – 271 Winchester Street
Requested Action:	Review of proposal for demolition of existing non-contributing and non-historic building for new 13,000sq. ft. office building at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church.
Department / Agency Lead:	Community Development
Staff Lead:	Casey Squyres

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An Entitlement to Special Use Permit (SUP) 2023-01 for St John the Evangelist, the Applicant, and the Owner, the Catholic Diocese of Arlington (St Johns Catholic School Tees) has been granted to allow for the demolition of an existing non-contributing and non-historic ca. 1980 Parrish Office building and the construction of a new 13,000 square foot office building.

The Applicant has since submitted the required COA 24-7 for the project for review and approval by the Architectural Review Board.

Regarding the demolition of the non-contributing ca. 1980 Parrish Office building – the Historic District Guidelines only dictate conditions for contributing buildings and structures within the Historic District. However, any demolition of non-contributing buildings and structures within the Historic District must obtain any necessary permits in order to proceed.

BACKGROUND

The church building that encompasses St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church at 271 Winchester Street was constructed in 1964. It is in excellent condition and retains a high degree of integrity. The building does not possess sufficient architectural or historical significance for individual listing in the NRHP; however, it is a contributing resource to the Warrenton Historic District Boundary Increase 2023 under Criterion C – Distinctive Characteristics of Architecture/Construction.

Adjacent to the main church building is a non-contributing circa 1980 office building that is currently used as the Parrish Office. This building was determined to be in fair condition at the time of the most recent survey in July 2023. This building is proposed for demolition and will be replaced with the new proposed office building.



DESIGN GUIDELINE CONSIDERATIONS

Historic District Guideline	Page No.	Analysis
7. NEW CONSTRUCTION A. Context		
<p>The Architectural Review Board will not specify a particular architectural style or design for new construction projects. The context of new construction or infill is more important than the decorative details applied, though detailing is important.</p>	<p>3.63</p>	<p>The Applicant has demonstrated through plans that the architectural style will be sensitive to the main church building and will blend with the overall character of the Historic District.</p>
<p>New construction will be evaluated based on the project's relationship to its surroundings (context) and to the details of its site (materials, cornices, trim, porches, landscaping, rhythm).</p>	<p>3.63</p>	<p>N/A</p>
A1. Setback		
<p>1. Relate the setback of any new construction and additions to the setback of the existing historic buildings in the immediate surroundings of the proposed new construction. Generally speaking, setback should be within 10% of adjacent setbacks.</p>	<p>3.64</p>	<p>Applicant states that all new construction and additions will meet proper setbacks.</p>
A2. Spacing		
<p>1. Space new construction according to the historic precedence in the immediate surroundings of the proposed new construction. This includes sites adjacent to as well as across the street from the proposed new construction.</p>	<p>3.65</p>	<p>Applicant intends to appropriately space all new construction to comply with the general setting and historic precedence of immediately surrounding houses and buildings.</p>
A4. Massing		

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<p>2. Use forms for new construction that relate to the forms of the majority of surrounding buildings. For instance, if the form of adjacent buildings has a variety of projecting bays, dormers, etc., employ some of these elements in the new building.</p>	<p>3.67</p>	<p>Applicant intends to appropriately space all new construction to comply with the general setting and historic precedence of immediately surrounding houses and buildings.</p>
<p>A5. Height and Width</p>		
<p>1. The height and width of a new building must be compatible with historic buildings within a 360-degree range of visibility of the new building.</p>	<p>3.68</p>	<p>The applicant states height and width of the new construction will be compatible with the historic buildings within a 360-degree range of visibility.</p>
<p>2. The height of a proposed building should be no taller than the tallest historic building on the block within a 360-degree range of visibility of the same type (e.g. single family to single family, multifamily to multi-family). The height of the historic structure should be calculated from the original historic ridge line (not any later additions that may be taller).</p>	<p>3.68</p>	<p>The applicant states height and width of the new construction will be compatible with the historic buildings within a 360-degree range of visibility.</p>
<p>3. Design new buildings to respect the existing width of original structures in the district. The space should be no more than ten percent of the average spacing of other historic buildings within the subject block. Larger apartment buildings or newer dwellings that do not contribute to the existing historic character should not be included within this calculation.</p>		<p>The applicant states height and width of the new construction will be compatible with the historic buildings within a 360-degree range of visibility.</p>

Historic District Guideline	Page No.	Analysis
A6. Scale		
1. Create human scale by including functional elements typical to the historic context, such as porches and porticoes.	3.69	Applicant has provided detailed plans and drawings for appropriate scale and massing of new construction.
B. NEW BUILDING		
1. New construction shall respect the established architectural character of the historic district.	3.70	Applicant has demonstrated that all new construction will respect the established character of the historic district.
2. The new building should be recognized as a product of its period of construction, design, materials and craftsmanship and consistent with the architecture of the Historic District. Avoid an exact imitation of a historic style that would blur the distinction between old and new buildings and make it more difficult to understand the architectural evolution of the district. In this way, an interpretation of a historic style that is authentic to the district will be considered if it is subtly distinguishable as being new. Allow for the contemporary design of new buildings, when such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the neighborhood, or environment.	3.70	Applicant has demonstrated that all new construction will respect the established character of the historic district. The materials and style/design proposed appropriately avoid exact imitation of the historic main church building.

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<p>4. RHYTHM: Incorporate traditional façade rhythm and articulation techniques in a new design. Design a new building to replicate the rhythm of fenestration patterning found in the historic district. Arrange windows to reflect the traditional rhythm and general alignment of others in the area. Incorporate windows, doors, and other openings at a consistent ratio to those found on nearby historic buildings. Use durable window materials. Appropriate window materials include metal, wood, and various composites, as deemed appropriate by the preservation industry standards and the Architectural Review Board. Inappropriate window materials include aluminum and vinyl with plastic snap-in muntins. Use detailing to articulate a façade including window and door framing, sills, water tables and belt courses, canopies, moldings, cornices, columns, and pilasters</p>	<p>3.70</p>	<p>Applicant has provided detailed plans and drawings that demonstrate the fenestration patterns of the new construction and its relationship to the main house. The materials and style/design proposed appropriately avoid exact imitation of the historic main church building.</p>

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<p>5. MATERIALS: Use building materials that appear similar in scale, color, texture, and finish to those seen historically in the context of the district. Use materials that are proven to be durable in the local climate. Use materials that will maintain an intended finish over time or acquire a patina. Use high-quality, durable, materials. Use new siding that is similar to the lap exposure, texture, and finish of traditional wood siding. Use trim boards that show depth and typify high-quality traditional construction.</p>	<p>3.70</p>	<p>The materials and style/design proposed appropriately avoid exact imitation of the historic main house. The materials to be utilized will be high-quality and durable in nature.</p>
<p>6. DOORS AND WINDOWS: Respect the size, proportion, spacing and rhythm of door and window openings on all stories of contributing buildings in the subject block or neighborhood when designing and constructing new commercial or residential buildings. Avoid horizontal strip windows or square openings and doors wider than double leaf.</p>	<p>3.71</p>	<p>Applicant has provided detailed plans and drawings that demonstrate the fenestration patterns of the new construction and its relationship to the main church building.</p>
<p>7. STYLE: Style cannot be guided inasmuch as they emerge with good design by architects, art, implementation by builders, lifestyles, function, fashion, the economy and industrial evolution. Contemporary expression with respect of historic precedence, context, significance and architectural heritage is encouraged.</p>	<p>3.71</p>	<p>Applicant has demonstrated that all new construction will respect the established character of the historic district. The materials and style/design proposed appropriately avoid exact imitation of the historic main church building.</p>

Historic District Guideline	Page No.	Analysis
8. OUTBUILDINGS: Outbuildings shall remain secondary to main buildings	3.71	Applicant has demonstrated through detailed drawings and plans that all new outbuilding construction will remain secondary to the main church building.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of COA 24-7 for 271 Winchester Street for the request to demolish an existing non-contributing, non-historic Parrish Office Building and to construct a new, more architecturally compatible Office Building of approximately 13,000sq.ft., as described and depicted in the application and plans, provided the following conditions are met:

- 1) All necessary permits are acquired.
- 2) Relate the setback of any new construction and additions to the setback of the existing historic buildings in the immediate surroundings of the proposed new construction. Generally speaking, setback should be within 10% of adjacent setbacks.
- 3) New construction shall respect the established architectural character of the historic district.
- 4) The new building should be recognized as a product of its period of construction, design, materials and craftsmanship and consistent with the architecture of the Historic District.
- 5) Incorporate an appropriate amount of detail and decoration in new construction to avoid blandness and establish a compatible relationship with contributing buildings.
- 6) The new building should be recognized as a product of its period of construction, design, materials and craftsmanship and consistent with the architecture of the Historic District. Avoid an exact imitation of a historic style that would blur the distinction between old and new buildings and make it more difficult to understand the architectural evolution of the district.
- 7) The demolition of the non-contributing ca. 1980 Parrish Office building shall conform to all necessary Building and Zoning Codes and Ordinances.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 – Photos and Plans