



Legislation Text

File #: O-630-21, Version: 1

Zoning & Planning Committee

Accepting the City Plan Commission's recommendation for local landmark designation for the Building known as the Masonic Temple Building located at 401 Main Street, in accordance with Toledo Municipal Code Section 1111.1002; and declaring an emergency.

SUMMARY & BACKGROUND:

This request is for the review of the landmark designation for the Masonic Temple located at 401 Main Street. The City of Toledo currently has three locally designated historic districts: Old West End, Vistula, and Westmoreland. Seven other properties in the City of Toledo have been locally designated in the last five years; the most recent designations closest to the subject site are two buildings located at 239 and 245 N. Summit Street. The applicant is seeking the designation in order to obtain State Historic Tax Credits. They are also seeking to list the building in the National Register of Historic Places for its historic significance so it will qualify for Federal Tax Credits. The building is considered historically significant since it was constructed around 1913; which is deemed a period of historical significance. The applicant proposes to use the building for senior affordable housing with amenities on site to include offices.

The process for landmark designation outlined in the Toledo Municipal Code, Chapter 1111.1000 Historic Districts and Landmarks (Designation or Expansion), Section 1111.1104 Report Contents states the following:

The reports of the Plan Commission and City Historic District Commission, containing their written recommendations to the City Council, must include information about how the proposed historic district or landmark, or expansion, is of special historical and architectural significance. The reports must include the following:

- A. whether the district or landmark proposed to be designated is listed in the National Register of Historic Places;
- B. whether the district or landmark proposed to be designated provides significant examples of architectural styles of the past; and
- C. a description of the district or landmark to serve as an informational resource. The description must include, but need not be limited to, the following:
 1. a geographic description including location and its relationship to the entire City;
 2. a description of the general land uses;
 3. a general description of the building conditions;

4. a general description of the socio-economic characteristics;
5. a description of existing developmental plans or programs within or including the historic district or landmark; and
6. a list of neighborhood organizations within or serving the historic district or landmark.

The required information for this landmark designation is delineated below.

- A. Whether the district or landmark proposed to be designated is listed in the National Register of Historic Places;

The applicant is currently applying for designation on the National Register of Historic Places. The process takes significantly more time than the local designation and they are estimating a response from the Department of the Interior within the next six (6) to twelve (12) months.

- B. Whether the district or landmark proposed to be designated provides significant examples of architectural styles of the past;

The former Masonic Temple storefront located at 401 Main Street and Fourth Street is a rectangular, brick, stone, flat roof, and 4-story, 60,000 square foot structure originally built in 1913. The architecture style is considerably related to the term “Chicago School” which was developed during 1875 to 1925. The original ground floor tenant was Finkbeiner Furniture moved from the Freidman Block to the Masonic Temple when it opened at Fourth and Main in 1913. The basement had several businesses including a bowling alley and boxing gym, the first floor was primarily retail space, and the top floor was occupied by the masons. F.S. Myers and Son Furnishings moved to the masonic during the late 1930’s and occupied space until 1963.

The architecture is what exemplifies the grandness of the structure. The vertical windows at ground level that are carried all the way up to the fourth floor, the ornamental detail along the façade, the traditional brick and stone masonry, the simplistic patterned awnings, the color palette, and the highly expressive Romanesque entrance along Fourth Street. Additionally, the symmetrical layout of the building along Fourth and Main Street embody the envelope as a focal point. The load bearing columns and walls within the structure are still structurally sound.

- C. a description of the district or landmark to serve as an informational resource. The description must include, but need not be limited to, the following:

1. a geographic description including location and its relationship to the entire City;

The subject property is a 0.28-acre site that is located on the East side of Toledo along the Main Street corridor and the corner of Fourth Street. The Main Street corridor runs North-West to South-East while Fourth Street runs North-East to South-West. The structure is South-East from the Docks, International Park, Glass City Metropark, and Marina Loft development along Main Street. According to the National Register of Historic Places, East Toledo is approximately two tenths of a mile North-East and Yondota is directly South-West of the site.

2. a description of the general land uses;

The subject property is zoned Storefront Commercial (CS). The building operated as a commercial furniture store from 1913 to 1930 and then as a bank and office building 1931 to 1981. It is currently vacant. Surrounding land uses include a large commercial and apartment buildings directly to the north, public parks to the east and west, and a parking garage to the south.

3. a general description of the building conditions;

The former Masonic Temple storefront located at 401 Main Street and Fourth Street is a rectangular, brick, stone, flat roof, and 4-story structure originally built in 1913. As result of being vacant for several years, the current condition is poor both interior and exterior but can be renovated for future functionality. The existing windows will have to be restored due to some having been shattered and weather damaged. The masonry of the structure will require major restoration due to extreme weathering over the past century, and the current state of the masonry is crumbling to pieces. However, the building still holds value to its historical integrity, much of the original stone ornamentation detail can be seen amongst the façade along Fourth Street and the Main Street corridor. Additionally, the structural envelope is in good condition minus the lack of upkeep maintenance over time. Overall, the former Masonic Temple has historical, structural, and design elements worth saving and restoring to be nominated on the National Register of Historic Places.

4. a general description of the socio-economic characteristics;

The future use of this structure is for Mixed Commercial - Residential (CM). The former Masonic Temple built in 1913 is a building the developer views as prime for redevelopment. The 4-story, 60,000 sq. ft. commercial building will be redeveloped as senior affordable housing. There will be 42 residential units which will consist of 1 and 2 bedrooms on all four floors. The basement will consist of tenant programming to include laundry, management office, multi-purpose room, exercise room, and small offices available to service providers. The building will receive a complete top to bottom renovation to provide quality affordable housing to Toledo seniors.

5. a description of existing developmental plans or programs within or including the historic district or landmark; and

Toledo 20/20 Comprehensive Plan

The Toledo 20/20 Comprehensive Plan targets this area as CN Neighborhood Commercial which is intended to accommodate pedestrian-oriented small-scale retail and service businesses that serve nearby residential areas. However, the Plan also recommends protecting neighborhood structures by reusing them and integrating new development with respect to the existing character.

Main Street - Starr Avenue Neighborhood Overlay

This corridor was designated as the River East C-6 District for economic development which was revised and updated as the Main Street - Starr Avenue Neighborhood Overlay in 2010. The role of overlay zoning districts is to encourage the rehabilitation of historic districts and structures. Protecting this neighborhood's historic fabric while integrating new development is supported through this overlay. While an overlay does provide additional development standards, the underlying zoning does not change. All uses that are permitted or prohibited or are special uses in the underlying zoning district(s), shall remain as permitted or prohibited or special uses in the UNO.

Garfield Neighborhood Plan 2020 (pending)

The Garfield Neighborhood Plan identified this structure for adaptive reuse. The Plan also calls for an expansion of an historic district designation for the Main-Starr Corridor to spark redevelopment and support the architectural, historic, and visual richness of the district. Strategies identified in the Plan include the assessment of zoning to provide higher density housing within the Business District.

6. a list of neighborhood organizations within or serving the historic district or landmark.

The East Toledo Family Center has a long history of “serving the people of East Toledo. It began in 1901 as the Neighborhood Association, but soon became fondly known in the community as simply the ‘Neighborhood House.’ To present day, it has served more people and provided more programs than at any other time in its long history.”

One Voice for East Toledo focuses on engaging, educating, and empowering interested residents, church, school, agency, and business volunteer leaders in building a livable, healthy, and sustainable east Toledo Community. One Voice volunteer residents are working to create and make change one block at a time.

The Toledo City Historic Districts Commission is charged with the responsibility of being the historical conscience of the City and exists to help preserve and protect Toledo’s historic resources. The Toledo City Historic Districts Commission will have the authority to oversee any exterior changes to the Masonic Temple building if it is designated as a local landmark. These powers are addressed in the Toledo Municipal Code, Chapter 1112 Review and Decision-Making Bodies, Section 1112.0102 City Historic District Commission, letter D states the following:

In addition to the duties of each Historic District Commission pursuant to Sec. 1112.0102, the City Historic District Commission shall:

1. designate landmark properties;
2. for designated landmark properties, develop appropriate standards and guidelines reflecting the landmark’s historic and architectural significance,
3. hear, review, grant, deny and recommend modifications to proposals for Certificates of Appropriateness involving environmental changes to landmarked properties. Applications for Certificates of Appropriateness must be judged using adopted historic landmark standards and guidelines;
4. conduct a continuing survey of cultural resources in the City with the support of the Historic/Environmental Section, Department of Economic and Community Development;
5. advise the Mayor, the Department of Economic and Community Development and other local officials and make recommendations as to the protection of the City’s cultural resources;
6. act as a liaison on behalf of the City to individuals and organizations concerned with historic preservation;

7. review all proposed National Register nominations for properties within the City in a manner consistent with federal and state regulations, seeking expertise from disciplines not represented on the Commission as needed; and
8. notify the respective active neighborhood organization of any demolitions requiring City Historic District Commission review, which is in the respective Historic District. Notification must be given to the respective active neighborhood organization at least ten calendar days before the City Historic District Commission hearing.

The Toledo City Historic Commission reviewed and voted to support the Landmark Designation for this site at their meeting October 25, 2021.

Staff supports designating the Masonic Temple Building at 401 Main Street as a local landmark because of its historic and architectural significance. Additionally, the creation of senior housing will allow the structure to remain a sustainable building in the community. The significance of the building will be preserved and this designation enhances the ability of the Toledo community to preserve a part of the City's history. NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it ordained by the Council of the City of Toledo:

SECTION 1. That "Landmark Designation" for the Building located at 401 Main Street, in Toledo is hereby approved.

SECTION 2. That this Ordinance hereby is declared to be an emergency measure and shall be in force and effect from and after passage. The reason for the emergency lies in the fact that same has had Public hearings and approval from the Historic District Commission, the Toledo Plan Commission and the City Council Zoning and Planning Committee and is necessary for the immediate preservation and property.

Vote on emergency clause: yeas _____, nays _____.

Passed: _____, as an emergency measure: yeas _____, nays _____.

Attest: _____
Clerk of Council

President of Council

Approved: _____

Mayor

I hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of an Ordinance passed by Council

_____.

Attest: _____
Clerk of Council