Appendix 1: Informed Consent Form

Block 75 Stakeholder Interviews

Description: The North End Neighborhood Association (NENA) is interested in exploring whether there might be some possibilities for community engagement activities centering around the possible development of Block 75, owned by the Cathedral of the Rockies. As a starting point, Dr. Jen Schneider (School of Public Service, Boise State University) is conducting 8-10 interviews with residents and other stakeholders who have been involved in or care about the history and future of Block 75.

Objective: The aim of these initial interviews is to gather information that might help NENA design appropriate community engagement mechanisms or other projects relevant to Block 75 and its future. In particular, Dr. Schneider is interested in the perspectives and values of interviewees, and in their concerns about—and hopes for—the space, should the Cathedral decide to develop the Block in the future.

NENA is not affiliated with the Church directly, nor do they have any inside information that suggests particular development plans are in the works. Rather, they are interested in possibly serving as an "honest broker" for discussions and/or projects moving forward.

Interviews: Interviews are expected to last 60-90 minutes, depending on how much time interviewees have available. Dr. Schneider would like to record these interviews so that they can be transcribed through an independent transcription service. Transcriptions ensure accuracy and completeness, and allow for a thorough analysis of the data. Our memories can be fallible, as researchers, and even if Dr. Schneider took very detailed notes, it would not be as good as having the exact words of interviewees.

Analysis: Ideally, each interview will be recorded and transcripts produced. Dr. Schneider will then analyze the transcripts using a process known as "coding" wherein frequent themes will be identified across interviews, as well as themes that seem particularly strongly felt (so, frequency *and* intensity matter).

Final report: Dr. Schneider will prepare a report for NENA leadership identifying shared or conflicting values, possible tensions and concerns, and opportunities for moving forward with community or stakeholder engagement activities. If interviewees agree that they can be identified and quoted in the report, certain quotations from the interviews may be used to illustrate important points. Otherwise, findings will be kept general, anonymous (when possible), or presented in the aggregate.

Confidentiality: Generally speaking, in academic research projects, confidentiality and anonymity is promised to interviewees. However, because this is a very small group of interviews being conducted in a community that knows each other well, it may be impossible to protect the identities of participants, and it may also be that interviewees are comfortable having transcripts shared.

Above all, it's important that interviewees feel comfortable with the process. To that end, there are options for how Dr. Schneider handles your interview data. Please read the options below, and check those that reflect your preference.

Data collection

- ☐ I agree to have the interview recorded.
- ☐ I agree that my recorded interview can be transcribed.
- ☐ I prefer not to be recorded, but the researcher may take notes.
- ☐ I may ask for parts of my interview to be "off the record." The researcher will not include material that is off the record in any notes or any portion of the final report.

Anonymity

- ☐ In the final report for NENA, if I am quoted, I prefer for my identity to be kept anonymous.
- ☐ If my identity cannot reasonably be kept anonymous, I prefer not to be quoted.
- ☐ In the final report for NENA, I am okay with being identified and quoted.
- ☐ Do not identify or quote me in the final report.

Confidentiality

- ☐ The interview recording and transcript should be kept confidential, and destroyed at the end of the project.
- ☐ I am okay with the interview transcript being shared with NENA for their historical records (the recording will be destroyed by the interviewer at the end of the project).
- ☐ If I have not agreed to be recorded, I want the interviewer's notes to be destroyed at the end of the project.

Report review

- ☐ If I am to be quoted in the final report, I would like to see and approve my quotation before the final version is sent to NENA.
- ☐ I would like to see the final version of the report when it is sent to NENA.

Interviewee Name (please print): _____

Interviewee Signature: _____

Interviewer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2: Interview questions

*Please note that I use a "semi-structured" interview process: the questions below provide a guideline for interviews, but when possible and relevant, I frequently asked follow-up, reframing, or clarifying questions. Furthermore, if an interviewee had particular expertise in a subject area of relevance to Block 75 (i.e., gardening or real estate development) I also occasionally asked more technical questions to bolster my own knowledge and understanding.

1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?
2. Can you tell me a little bit about your [organization/neighborhood]?
3. When people ask you about Block 75, what kind of background do you give them? What are you think are the most important parts of that history?
4. The space has been both a site of conflict and of great potential. Can you first tell me something about how the conflict has evolved, and where you think it stands now?
5. And what about how the space is being used now? What is your understanding of the space? Your experience with it?
6. What do you see as the potential of Block 75? What are your dreams for it?
7. What would a really good development process look like, moving forward, from your point of view?
8. What would be a worst case scenario?
9. What role do you see for NENA in this process?

Appendix 3: **Jen Schneider researcher statement**

I'm a Professor in the School of Public Service (SPS) at Boise State University, where I currently serve as Interim Associate Dean. I have experience conducting qualitative research (research using observations, interviews, and other tools that focus on understanding the perspectives on research participants) and teach qualitative research methods to graduate students in SPS. I also have experience with stakeholder engagement methods and approaches, and with the facilitation of public engagement in decision making. My work in this area has primarily been in the area of science and technology, but I am increasingly doing stakeholder engagement and facilitation work for local governments and organizations in the area of urban development and growth. I am not, however, an expert in urban planning, development, or real estate. My expertise relates primarily to building decision-making processes.

I am not a member of First United Methodist Church (FUMC) and am not religiously affiliated with the church, though I am aware of its importance as a local institution. I grew up in the North End neighborhood, and my parents were married in the church over 45 years ago. I was not, however, living in Boise when FUMC first began purchasing properties on Block 75, nor was I aware of the block's history before last summer, when I first learned about it incidentally, through conversations and reading newspaper articles.

I am currently living in the North End, near the co-op. I do not attend NENA meetings. I am not a direct neighbor of FUMC or of Block 75, and do not have a personal or economic stake in what happens to the Block. I have been hired on a contract basis by NENA to conduct this study; I have donated a portion of my time to this project as a gesture of good will, and because my institutional home, SPS, has a strong public service mission. It if makes sense for me to be involved as a facilitator or consultant moving forward, I am happy to discuss that possibility with the parties involved. But I am also happy to recommend other facilitators or consultants. My main interest is in developing a robust and collaborative process.

Appendix 4: Article on "slow democracy" and study circles, courtesy Dr. Wayne Rysavy.

TRANSFORMATION

Slow democracy

At a time when 95 per cent of Americans disapprove of their own Congress, what hope is there for democracy in the USA? Plenty, if democracy itself can be transformed. This is the fourth article in our series on "trans-partisan politics".

Susan Clark

Woden Teachout

20 November 2013



Credit: Stacy Harbaugh, Midwest Environmental Advocates and http://www.wnpj.org. All rights reserved.

Is there anything less popular among Americans than their own government? During the temporary shutdown in October 2013, the public's approval rating for Congress dipped to an all-time low of five per cent. "A majority of Americans say they would enjoy seeing Congress torn limb from limb by a ferocious bear," quipped humorist Andy Borowitz at the time. The only disagreement was "which species of bear would be best suited for the assignment."

Such stories make us want to laugh and cry. Given this level of cynicism about government, what hope is there that people will use the democratic process to make change? Looking carefully, we find small seedlings of optimism, breaking through green and vigorous, at the local level. While most Americans share a disdain for national politics, many are finding new possibilities locally by taking governance

back into their own hands. And by working to change the political process, they are also being changed themselves. It's a process we call "slow democracy:" taking time to co-create new forms of politics based on inclusion, deliberation and local power.

Citizen advocacy at the local level brings to mind the story of David and Goliath. For some people, these fights are heartening. When communities successfully organize against corporations and ban genetically modified crops, or win back the right to create a local energy plan or market local foods, some feel hope for an empowered future. For other people, however, local advocacy is a source of pain and skepticism. Get real, they say; in the long run, the big money behind projects like genetically modified foods and fracking for natural gas will always win, no matter how earnest the local efforts.

Regardless of where you stand on this spectrum, relentless local battles bear witness to the fact that it's not just the content of laws and policies that needs changing, but also the system of making them. Local power is necessary but not sufficient. Political systems consist of relationships, and in the US system, adversarial relationships are the norm. Issues are divided along lines that are determined by interest groups, including political parties, industry lobbies, and environmental and social justice organizations. These groups determine the menu of political choices that's on offer, and it's a menu that is both short and relatively fixed. There may be a debate that produces winners and losers, but there is little public *deliberation* out of which something new and creative might emerge.

If we want to re-energize democracy it has to be more than the same old political system transposed to the community level. Instead we need slow democracy, which is not a clarion call for endless meetings but a reminder of the care that's needed for full-blooded community decision making.

Slow democracy takes its name from the "slow food" movement, which argues that the centralization and homogenization of "fast food" symbolizes much of what is wrong in society. Paralleling slow food's push for authenticity in what we eat, slow democracy calls for firsthand knowledge of the local decisions that affect us. Just as slow food encourages cooks and eaters to become more intimately involved with

the production of local food, slow democracy weaves together three key elements of democratic decision making: inclusion - ensuring broad, diverse public participation; deliberation - defining problems, weighing options, and co-creating solutions through sound information and respectful relationships; and power - defining a clear connection between citizen participation, public decisions, and action.

To appreciate what these principles mean in practice, consider the story of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Once the home of a major air force base, the city was thrown into economic and social flux when the base was closed with the loss of thousands of jobs. As Portsmouth's demographics changed, the city's elementary schools became unbalanced, with two under-enrolled schools and another that was bursting with students.

"Changing the way schools work, especially elementary schools, is... probably one of the most intense things a city can go through," recalls city manager John Bohenko. Local lawyer Jim Noucas puts it more bluntly: "Tackling the issue was political suicide," he said. In early public discussions regarding redistricting, some residents resorted to painful insinuations about other people's class and culture. Recalls Noucas, "People stood up at public hearings and denigrated the elementary school that was literally 'on the other side of the tracks.'" While parents argued, leaders equivocated, and students suffered, the issue went unresolved for a decade.

Desperate for a solution, the school board appointed a redistricting committee in 2000 that discovered a technique called "study circles." Organizers rallied 105 citizen volunteers to participate in a series of small-group meetings, a diverse group that represented the demographic make-up of the city. Rather than diving into decision-making, the study circles encouraged a slow and careful approach to deliberation. First, the groups visited all three schools to ensure excellent information gathering. They also spent hours sharing stories as parents and neighbors, breaking down stereotypes and building trust and understanding.

Then, when the groups were ready to discuss policy options, the issues were framed openly. Rather than polarizing "option A against option B," the study circles talked about "what issues...the redistricting committee should consider in balancing the

enrollments of the schools." This inclusive framing generated innovative ideas and common ground. In the final phase of the process, the groups reported back to a school board that had been involved in the process from the beginning and was therefore more open to hearing their ideas. The board developed a proposal to help balance the quality of the three schools backed by $2 million of improvements, which the 105 "ambassadors" explained to parents and neighbors. The proposal received broad voter support and was approved, ending a decade-long destructive stalemate. A "slow" process proved to be the fastest route to success.

Over the past fifteen years, Portsmouth has used study circles to address many more issues including school bullying, the city's master plan, racism, and environmental sustainability. Citizens have created "Portsmouth Listens," a committee of volunteers trained in facilitating the public dialogues that are now integral to addressing the city's toughest issues. Small-group discussions are now used at election time as an alternative to divisive debates between candidates. And hardest to describe but perhaps most important, many of Portsmouth's residents sense a fundamental shift, speaking of an increase in civic pride, an improvement in public participation, and heightened expectations of what democratic participation can offer. As city councilor Chris Dwyer noted, "we've raised the bar."

Portsmouth's experience is not unique: it represents a new generation of slow democracy experiments. For example, participatory budgeting techniques are inspiring renewed citizen energy in cities around the globe. Scholars and practitioners have dramatically increased the study and practice of dialogue and deliberation both nationally and internationally. This new wave has the potential to transform both individuals and communities.

Neurological research is revealing why slow democracy processes can help citizens to absorb new information and craft fresh solutions. Brain science tells us that we can use our full intellectual capacity more effectively when we avoid triggering "us versus them" responses. Communications researcher John Gastil notes that democratic deliberation "has shown the power of thoughtful, respectful, public exchange in generating consensus among citizens of diverse moral persuasions... appropriately structured deliberation achieves this...by slowing people down."

Portsmouth and other communities have shown that citizens will take the time that's needed for slow democracy when they can see that their involvement makes a difference. Yet time and time again governments create policies that shift power from local entities to the state and federal levels. The removal of opportunities for citizens to collaborate face-to-face, create local solutions, and experience real, hands-on decision making is causing a creeping democracy deficit in the United States.

We desperately need leaders with clarity, wisdom, and courage - and voters to elect them. If people have been in leadership positions themselves, they will have a much better idea of what real political leadership entails. They will know not to expect agreements overnight, and be able to distinguish between bullying and respectful deliberation, and between political posturing and authentic debate.

Slow democracy is not just an add-on to representative government - the two systems complement each other. As communities become more engaged in decision making, larger agencies can step back from micromanagement and work to support and connect local efforts. As one local official in Portsmouth, New Hampshire concluded, "There can be no going back to the old ways of doing things."

Share this



Appendix 5: Select Newspaper Coverage of Block 75 Controversy

The articles below were collected by Public Policy and Administration PhD Student Nishikant Kamble, and are presented here in chronological order. Letters to the editor referencing Block 75 were omitted, but article-length editorials by or about relevant stakeholders are included here. Articles that only mention the block in passing were also omitted.

NewsBank inc.

Near North End faces challenge of change - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - February 12, 2002 - page 01

February 12, 2002 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Emily SimnittThe Idaho Statesman | Page 01

Proposed apartment complex would include more parking for church

Emily Simnitt

The Idaho Statesman

There's a certain rhythm to the Victorian and other large turn-of-the-century homes that make up the Near North End, says planner and historian John Bertram.

"There's a whole kind of shape to the area," Bertram said. "As I drive down those streets, there's really a proud group of architectures. It's very much a sense of Boise."

Sandwiched between the North End neighborhood and downtown, the Near North End is an area in transition.

In the coming months, the City Council could decide on a proposal by the **Cathedral of the Rockies** to tear down a block of houses and erect a 176-unit apartment complex in its place. The project includes 580 spaces for parking -- plenty for both residents of the complex and the church's 2,500 members, a spokesman said.

But neighbors say the size of the building and how it looks could spell doom for the historic character of the Near North End and leave the North End -- just across Fort Street from the project -- exposed.

When Boise was founded in the late 1800s, the Near North End was its first residential neighborhood. It's always been a mixture of mansions and middle-class homes, schools and churches. But with downtown's growth in recent decades, the Near North End has changed into a mixed-use neighborhood where single-family homes and apartments mingle with law, therapist and other offices.

Last year, the city designated the area between Fort and State streets the Near North End Conservation District -- a level of protection intended to keep some of the buildings that housed Boise's earliest residents from being turned into parking lots.

For the nearby North End neighborhood, the area serves as an important buffer from the retail and commercial encroachment of downtown.

For downtown, the area in part serves as a place for much-needed residential housing, even though many of the larger homes have already been converted into offices.

It's a tough balance. On the one hand, the city plan for downtown calls for more housing in the downtown area, but it also is mindful of the importance of preserving older neighborhoods. The church, too faces a dilemma. It wants the neighborhood to remain strong with a solid residential presence, but it needs more parking space if it is to grow in the future.

"It sets a difficult precedent," Bertram said. "These are tough issues. You have to weigh the value of what's there. You have to evaluate the importance of the Near North End and the North End."

Preserving a neighborhood

Neighborhood churches such as the **Cathedral of the Rockies** are an important part of the Near North End. If the church can't accommodate its growing membership -- for which it says it needs additional parking -- the neighborhood would suffer a huge loss, Bertram said.

"We could have located near a freeway exit, but we felt called to the downtown," said **Cathedral of the Rockies** Pastor Steve Tollefson. "I've pastored in a suburban area. You don't get walk-in traffic."

The church has been at 12th and Hays for 42 years and in the neighborhood for 125.

Neighbors don't want to see the church leave, but they are concerned that if the church goes ahead with the project, more incompatible development could follow.

"One of the nice things about the Near North End is it's a transition from the intensity of downtown to the lower-key atmosphere of the North End," said Hal Simmons, city planner. "If you add a full block of dense apartment housing, you lose that transition. If the entire neighborhood slowly transitions to high density, the trend could potentially cross Fort Street."

And into the North End.

Much of the North End is a designated historic district, which offers more protection: Property owners can't modify exteriors or tear down houses without Historic Preservation Commission approval.

Mark Hill, North End Neighborhood Association vice president, worries that protection could easily be chipped away, much as he says the Near North End Conservation Overlay District has been slowly eroded in the 10 months since it was created. Hill cites a City Council decision a few months ago that removed a small area from the district's restrictions.

The church says it likes the neighborhood, too, and wants to be able to grow while staying there.

"We'd like to have people here rather than just businesses," Tollefson said. "We don't just want surface parking."

A question of design

The apartments are proposed on a block of large homes, including a two-story stone home with Boise's first residential elevator. But a few doors down is a boarded-up house the southwest corner of the block is already used as a church parking lot.

There's little question that the church has the right to demolish the houses it owns tomorrow and build a combination of parking and housing on the block.

The question is how many people will live on the block and what the apartments will look like.

Now, the block is zoned for 43 units per acre. The church is requesting a rezone that would allow nearly twice that many units.

Ken Elliott, a member of the church's building committee, said the difference -- about 75 units -- would make the project financially feasible and allow the church to hire a management company.

The church plans to finance much of the estimated $16 million cost and pay the debt with rents.

Last month, the church showed neighbors a preliminary design of the project. While the plan meets the church's parking needs, it clearly does not meet some neighbors' desire for what they want to see on the block.

Neighbors have asked the church to make the parking garage less prominent, reduce the building's height and in general make it look less like a modern apartment complex and more like the older homes in the neighborhood.

John Hansen, who lives in a turn-of-the-century Victorian house on the corner of Fort and 11th street, said the project's design has a long way to go.

"What is proposed here doesn't conform with the design of the neighborhood," Hansen said. "I'm not against the church improving the property and using it for something that benefits the church, as long as it benefits the neighborhood, too."

To try to find a compromise, the North End Neighborhood Association has set up a committee of neighbors, and the church has agreed to meet with them in the coming weeks.

Short of protecting the area as a more restrictive historic district, such conflicts and compromises will be inevitable.

"You have to accept the fact that unless it's a historic preservation district, the character will change to a more modern, urban use," said Hal Simmons, city planner. "To the extent that it means more housing near downtown, it's a good thing.

"The difficulty is to find the proper amount of compromise, so the project doesn't overwhelm the neighborhood."

Cutline: This view of the apartments proposed by the **Cathedral of the Rockies** looks north from Hays Street.

This view shows homes on Hays Street where the proposed apartment complex would be constructed by the **Cathedral of the Rockies**.

The **Cathedral of the Rockies** is proposing to demolish a block of homes in the Near North End to build a 176-unit apartment complex. The project would help alleviate the church's parking shortage.

The Near North End includes the blocks covered by the conservation district as well as the blocks south to Washington and east to 2nd Street. The 443 lots in the area include one vacant lot and 61 parking lots. The remainder of the area is used in the following ways:

Commercial: 16

Office: 119

Multi-family residences: 113

Single-family homes: 64

Schools and churches: 69

Concerns about the project

The North End Neighborhood Association has outlined a series of concerns with the **Cathedral of the Rockies**' project. The two groups hope to work through these issues in the coming weeks.

Among the association's concerns:

Traffic: Neighbors worry the additional residents will push Fort Street traffic above its 8,500 vehicles-per-day planning threshold.

Parking: Neighbors are concerned that even with 580 new spaces, there won't be enough parking for all the uses the church envisions, including leasing parking space to Boise High School students.

Design: Neighbors don't like the way the project would tower above neighboring homes and take up the entire block. They also dislike the prominent first-level parking garage and the way it restricts foot traffic.

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Emily Simnitt at esimnittidahostatesman.com or 377-6427.

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ACHD to take testimony on apartments - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - October 23, 2002 - page 01

October 23, 2002 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Emily SimnittStaff | Page 01

Cathedral of the Rockies wants to build in North End

Emily Simnitt

Staff

An apartment complex proposed for the area sandwiched between the North End and downtown could cause major traffic congestion, according to an Ada County Highway District staff report.

The ACHD Commission is scheduled to take public testimony tonight on the 137-unit Cathedral Place, a development proposed by the First United Methodist Church/**Cathedral of the Rockies** for the block between Fort and Hays streets and 11th and 12th streets.

The project includes a 417-space underground parking garage for complex residents and the church's 2,500 members.

The project was first presented last spring, and since then has undergone several changes in response to neighbors' concerns: It's smaller by 39 units, it sits back farther from the street and its overall design has been changed to better fit in with its neighbors' turn-of-the-century architecture.

"I appreciate the fact they've gone back and redrawn and addressed many of the neighbors' concerns," said Mark Baltes, who is active in the North End Neighborhood Association.

"They are making an attempt to take a difficult situation and make it workable.

"But it's still 137 units, and it's still going to carry with it all those impacts."

Baltes and other neighbors are concerned that replacing the eight houses on the block with a large apartment building will cause traffic nightmares.

The project will add about 842 additional vehicle trips a day to Fort and Hays streets, according to a traffic impact study.

Fort Street already carries 8,360 trips a day, and Hays Street carries 6,140. Planners say the ideal maximum level for both streets is about 7,000 trips a day.

Traffic from the development could make the situation worse on both streets, pushing them to what planners consider the worst service level.

There will be even more traffic on the streets if the 44 condos proposed for the block to the west are built. A Boise Planning and Zoning Commission decision to approve that project is being appealed to the Boise City Council. The appeal is scheduled to be heard Nov. 12.

The church's project could be rejected by ACHD or the city on the grounds that it adds too much traffic to the roads.

While there's no specific recommendation by ACHD staff to reject the project, the staff report recommends that the city take special note of what the extra traffic could do to Fort and Hays streets.

The church recognizes that its project will be a big change for the neighborhood. Sandi MacFadden, an associate pastor with the church, said the church is doing all it can to mitigate neighbors' concerns.

She said many church members live in the North End, and even if the project gets the go-ahead from the city and ACHD, the church won't build it unless it's approved by its congregation.

"We want to be a good neighbor," MacFadden said. "We are here, and we're staying here. The people who live in the neighborhood are people that mean a lot to us. The project is a way we can be an important part of keeping the area feeling like a family area rather than letting businesses encroach."

The project is in the Near North End, a conservation district the city created more than a year ago that is intended to keep some of the buildings that housed Boise's earliest residents from being turned into parking lots.

Just how Cathedral Place will affect the neighborhood remains to be seen, Baltes said.

"It's still a large project, but it's a smaller project than what they might have been able to do," Baltes said.

"You look at it as a trade-off. It's two reasonable parties trying to come up with a solution to a difficult situation. It's what we're always trying to do."

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Emily Simnitt at esimnittidahostatesman.com or 377-6427.

CITATION (APA STYLE)

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Proposed Cathedral Place may not fit city's long- - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - December 11, 2002 - page 03

December 11, 2002 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Emily SimnittStaff | Page 03

Emily Simnitt

Staff

An apartment complex proposed for the area sandwiched between the North End and downtown could conflict with several provisions of Boise's long-range plan, according to an Ada County Highway District staff report.

The ACHD Commission is scheduled to take public testimony tonight on the 137-unit Cathedral Place, a development proposed by the First United Methodist Church/**Cathedral of the Rockies**. ACHD will make a recommendation to the Boise Planning and Zoning Commission on whether to approve the project for the block between Fort and Hays streets and 11th and 12th streets.

The church needs approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission before it can start construction.

Cathedral Place would include a 417-space underground parking garage designed to serve the complex's residents and the church's 2,500 members.

The ACHD staff report says that approving the project could place "undue burden on transportation" in the area and therefore violate the city's comprehensive plan. The project will add about 842 additional vehicle trips a day to Fort and Hays streets, according to a traffic-impact study.

Fort Street already carries 8,360 trips a day, and Hays Street 6,140. Planners say the ideal maximum level for both streets is about 7,000 trips a day.

Some neighbors of the project are heartened by the ACHD report and hope the commission strongly recommends the city deny it.

"It's just not compatible," said John Hansen, who has lived in the neighborhood for 23 years. He and about 15 other concerned residents picketed the **Cathedral of the Rockies** last Sunday to protest the project they say will change the character of their neighborhood and make the streets unsafe and congested.

In October, ACHD took testimony on the project, but asked for more information from the city before making a recommendation.

Boise City Council in November said traffic congestion in the Near North End, where Cathedral

Place is proposed, might be OK if it was the result of housing where downtown workers could live so they could walk to work.

But that guidance, the report says, might be inconsistent with some parts of the plan.

The ACHD report also notes that the project may conflict with the Near North End Conservation Overlay District. That district is designed to keep older homes from being leveled for parking lots. The reports says the proposal "may be contrary to the policy discouraging the development of excessive parking lots."

ACHD staff doesn't usually evaluate projects on how they mesh with city policies, but it did so in this case at the request of the ACHD Commission.

The commission wanted to know what city policies applied to the project and it wanted to have a detailed report to show the city how it reached its recommendation, said Craig Quintana, ACHD spokesman.

Wayne Gibbs, city planning director, said the city is waiting on ACHD's decision to begin writing its staff report and analyzing how the project fits with the city's comprehensive plan.

The Boise Planning and Zoning Commission is tentatively scheduled to make a decision on the project on Jan. 13.

At IdahoStatesman.com

Read more about the Ada County Highway District

Tonight's meeting

The Ada County Highway District Commission will review at 6:30 tonight a proposal to put a 137-unit apartment building with a 417-space underground parking garage on the block between 11th and 12th and Fort and Hays streets. ACHD meets at 318 E. 37th St. in Garden City.

The Boise Planning and Zoning Commission is scheduled to consider the project in January.

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Emily Simnitt at esimnittidahostatesman.com or 377-6427.

CITATION (APA STYLE)

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NewsBank inc.

ACHD gives thumbs-down to Cathedral Place - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - December 12, 2002 - page 01

December 12, 2002 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Emily SimnittStaff | Page 01

Emily Simnitt

Staff

Ada County Highway District commissioners Wednesday declined to recommend approval of an apartment complex proposed for the Near North End that might conflict with several provisions of Boise's long-range plan.

The 137-unit Cathedral Place is proposed by the First United Methodist Church/**Cathedral of the Rockies** for the block between Fort and Hays and 11th and 12th streets. It includes a 417-space underground parking garage to serve residents and the church's 2,500 members.

ACHD commissioners said they could not recommend approval unless the capacity of Fort and Hays streets is increased.

"We cannot treat this property by itself," Commissioner Susan Eastlake said. "The city should recognize that allowing this project would exacerbate an already serious (traffic) problem."

The late-night decision came after a two-hour public hearing that drew about 25 people, most of whom were neighborhood residents who oppose the development.

Neighbors of the project are concerned it will change the character of their neighborhood and make their streets unsafe and congested.

But the church says it needs the additional parking in order to stay in its urban location.

The proposal now goes to the Boise Planning and Zoning Commission, which will decide whether to give the church the go-ahead for construction.

An ACHD staff report said that approving the project could place "undue burden on transportation" in the area and therefore violate the city's comprehensive plan. The project will add about 842 additional vehicle trips a day to Fort and Hays streets, according to a traffic-impact study.

Fort Street already carries 8,360 trips a day, and Hays Street 6,140. Planners say the ideal maximum level for both streets is about 7,000 trips a day.

In October, ACHD took testimony on the project, but asked for more information from the city before making a recommendation.

Boise City Council members in November said traffic congestion in the Near North End, where Cathedral Place is proposed, might be OK if it was the result of housing where downtown workers could live so they could walk to work.

But that guidance, the report says, might be inconsistent with some parts of the comprehensive plan.

The ACHD report also notes that the project may conflict with the Near North End Conservation Overlay District, designed to keep older homes from being leveled for parking lots. The report says the proposal "may be contrary to the policy discouraging the development of excessive parking lots."

Wayne Gibbs, city planning director, said the city was waiting on ACHD's decision before writing its staff report and analyzing how the project fits with the city's comprehensive plan.

What's next

The Boise Planning and Zoning Commission is scheduled to take up the proposed 137-unit Cathedral Place on Jan. 13.

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Emily Simnitt at esimnittidahostatesman.com or 377-6427.

CITATION (APA STYLE)

Simnitt, E. (2002, December 12). ACHD gives thumbs-down to Cathedral Place. *Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID)*, p. 01. Available from NewsBank: https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/0F7E8ABBB2D4BFF9.

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Susan Graham: Please rethink the Cathedral Place - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - January 21, 2003 - page 09

January 21, 2003 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Readers | Page 09

The Near North End Coalition represents many of the residents and owners of the homes in the neighborhood surrounding the **Cathedral of the Rockies**.

We are concerned about the number of apartments, the enormous size of the parking structure, and the adverse effects the proposed Cathedral Place Project will have on our neighborhood.

We did not object to the original expansion of the church in 2000 because the construction was confined to the existing site. The application and a letter from the architect stated, "The grand total of all off-street parking available is 274 stalls, which is in excess of either parking requirement assumption."

It went on to state "... the reality is that in this case, most of the churchgoers park on the street and have done so the past 50 years. There are approximately 410 parking spaces available along the curb within a two-block walk from the church. Church services are held on Sunday, which do not conflict with business uses or student parking from Boise High School."

We oppose the Cathedral Place Project because it will completely change the nature of our neighborhood.

We feel that the congregation must be unaware of the impact of this project and should know that:

This project will create 139 apartments with 207 bedrooms on a block that formerly had 13 homes with less than 40 bedrooms.

The project includes a three-level parking garage that has 417 spaces and will be bigger than four of the public parking garages in downtown Boise.

The cost of each parking stall is projected to be $9,000.

The residents of the apartments will generate 1,150 vehicle trips daily, past our homes.

Currently, according to Ada County Highway District (ACHD) traffic studies, Fort and Hays streets are at, or exceed, the recommended traffic volume that they were designed to handle.

In fact, Fort Street is already two levels above the recommended level of service.

Not only will the proposed project create more traffic congestion and pollution, it will make the streets more dangerous for the children attending the neighboring Washington Elementary, North

Junior High, Boise High and St. Joseph´s Elementary schools.

If your project is allowed, 4,000 to 5,000 truckloads of dirt will need to be removed through the streets in our neighborhood.

ACHD has determined that this project will place an undue burden on neighborhood streets and exacerbate an already existing problem.

The project is incompatible with the requirements of The Fort Street National Historic District. It is too big and out of character with the area.

We ask you to please look into your hearts and ask whether this is a project that fits in this neighborhood.

Please speak to your pastor and board members and ask them to stop this project and look for more realistic solutions.

For example, rescheduling the church services would enable people to visit before and following the services and still vacate parking spaces in time for the next service.

We appreciate your consideration and help.

We seek and welcome a dialogue with the members of your church.

Susan M. Graham, on behalf of the Near North End Coalition.

Susan Graham

CITATION (APA STYLE)

Readers. (2003, January 21). Susan Graham: Please rethink the Cathedral Place Project. *Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID)*, p. 09. Available from NewsBank: https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/0F8BBF09E016339F.

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Panel rejects proposed Cathedral Place project - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - February 4, 2003 - page 01

February 4, 2003 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Emily SimnittStaff | Page 01

More than 100 show up for P&Z panel hearing

Emily Simnitt

Staff

The Boise Planning and Zoning Commission on Monday rejected a proposal to build the 139-unit apartment Cathedral Place with a 456-space parking garage underneath in the neighborhood between the North End and downtown.

The decision came after nearly three hours of testimony, which followed picketing by about 35 project opponents outside City Hall prior to the meeting.

About 115 people stayed through the hearing. Most who spoke opposed the project, saying it would change their neighborhood´s character and add enough traffic to their streets to make them unsafe and congested.

"This project is just atrocious. It could have been built in San Jose, Calif., and plunked down in Boise. It has nothing to do with the Near North End. It´s crazy for this area," said picketer Susan Graham, a Fort Street resident.

Cathedral Place is being proposed by the **Cathedral of the Rockies** for the block on Fort Street between 11th and 12th streets. The block is in an area called the Near North End across the street from the church, which has been at its location for more than 40 years and says it needs to build the project to solve what it calls a parking crisis for its 2,500 members.

Commissioners said the project was too large for the neighborhood and that it would generate too much traffic for neighborhood streets.

But several commissioners told church officials that they liked the idea of providing more housing close to downtown and encouraged them to scale back the project and resubmit it.

Church officials say the project will add necessary housing close to downtown, a goal the city has consistently worked to achieve.

But the staff report says the project is too bulky for the area, which is now composed of large, turn-of-the-century homes that have been turned into apartments and offices.

"The neighborhood is not put at risk from high-density development on this block," said Ken Elliott,

a representative for **Cathedral of the Rockies**. "It´s at risk from the dwindling number of single-family homes and the conversion of those home into offices."

For the nearby North End neighborhood, the area serves as an important buffer from the retail and commercial encroachment of downtown.

City staff and the Ada County Highway District recommended that the commission deny the project.

An ACHD staff report said approving the project could place "undue burden on transportation" in the area and therefore violate the city´s comprehensive plan. The project will add about 842 additional vehicle trips a day to Fort and Hays streets, according to a traffic-impact study.

Fort Street already carries 8,360 trips a day, and Hays Street 6,140. Planners say the ideal maximum level for both streets is about 7,000 trips a day.

A report from city staff cites ACHD´s traffic concerns and says the development "violates at least as many policies of the Comprehensive Plan as it supports."

A couple of years ago, the city designated the area between Fort and State streets the Near North End Conservation District -- a level of protection intended to keep some of the buildings that housed Boise´s earliest residents from being turned into parking lots.

P&Z Commission OKs Highlands project

The Boise Planning and Zoning Commission Monday gave approval to a project that would add 46 patio homes, rowhouses and condos to about six acres next to the old Sav On Drug store. That store is being renovated and will open soon as a gourmet grocery store.

The North End Neighborhood Association supported Highlands Village, in part because of developer Bill Hodges´ efforts to keep traffic from harming the neighborhood.

Hodges plans to build a bus stop with the development, lobby the Ada County Highway District for money to put in traffic calming devices and offer price discounts on the units to people who work in the area.

What's next

Backers of the Cathedral Place development can appeal the Boise Planning and Zoning Commission´s denial to the Boise City Council. During the appeal process, citizens can voice their opinions in favor or against the project.

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Emily Simnitt at esimnittidahostatesman.com or 377-6427.

Cutline:Beth Ambrose of Boise joins a group Monday evening at Boise City Hall to protest the construction of an apartment complex they say does not fit the city´s master plan. The Boise

Planning and Zoning Commission met Monday night to decide on the Cathedral Place housing project proposed in Boise´s Near North End.

CITATION (APA STYLE)

Simnitt, E. (2003, February 4). Panel rejects proposed Cathedral Place project. *Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID)*, p. 01. Available from NewsBank: https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/0F905244AA2EE022.

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Cathedral Place Project is win-win situation for - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - January 31, 2003 - page 09

Steven Tollefson

Readers

I believe that the Cathedral Place Project, combining apartments with underground parking across the street from the **Cathedral of the Rockies**, is a "win-win" situation: a win for the city, a win for the neighborhood and a win for the church.

Let me explain why this project is so helpful to so many.

The city´s plan for the Near North End is to increase the percentage of residents living in an area that, unfortunately, has been rapidly transforming into an office district. The plan the church has developed fits in with the city´s plan. The city has zoned this area for this type of multi-use construction.

The Near North End gains as well. The trend in the Near North End for 20 years has been to turn houses into offices. At 5 p.m., office workers turn off their lights and go home. As that trend continues, we will find more and more of an empty and lifeless neighborhood after dark. That is not healthy for the neighborhood or the city.

The church owns four rentals on the block where the construction would take place. We will offer to relocate the tenants of those four rental homes during construction and will reserve apartment units for them in Cathedral Place at their current rental rates. Even the homes located on the block are for sale to anyone who can move them to a new location, preferably within the North End. Our goal is to provide more affordable housing, not to take housing away.

The YMCA would gain, as there would be parking spaces available for its staff. Boise High School would gain, as students and staff would have off-street parking spaces if they so desire.

People looking for parking during the week while school is in session would gain because there would be on-street parking. It is almost impossible to find parking around our neighborhood because of students parking on the street.

The city is growing. And what makes for a healthy neighborhood and city is people. Cathedral Place will be an approximately 139-unit apartment residence within easy walking distance of the many restaurants, schools, churches and businesses of downtown Boise, Hyde Park and other charming neighborhoods.

We are not attempting this large project on our own. We have joined in partnership with Boise

Housing Corporation and Tomlinson and Associates. Together, our goal is to make sure Cathedral Place benefits not only our church but our neighborhood.

A few neighbors of our proposed project have expressed opposition. They say Cathedral Place will add traffic to their streets. To the contrary, I believe when Cathedral Place is constructed, Boise will be providing close-in living, walking proximity to goods and services and attractively designed buildings on a block that has been in decay for several decades. Moreover, providing 139 homes so close to downtown will mean that that many homes won´t be needed in the nearby Foothills -- development that certainly would add to the traffic loads of Harrison Boulevard, 15th Street and other designated collector streets.

There is strong evidence to support my point of view. One year after construction of a similar project -- the C.W. Moore Plaza apartments downtown -- a traffic engineer´s research showed that car trips generated by the development were less than half the projection by the Ada County Highway District.

Our goal as a church is to serve the neighborhood and our city. Large churches should not be forced to move to the suburbs but be allowed to remain vital, alive and growing, even in the middle of a busy city.

Steven A. Tollefson is senior pastor of First United Methodist Church of Boise, or The **Cathedral of the Rockies**.

Steven Tollefson

CITATION (APA STYLE)

Tollefson, S. (2003, January 31). Cathedral Place Project is win-win situation for city, residents, church. *Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID)*, p. 09. Available from NewsBank: https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/0F8F00CFB7339619.

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Cathedral Place too massive for the neighborhood - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - February 2, 2003 - page 01

February 2, 2003 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Dan PopkeyStaff | Page 01

Dan Popkey

Staff

The **Cathedral of the Rockies**, one of downtown Boise´s most important institutions, has set off a storm of opposition with a proposal for an apartment and parking complex in a historic district.

Several hundred yard signs popped up in the North End last week, urging people to "Save the Fort Street National Historic District." Today, pickets will greet worshippers at the First United Methodist Church for the third time, and they´ll be outside City Hall before Monday´s 6 p.m. Planning and Zoning Commission hearing on the 139-unit, 456-parking space project.

Wondering what the fuss was about, I spoke with both sides last week. After wading through harsh words poisoning the debate, I agree with neighbors, the Idaho Historical Society, the Ada County Highway District and Boise Planning Department staff that Cathedral Place would seriously damage the character of a 100-year-old neighborhood.

The church and the Rev. Dr. Steven Tollefson are to be commended for staying downtown and investing $8.5 million in a new 700-seat sanctuary. But as that project nears completion, they´re playing a shell game with the city.

In winning approval for the sanctuary three years ago, the church said it had plenty of parking. But now, says building committee member Ken Elliott, they need more spaces "to make full use of a brand-new facility that the church has dreamed of for 15 years."

At first, church leaders planned a surface parking lot on the church-owned block bounded by Fort, Hays, 11th and 12th streets. But that was discouraged by rules for the city´s Near North End Conservation District.

So they joined forces with developer Jim Tomlinson, who has built quality projects including Oak Park in the Vista neighborhood. Proposing to offer apartments below market rent, the church has applied for $8 million in tax credits through the Idaho Housing and Finance Association, which would cut the project´s net cost from $17 million to $9 million.

The tax credits and apartments would pay for what the church really wants -- parking.

"The density of the housing is partly to defray the costs of the parking structure," said Elliott, who belittles opponents, calling them a "splinter group" of the "same six or eight people."

Church officials have squabbled with John Hansen, a neighbor leading the opposition. After the church pulled anti-Cathedral Place signs from the yards of its tenants on the block, Hansen threatened to call police. All nine houses on the site, including several of historical significance, are slated for removal.

Hansen also behaved badly, telling me church officials act like "possessed demons" with "illusions of grandeur."

But there are real reasons to reject this project. It is opposed by the North End Neighborhood Association. The ACHD found it would put an "undue burden on transportation" on already over-capacity streets and violate Boise´s Comprehensive Plan. Historical Society Director Steve Guerber urges denial because of affects on a "very significant historic neighborhood."

City Planning Analyst Karen Gallagher recommends the P&Z reject the project because of historical values and traffic, and because of its sheer size. "The Cathedral Place proposal is a large and bulky development that is clearly out of scale with the surrounding uses."

Covering 86 percent of the block, the building would require numerous reductions of the 20-foot setback requirement. It would have 117,000 square feet of apartments in three stories and 187,000 square feet of parking on three levels, with the upper level rising 8 feet above ground to sour the neighborhood´s character.

Pastor Tollefson correctly points out that high density fits with city policy to put housing near jobs.

"That´s healthy," he said. "Our goal is to get people to live here. Our goal is to enhance the neighborhood."

But this project is just too massive. Gallagher´s report to the commission is a model of balance that recognizes the value of housing downtown. She has a sensible idea: Eliminate one level of apartments and the above-grade parking.

Tollefson said the church has compromised, dropping the number of apartments from 176 to 139. "How low can you go to make them happy? I don´t think you can go far enough."

Pastor, for the sake of your neighborhood, please give it another try.

Dan Popkey´s column runs Sunday, Wednesday and Thursday. He appears at 9 a.m. Mondays on 580 NewsRadio KIDO. Phone 377-6438 or e-mail dpopkeyidahostatesman.com

CITATION (APA STYLE)

Popkey, D. (2003, February 2). Cathedral Place too massive for the neighborhood. *Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID)*, p. 01. Available from NewsBank: https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/0F8FA7E2F01F8F89.

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Boise neighbors want to establish historic - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - May 28, 2003 - page 02

May 28, 2003 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Emily SimnittStaff | Page 02

Near North End residents plan for a fund-raising event

Emily Simnitt

Staff

Molly O´Leary has lived in the Near North End for nine years, and she and her neighbors are concerned the historic charm that attracted them to the neighborhood may soon be lost.

"There´s a lot of pressure on the Near North End right now to demolish historic structures and develop new housing," O´Leary said. "We´re very concerned not only about the destruction of homes, but we´re also concerned about increased traffic that goes beyond the limits of the street."

To slow development, neighbors have asked the city to consider designating the Near North End a historic district bounded by Fort Street, 16th Street, State Street to 8th Street and Jefferson Street from 8th to Avenue B.

To raise money and awareness for the effort, neighbors are holding a live auction and music fest June 15 at Edwards Greenhouses.

Near North End neighbors recently opposed a proposed project by the **Cathedral of the Rockies** for the block on Fort Street between 11th and 12th streets. The church wanted to tear down several houses on the block and build a 139-unit apartment complex with a 456-space parking garage underneath.

The Boise Planning and Zoning Commission denied the proposal in February, but the church has said it plans to come back with a modified design in the future.

If the Near North End becomes a historic district, it could make it a lot harder for the church and others to tear down houses and build new developments.

Once an area becomes a historic district, all exterior changes to buildings within the district must undergo review by the Boise Historic Preservation Commission, said Jeff Neberman, city historic preservation planner.

In order for buildings to be demolished, the owner must prove the demolition won´t harm the rest of the historic district, that rehabilitation is not financially feasible and that the new design will have a positive effect on the district.

Before the area can be made a historic district, there will be an opportunity for affected property owners to comment. That meeting is not scheduled yet.

After that, the commission will make a recommendation the City Council makes the final decision.

It´s the not first time the area has been eyed for historic district status. The city surveyed the area in 1997 but didn´t create the district then because of opposition.

Near North End neighbors hope it will be a different story this time.

"I love the feel and the scale of the neighborhood," O´Leary said. "That´s what we want to preserve."

Dinner and music

The Near North End Coalition is holding a fund-raiser June 15 to raise money and awareness about creating a historic district in the Near North End.

The event includes music by Rosalie Sorrels, John Hansen, Belinda Bowler, Rebecca Scott and Ben Burdick, and Joshua Tree. There will be a grilled chicken dinner available for $5 a plate, and a live auction of items ranging from a customized house history to a gourmet Russian dinner for eight.

The event will be from 3 to 8 p.m. at Edwards Greenhouses, 4106 Sand Creek. Admission is $10 per person at the door children 12 and younger are free.

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Emily Simnitt at esimnittidahostatesman.com or 377-6427.

Cutline:Molly O´Leary, with the Near North End Coalition, is hoping her organization can have the Near North End designated as a historic district to help slow the area´s development.

CITATION (APA STYLE)

Simnitt, E. (2003, May 28). Boise neighbors want to establish historic district. *Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID)*, p. 02. Available from NewsBank: https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/0FB78FA56E5898EB.

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Proposed historic district on agenda tonight - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - June 26, 2003 - page 01

June 26, 2003 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Emily SimnittStaff | Page 01

Near North End neighborhood seeks new status

Emily Simnitt

Staff

An area sandwiched between downtown and the North End neighborhood could become Boise´s next historic district.

The Boise Historic Preservation Commission is holding a workshop tonight to hear what people think of a proposal to designate as a historic district the area bounded by Fort Street, 16th Street, State Street to 8th Street and Jefferson Street from 8th to Avenue B.

More than 300 people signed a petition requesting the district in hopes that it will help preserve the historic character of the neighborhood and stop projects like a 139-unit apartment complex with a 456-space parking garage the **Cathedral of the Rockies** proposed for the block on Fort Street between 12th and 11th streets.

"It´s about what we value as a community," said Molly O´Leary, who lives in the neighborhood and supports the historic district. "There´s a reason we care about preserving our past. It´s not just because we like dusty old artifacts and relics. The past helps us understand who we are and helps us understand the future."

Opponents of the district, which include the **Cathedral of the Rockies**, say that historic district designation is too restrictive and will make it difficult for them to make the most of their property.

Ken Elliott, a spokesman for **Cathedral of the Rockies**, said the church will be forced to abandon its plans to add housing and parking to the area if the district is approved. The church wants to build the structure to provide parking for its growing membership.

This week, the church gave its tenants on the block 30 days notice to vacate the property. The church plans to work this summer on finding people willing to move the houses from the block so the church doesn´t have to demolish them, Elliot said.

The Boise Planning and Zoning Commission denied the church´s apartment complex proposal in February, but the church has said it plans to come back with a modified design in the future.

The city rejected the proposal in part because it did not fit in with the character of the neighborhood. It´s city policy to support a strong, high-density housing district close to downtown,

said Hal Simmons, city planner.

The area is already designated a conservation overlay district, which is designed to maintain residential use and prevent houses from being replaced by parking garages. Any property owner in the area now can tear down houses without special permission, but they would have to replace them with a residential use.

The block owned by the church is zoned for multifamily use and can be developed at a density of 25 homes an acre. But the church can´t build a private parking garage, as it wanted, without approval from the Boise Planning and Zoning Commission.

In order for buildings to be demolished in a historic district, the owner must prove the demolition won´t harm the rest of the historic district, that rehabilitation is not financially feasible and that the new design will have a positive effect on the district.

But that doesn´t mean property owners can never change or demolish buildings in a historic district. In fact, a couple of commercial buildings in the South 8th Street Historic District are in the process of being demolished to make way for new development in the area.

Once an area becomes a historic district, all exterior changes to buildings within the district must undergo review by the Boise Historic Preservation Commission, said Jeff Neberman, city historic preservation planner. In the last three years, the commission reviewed about 300 requests to change the look of buildings in Boise´s seven historic districts. The commission approved almost all of them, Neberman said.

The commission bases those decisions on federal design guidelines for historic districts.

Work session tonight

The Historic Preservation Commission is holding a work session at 7 p.m. tonight at City Hall, 150 N. Capitol Blvd. At the workshop, the commission will seek input from the public on the proposed Near North End Historic District to gauge whether there is support for the district.

The commission also will take questions and explain the pros and cons of owning property in a historic district and try to dispel some myths circulating about historic districts.

If the commission decides there is support for the district, it will hold a public hearing. At that time, it will make a recommendation to City Council who will have final say on the proposal.

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Emily Simnitt at esimnittidahostatesman.com or 377-6427.

CITATION (APA STYLE)

Simnitt, E. (2003, June 26). Proposed historic district on agenda tonight. *Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID)*, p. 01. Available from NewsBank: https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/0FBF192CF5CC9A0B.

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Boise church won't get to demolish homes - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - July 16, 2003 - page 01

July 16, 2003 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Emily SimnittStaff | Page 01

Council sides with neighbors in Near North End

Emily Simnitt

Staff

Near North End neighbors were successful Tuesday in their latest battle to save a block of homes in their neighborhood from demolition.

The Boise City Council voted 3-2 to uphold the neighbors´ request to revoke a series of demolition permits the **Cathedral of the Rockies** recently obtained for six houses on the block on Fort Street between 11th and 12th streets.

Council members Maryanne Jordan, Alan Shealy and Jon Mason voted to revoke the permits while Vern Bisterfeldt and Jerome Mapp wanted to deny the request.

"Let them follow the rules and plan the building before demolition and not the other way around," said Michael Jones, an attorney who filed the permit appeal on behalf of the neighborhood. "You´ll lose a big heritage if you allow this demolition to occur."

Nearly 100 people attended the hearing. About half of them were in favor of demolishing the houses, and half against.

The church´s request for the demolition permits comes at the same time the area in which the block sits is under consideration to become a historic district.

The Historic Preservation Commission held a workshop in June to get input from neighbors and landowners in the area about the district.

The commission has not yet decided whether to pursue establishing the district but plans to discuss the possibility at its meeting Monday.

If the area were to become a historic district, the church and other property owners would have a more difficult time tearing down buildings there.

Neighbors in favor of revoking the permits said they want the city to make a decision on the historic district before the church is allowed to tear down the homes.

Church representatives told the council Tuesday the church has no current plans to build on the

block and would replace the homes with grass for now.

"We´re in no hurry to move forward" with a new development proposal for the block, said developer Jim Tomlinson, who is working with the church.

Earlier this year, the Boise Planning and Zoning Commission denied the church´s proposal to build a 139-unit apartment complex with a 456-space parking garage underneath for its members. The commission said the project did not fit in with the existing neighborhood.

The church said it´s trying to give the homes away to those willing to move them, and has plans to move the homes at the corners of 11th and Fort streets and 11th and Hays streets itself.

The church estimates it would cost anywhere from $30,000 to $80,000 to move the houses on the block.

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Emily Simnitt at esimnittidaho statesman.com or 377-6427.

CITATION (APA STYLE)

Simnitt, E. (2003, July 16). Boise church won't get to demolish homes. *Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID)*, p. 01. Available from NewsBank: https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/0FC5C9A90F7DCA3E.

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City council will re-examine decision on - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - July 23, 2003 - page 03

July 23, 2003 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Brad HemStaff | Page 03

Brad Hem

Staff

The Boise City Council will reconsider last week´s decision to revoke Cathedral of the Rockies´ permits to tear down or move the homes on an entire Near North End block.

The council voted 3-2 July 15 not to allow the church, which owns the block bounded by 11th, 12th, Hays and Fort streets, to demolish the homes. But council members are now concerned about whether the vote was legal or prudent. City lawyers will research the issue, and the council will revisit it at its Aug. 12 meeting.

Councilman Alan Shealy, who pushed the issue last week, said he was worried that if the council made the wrong decision, it would set a bad precedent for future planning and zoning decisions.

Fredric Shoemaker, the church´s attorney, said he expects the council to realize its decision last week was wrong and correct it. In a letter to the council Monday, Shoemaker said Boise City Code requires only a surety bond and liability insurance to receive a demolition permit. The church met both of those requirements, and the council should not have taken into consideration any other effects the project might have on the neighborhood, he said.

The church´s request for the demolition permits comes at the same time the area in which the block sits is under consideration to become a historic district.

The Boise Historic Preservation Commission held a workshop in June and again Monday to get input from neighbors and landowners in the area.

Jeff Neberman, city historic preservation planner, said the commission authorized staff to set up a second workshop for some time in August, to allow time for staff to make more maps of the area to help them decide whether to pursue establishing the district..

The additional maps, he said, will be geared at providing more information about the specific areas proposed for the proposed historic district, as well as other details to help determine what areas might be included.

If the area were to become a historic district, the church and other property owners would have a more difficult time tearing down buildings there. Neighbors in favor of revoking the permits said they want the city to make a decision on the historic district before the church is allowed to tear down the homes.

Church representatives told the council last week the church has no current plans to build on the block and would replace the homes with grass for now.

Earlier this year, the Boise Planning and Zoning Commission denied the church´s proposal to build a 139-unit apartment complex with a 456-space parking garage underneath for its members.

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Brad Hem at bhemidahostatesman.com or 377-6402.

CITATION (APA STYLE)

Hem, B. (2003, July 23). City council will re-examine decision on demolition in Near North End. *Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID)*, p. 03. Available from NewsBank: https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/0FC80ACF62F31946.

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Neighbors hope to save Boise's older homes - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - September 16, 2003 - page 01

September 16, 2003 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Emily SimnittStaff | Page 01

Residents call tear-downs 'unneighborly,' but other property owners want options kept open

Emily Simnitt

Staff

Amy Hutchinson moved to the North End seven years ago because she loves the big, leafy trees and the historic architecture.

But now she and other residents are concerned that the neighborhood could be losing that architecture and with it the historic character of the area that prompted many of them to move there.

For the past year, Hutchinson has watched as a handful of houses on 21st Street where she lives and several on 24th Street have been torn down or partially dismantled. They have been replaced with larger, suburban-style homes that she says are out of character with the North End and dwarf many of the smaller homes nearby.

To stop more tear-downs, residents have asked the city to create historic districts in the area and two others nearby. The Boise Historic Preservation Commission and City Council will be making decisions about these districts in the coming months.

For Hutchinson, those decisions can´t come soon enough.

"They took care when they built this neighborhood the first time," Hutchinson said. "It´s very unneighborly to move into an area because you like what the area is and then change it piece by piece. It´s wanton destruction."

Tearing down older houses and replacing them with bigger homes is an issue nationwide. Preservationists say it´s a combination of low mortgage rates and people being fed up with long commutes downtown.

Those building the new houses say it´s their right to use their property how they wish, and some don´t want to deal with the inconvenience and maintenance issues that older houses often have.

In areas such as the Near North End, some property owners want to replace aging homes with apartments and condos in an effort to add more high-density housing close to downtown.

The **Cathedral of the Rockies** has demolition permits in hand for a block of homes in the area

and could start tearing the homes down any day.

But many neighbors say those homes and the historic character of their neighborhoods are worth saving.

It´s too late to stop demolition of the **Cathedral of the Rockies** property. But neighbors are hoping to prevent future tear-downs.

Once an area is declared a historic district, it´s more difficult to demolish buildings.

Also, all exterior changes must be scrutinized by the Historic Preservation Commission to ensure they won´t harm the historic character of the area.

The Historic Preservation Commission also has asked the city to impose a moratorium on demolition in the proposed historic districts as well as on any properties outside the areas listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The commission wants to prevent tear-downs until decisions are made about the districts and wants time to explore ways to protect structures such as the Boise Depot, Cole Elementary School and other buildings from Boise´s past.

The City Council will discuss that request in a work session today.

In the coming months, the commission and City Council will decide on three proposed historic districts -- one expanding the existing North End historic district west of Harrison Boulevard to 28th Street one encompassing the East End north of Warm Springs Avenue and one in the Near North End south of Fort Street.

"We need to do something to save these neighborhoods," Hutchinson said.

A national trend

North and East end neighbors´ concerns about tear-downs in older neighborhoods are part of a pattern that´s cropping up all over the country.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, which tracks trends surrounding historic places and advocates saving historic architecture, included older neighborhoods where homes are being demolished and replaced on its list of most endangered historic places.

In a report on the tear-down trend, the agency noted that Denver lost 200 homes recently, most of them 1920s and 1930s brick bungalows.

The trend also is affecting turn-of-the-century neighborhoods nationally known for their historic architecture, such as Oak Park just west of Chicago.

"What´s happening is land is worth more than the houses," said Jeff Neberman, city historic preservation planner for Boise. "These are people with enough money who don´t want to live in

Meridian and commute."

But some of those people want all the amenities of a modern house, including a lot more square footage than is offered in many older homes in the North and East ends.

In 1900, when neighborhoods such as the North and East ends were developed, the average house was about 1,000 square feet.

After World War II, homes grew to about 1,500. Today, fewer houses are built with less than 2,000 square feet, Neberman said.

Because many of the lots in older neighborhoods are smaller, property owners have to build close to the setbacks and add second stories to get more square footage.

But neighbors say that sometimes those homes tower over existing older homes.

Hutchinson´s house was once on two lots. When she bought it, the former owner subdivided the lots and built a large, two-story home on the lot next to Hutchinson´s much smaller one-story house.

A group of neighbors living around 24th Street was so concerned that a restored Tudor revival-style house on the street would be torn down that they approached the commission for help.

"This is coming from the people who live in these neighborhoods," said Mark Baltes, a historic preservation commissioner who lives in the proposed expansion of the North End historic district. "They don´t want the complexion of their neighborhoods changed."

A question of property rights

But not everyone agrees that historic district designation is the right way to go.

Jim Auld, Ada County Property Owners Association president and a vocal opponent of the Near North End historic district, said the designation interferes with property rights.

"Property owners should have the absolute last word on what they can do with their own property," Auld said. "We have zoning laws. Those are adequate."

Auld owns rental property in the Near North End that is zoned for high-density residential and office uses. He wants to retain the option of tearing his buildings down and replacing them with larger ones -- in part to deal with aging wiring and plumbing and in part to give him more income to pay for rising property taxes, he said.

Auld and other historic district opponents argue that many of the buildings and homes in the proposed historic districts aren´t historic but merely old.

"It´s common sense that we shouldn´t put all of the older housing in a historic district because that will cause stagnation," Auld said. "It will have the effect of people fleeing to the suburbs."

But Baltes said the designation will improve the neighborhoods.

"It´s an asset, not a liability," Baltes said. "It´s not something I want to impose on somebody else it´s something I want to impose on myself."

It´s not an issue that´s going to go away.

The North and East ends are obvious places to consider as historic districts.

The neighborhood south of Boise State University has discussed seeking historic district designation, and many areas on the Bench are turning 50, the benchmark for consideration as historic.

Steve Lord, a preservation commissioner and East End neighbor who lives outside the bounds of the proposed historic district, said Boise is fairly new to historic preservation.

"It´s only recently we´ve become aware that we have a history as a community and that it´s a history worth preserving and understanding," Lord said.

He points to efforts in recent years to save the Bown home, built by pioneers Joseph and Temperance Bown, and Boise High School. A couple of years ago, North End neighbors combined and expanded the existing historic districts in their neighborhood to create Boise´s largest residential historic district.

"It´s a way to ensure as properties are redeveloped or additions are made that they honor the original intent and architecture of the place," Baltes said.

"Some of these new homes are built without style. I like the old character and the old charm. I have to believe there are other people like me who would rather rehab these houses then scrape them off."

What's next?

The Boise City Council is scheduled to hold a work session today on a request by the Historic Preservation Commission to enact a moratorium on demolition in the three proposed historic districts and properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The meeting will begin at 5 p.m. at City Hall, 150 N. Capitol Blvd.

Here is the status of the proposed districts:

Near North End: The Historic Preservation Commission earlier voted to move forward on this historic district. It could appear before the Boise Planning and Zoning Commission as soon as late October before heading to City Council for final decision.

East End: The commission held a work session in early September with neighbors. Look for a

decision soon on whether this district will move forward, too.

North End: Look for a work session with the commission in coming months.

1890 population boom led to homes built in North and East ends

The story of Boise and its neighborhoods began in the early 1860s when Boise was platted. The original townsite included parts of what is now the Near North End.

In 1890, Boise´s population skyrocketed, jumping from 2,000 to more than 4,000 in less than four months. That, combined with the advent of the Boise streetcar system, hastened development of Boise´s first suburbs -- the North and East ends.

Homes in the North End, ranging from majestic Queen Annes to more humble dwellings, were steadily built, and development continued west through the ´30s.

A number of Boise´s leading families moved to Warm Springs Avenue to take advantage of the newly discovered geothermal heat from underground hot springs, and development of smaller-scale houses north of the avenue followed.

East End developers also were attracted to the area by the Natatorium, a social and recreational center that included an indoor swimming pool, billiards, card playing, a Turkish bath and a bar. The "Nat" was torn down after a storm in 1934 caused severe structural damage.

By 1910, bungalows, or one or one-and-a-half story homes with wide, shallow-pitched roofs, became the ideal suburban home and sprung up in both the North and East ends.

Development in both areas dramatically slowed after World War II, because many of the lots were filled and because homebuyers began moving to new developments on the Bench.

Understanding historic districts

What qualifies an area as a historic district?

Historical, cultural or educational significance.

Important architecture or engineering features.

Geographic or archaeological importance.

Where are Boise´s existing historic districts?

North End from 4th Street to Harrison Boulevard.

Warm Springs Avenue.

South 8th Street.

Old Boise, downtown in the original townsite.

The Almon W. and Mary E. Spaulding Farmstead, also known as "Spaulding Ranch," at 3805 N. Cole Road.

What is included in a historic district?

All buildings within the boundaries of a historic district are considered part of the district, but only buildings that haven´t been substantially changed since construction are considered "contributing." Generally, 50 percent or more of the buildings need to be contributing for an area to be considered for a district.

The three proposed districts have the following number of contributing and non-contributing structures:

East End: 557 properties with 297 or 53 percent contributing.

Near North End: 238 properties with 178 or 75 percent contributing.

North End: 1,199 properties with 926 or 77 percent contributing.

How does an area become a historic district?

Generally property owners within the district request it the area is inventoried and the Historic Preservation Commission holds a public hearing and decides whether to pass it on to City Council, which has Åhe final say.

All three proposed districts were requested by people living in the districts.

What happens after an area is designated a historic district?

Exterior changes require a certificate of appropriateness, which is issued by the Historic Preservation Commission. The commission rarely outright denies a request, said Jeff Neberman, city preservation planner.

The staff generally works with property owners to ensure changes don´t take away from the historic character of the property or district. Decisions can be appealed to the City Council.

Historic district designation makes it more difficult to demolish buildings in the district.

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Emily Simnitt at esimnittidahostatesman.com or 377-6427.

Cutline:Amy Hutchinson´s neighborhood in the western part of the North End is one of three historic districts currently proposed in Boise.

CITATION (APA STYLE)

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Council reinstates demolition permits in Near - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - August 13, 2003 - page 01

August 13, 2003 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Emily SimnittStaff | Page 01

Neighborhood group fighting to keep houses

Emily Simnitt

Staff

The Boise City Council voted 4-1 Tuesday to reinstate six demolition permits the **Cathedral of the Rockies** recently obtained for houses that residents of an historic neighborhood have been fighting to save.

Opponents of the demolition say they are considering taking the issue to court.

"We really want to save historic Boise," said Susan Graham, who lives in the Near North End near the houses scheduled for demolition. "We really don´t want those buildings bulldozed with no plan in place."

The council´s vote reversed a July decision to revoke the permits at neighbors´ request. At that time, council members Alan Shealy and Maryanne Jordan voted to revoke the permits.

On Tuesday, Jordan and Shealy joined Vern Bisterfeldt and Jerome Mapp in voting to reinstate the permits. Jon Mason voted against reinstatement.

Neighbors had asked the council to force the church to wait to apply for demolition until a decision is made by the city on a historic district proposed for the area. The Boise Historic Preservation Commission is scheduled to meet at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the Downtown YMCA to discuss the proposed historic district.

Requirements for demolition permits are stricter in historic districts.

The church plans to demolish the houses on the block of Fort Street between 11th and 12th streets this fall, said Ken Elliott, a spokesman for the church. The church will try until Friday to give the houses slated for demolition away to those willing to move them.

The church also plans to present a new proposal in September to neighbors and then the city, describing what it would like to see replace the houses, which will likely include multiple-family housing and a parking component.

Earlier this year, the Boise Planning and Zoning Commission denied the church´s proposal to build a 139-unit apartment complex with a 456-space parking garage underneath for its members. The

commission said the project did not fit in with the existing neighborhood.

"The parking will allow the church to expand its ministry," Elliott said.

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Emily Simnitt at esimnittidahostatesman.com or 377-6427.

CITATION (APA STYLE)

Simnitt, E. (2003, August 13). Council reinstates demolition permits in Near North End. *Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID)*, p. 01. Available from NewsBank: https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/0FCEE9C678FD4F63.

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Steven Tollefson: Designating historic district - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - October 15, 2003 - page 06

October 15, 2003 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Readers | Page 06

Because the congregation of the First United Methodist Church "**Cathedral of the Rockies**" -- a community-minded body I am proud to represent -- seeks to establish a higher and better use for a block of mostly dilapidated homes on a block adjacent to our church, I´ve spent some time researching the implications of establishing a Near North End Historic District in Boise. I see little to recommend it.

A local Historic District concept places too much power in non-elected, single-issue overseers, who do not share the vision of our elected officials serving on the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council.

My opposition to establishing a Local Historic District in the Near North End rests on several facts and observations:

The city has a long-range plan for keeping our downtown alive, vital and growing. A key element of the comprehensive plan is to encourage more people to live close to the downtown core.

The current multifamily zoning of the Near North End and its designation in 2001 as a Conservation District allow for higher-density housing.

New housing within walking distance of jobs and services is essential for a vital downtown. Adding a Local Historic District discourages the potential economic growth that higher density housing would provide.

The age of a structure does not necessarily make it historically significant, worthy of preservation or of expensive renovation. The Historic Preservation Commission routinely rejects requests for simple additions or exterior remodels on houses based on the fear that the alteration would lessen the purported historical significance of the structure, regardless of the current shape the structure is in.

Many of the single-family dwellings in the Near North End have already been converted into offices, occupied during the day, but empty at night. Their occupants abandon downtown after work and on weekends and often do their shopping where they live -- in the suburbs.

This redevelopment pattern, which would be encouraged by the economics of a Local Historic District, is not conducive to a vibrant neighborhood.

Local Historic District designations can become laughably onerous. Some friends shared with me their desire to install an electric garage door on their historic home. They were denied for the "historical reason" that it would be a different style than the original garage door.

Designating an area a Local Historic District is a thinly veiled means of preventing lower-income families from moving into or staying in the neighborhood. Refurbishing old homes to their original bygone era condition is a hobby for well-situated families, a luxury that people with more modest incomes cannot afford.

Councilman Jerome Mapp recently commented on the wisdom of the steps taken by the city of Baltimore in its downtown area. Old buildings were slated for removal if they were in such disrepair that it was determined to be economically unfeasible to renovate them, but the replacement structures were designed in the same architectural styles as the buildings that had been saved. New and old stand side by side -- tastefully, compatibly and hard to distinguish from each other.

The city of Boise needs to adapt and change as our population grows and needs change. Downtown Boise needs more energy than it has.

A Local Historic District fixes the area in the past. The city has recognized the Near North End as an important transition area between downtown and the single- family Northeast neighborhood north of Fort Street. We need to allow our City Council and P&Z greater freedom to address the changing needs of a growing and healthy city as we move into the future.

I trust the wisdom and the vision of our City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission, elected officials who have an overall vision of the direction in which the great city of Boise needs to move.

Steven Tollefson

CITATION (APA STYLE)

Readers. (2003, October 15). Steven Tollefson: Designating historic district would stifle Near North End, downtown. *Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID)*, p. 06. Available from NewsBank: https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/0FE3AB77015D91A5.

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Council weighs new historic districts - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - March 17, 2004 - page 01

March 17, 2004 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Emily SimnittStaff | Page 01

Proposals cover East, North, Near North End areas

Emily Simnitt

Staff

The Boise City Council continued late Tuesday to take testimony on a proposal neighbors hope helps to preserve their Near North End neighborhood.

The proposed Hays Street historic district is designed to help preserve the outward appearance of part of the area sandwiched between downtown and the North End.

It´s one of three proposed historic districts the city will be making decisions on in the coming month. The other two are the Expanded North End Historic District between Harrison Boulevard and 28th Street and the East End Historic District roughly north of Warm Springs Avenue.

"When you see a neighborhood like this, you have a prototype for contemporary urban construction. It´s a place where you can stop and smell the roses," said Steve Lord, a Boise Historic Preservation Commission member who favors creating the Hays Street district.

But Clay Carley, another Historic Preservation commissioner, said he´s concerned that creating the district would make it more difficult to add higher-density housing near downtown.

City Council members aren´t convinced that designating an area as historic is the only way to preserve the character of Boise´s older neighborhoods.

At a work session last week, council members asked staff about other mechanisms they could use to help prevent historic structures from being torn down. The council directed staff to bring forward an ordinance that would give the city more control over what gets demolished citywide.

Part of the movement behind the proposed Hays Street district stems from area residents concerned over a block of homes owned by the **Cathedral of the Rockies** church. The church wants to build an apartment complex on the site. There aren´t current plans for the complex under consideration, but the church has demolished several of the homes on Fort Street between 11th and 12th streets.

In a historic district, all outside remodels and demolitions must get the go-ahead from either the city´s historic preservation planner or the Historic Preservation Commission. Neighbors requesting the historic districts hope that the extra step will slow a trend of older homes being torn

down and replaced by new structures .

But creating a historic district -- and the added bureaucracy for homeowners wishing to remodel -- isn´t the only way to protect buildings. Critics of historic districts say that designation can interfere with property rights.

What's next?

The Boise City Council is expected to hold public hearings on two additional proposed historic districts:

March 30: East End Historic District north of Warm Springs Avenue.

April 13: Expanded North End Historic District west of the existing North End Historic District.

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Emily Simnitt at esimnittidahostatesman.com or 377-6427.

CITATION (APA STYLE)

Simnitt, E. (2004, March 17). Council weighs new historic districts. *Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID)*, p. 01. Available from NewsBank: https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/10167309CD997748.

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Boise OKs historic district - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - March 18, 2004 - page 01

March 18, 2004 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Emily SimnittStaff | Page 01

Near North End called a 'very vital part' of city's past

Emily Simnitt

Staff

More than 100 years ago, Boise founders platted the original townsite, and people of all walks of life moved in to what is now the Near North End.

Now the Boise City Council is moving to preserve that heritage by designating the area between Fort and Hays streets the Hays Street Historic District, the city´s newest.

"The council recognized the significance of preserving a very vital part of Boise´s history," said Steve Lord, a Historic Preservation Commission member, said of the council´s Tuesday vote to create the district. "Other than the neighborhood around Grove Street that doesn´t exist anymore, it´s the first area where we saw homes of common people interspersed with homes of Boise´s leading citizens as well as offices, churches and schools."

About 50 people stayed late into the night Tuesday as the council took testimony on what many consider the most controversial of three proposed historic districts the city will consider in this spring.

The council voted 4-2 to create the district, with council members Vern Bisterfeldt and Jerome Mapp dissenting.

Once the district takes effect, all outside remodeling and demolitions must get the go-ahead from either the city´s historic preservation planner or the Historic Preservation Commission.

The council also reinserted half a block owned by the **Cathedral of the Rockies** that had been taken out of the district earlier. The church has long planned to build an apartment complex there and has already torn down most of the houses that once stood there.

Part of the movement to create the district came out of concern some neighbors had over the effect the church´s project would have on the neighborhood´s character.

District opponents said Tuesday that they feared the designation would take away property rights and interfere with plans to add higher-density housing close to downtown.

District supporters spoke of the neighborhood as a historic treasure.

"It is a very emotional issue for us," said Sonja Nehr-Kent at the meeting while her husband held their sleeping child. "We need to get the politics under control and do what´s best for our future."

Nehr-Kent recently moved into the neighborhood.

Jeff Neberman, city historic preservation planner, said the area is home to 25 buildings designed by Tourtellotte and Hummel, a Boise architectural firm that is considered to be the most important firm in Idaho history.

What's next?

Boise City Council is expected to hold public hearings on two more proposed historic districts:

March 30: East End Historic District north of Warm Springs Avenue.

April 13: Expanded North End Historic District west of the North End Historic District.

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Emily Simnitt at esimnittidahostatesman.com or 377-6427.

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Don't like that building proposed near you? This - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - December 12, 2017

December 12, 2017 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Sven Berg, Idaho Statesman

Prodded by projects they don't like, neighborhood groups are dusting off a little-known Boise ordinance to preserve the character of the places they live.

In the East End, a plan for a home on Mobley Drive off Warm Springs Avenue spurred a group of neighbors to start organizing what the city calls a conservation district. The house would have been two stories and narrow, while most nearby homes are single-level ranch-style structures built in the 1950s.

Across town, a September proposal to build a CVS Pharmacy at the corner of State and 17th streets prompted residents to step up a year-old effort to establish a conservation district there.

Conservation districts, or conservation overlays, are similar to historic districts. They restrict development by regulating architectural styles, height, massing and uses of buildings, as well as parking and other uses. Unlike historic districts, they don't restrict less obvious features such as materials and window sill depths.

As developers look for ways to build projects in established neighborhoods, Boise is likely to see more interest in conservation districts, said Hal Simmons, the city's planning director.

"They're a good tool if they're not abused," Simmons said. "They can't be used to just stop development. But if you can come up with some reasonable standards to kind of guide development to be the way you want it to be, I think they're workable."

TWO EXAMPLES

Two conservation districts exist in Boise. To some degree, they are examples of how and how not to use the 16-year-old law that allows them.

The oldest district lies between Franklin, Fort, 17th and 4th streets. It was established in 2001 by neighbors who became alarmed at the demolition of historic homes in the Near North End, Simmons said. The galvanizing moment came when **Cathedral of the Rockies**, also known as the First United Methodist Church, tore down all of the houses between Fort, Hays, 11th and 12th streets, planning to turn that city block into a parking lot.

The district's rules prohibit new parking lots of greater than 2,500 square feet unless they are for new residential space or an existing use. A new parking garage would be allowed in the district "provided that it is designed to blend with the predominant architectural theme of the surrounding area and that it includes a significant residential component." The district encourages continued residential use of existing homes and allows them to be remodeled as apartments or offices.

For the most part, Simmons said, the conservation overlay has done what it was designed to do. Historic homes have been preserved and no new parking lots have been developed, he said. Even the **Cathedral of the Rockies** only uses the southwest corner of the lot it cleared for parking. A community garden occupies much of the rest.

Boise's second conservation district has been less successful, Simmons said.

Established in the mid-2000s, it was meant to preserve parking spaces for existing businesses in Hyde Park, many of them restaurants or retail shops. Some of those businesses no longer exist, Simmons said, and the district isn't really relevant.

"It was overly complicated," he said. "I don't know that it's ever been used very much. And I don't think it's had much effect."

THE PROCESS

To establish a conservation overlay, the owners of all property inside and within its proposed boundaries must be notified.

Property owners decide the district's contours and which uses, building types or design features are allowed. The law doesn't specify how many affected property owners must agree on these details, but Simmons said the city likely would not approve a district that faces significant opposition within its boundaries.

A district's rules should work toward realizing goals established in Boise's comprehensive plan, such as preserving historic buildings and open space or fostering pleasant walking and biking corridors, Simmons said. The City Council must approve the a district, making it part of city law.

The West Downtown Neighborhood Association's board wishes it had done all this before the CVS application was filed, association President Nicole Windsor said.

The application calls for the removal of the Arcade Building, which houses 23 apartments, and three houses. The loss of housing close to Downtown conflicts with the city's goal of encouraging residences within walking and biking distance of services like the Albertsons grocery store at 16th and State or the shops Downtown.

Now that the city has received an application, a new conservation district can't stop the CVS project, Simmons said. That's because the laws on the books at the time of application are the ones that apply. An overlay could stop other projects from removing historic homes or adding new buildings that clash with the neighborhood, but it would not apply retroactively.

Windsor said the neighborhood is in the early stages of drafting a conservation overlay. It is still working on boundaries, which would mostly encompass residential corridors between 16th, 19th, Jefferson and Idaho streets.

"What we're looking at is not limiting people from building garages or additions or vinyl windows,"

Windsor said. "We're looking more at protecting the residences that are there and just kind of preserving that character."

MOBILIZED ON MOBLEY

The East End's push for a conservation district will continue even though the initiative's catalyst has fizzled.

Developer David Benoit withdrew his application Monday to build the two-story, 30-foot-wide home at 406 N. Mobley Drive. Neighbors said the home's design would clash with the single-story, midcentury architecture that dominates the street.

Benoit recently bought two adjoining lots on Mobley. The northern lot, at 408 N. Mobley, has a single-story home that extends over the empty southern parcel's lot line by 5 feet. Boise usually requires 5-foot setbacks from neighbors' property lines for single-family homes. That means the house at 408 extends 10 feet farther south than it normally would if 406 had a house on it.

The planning department approved a permanent easement by which the owner of the lot at 406 allows 408's encroachment. Simmons said that resolved the legal obstacle to building a home at 406. Neighbors cried foul. They said the easement essentially moves the lot line, making the southern lot smaller than Boise standards normally require. They said the city was inviting developers to use the same technique to shoehorn homes into places they don't fit.

"Anyone that has two lots could, in theory, give the permanent easement and build as skinny a house as they want as long as they met the setback requirements," said Mark Utting, who lives a few houses away from Benoit's property.

Brittney Scigliano, who lives across the street from Benoit's project, appealed to the Planning and Zoning Commission. A hearing was scheduled for Monday, but Benoit withdrew his application that morning. He told the Idaho Statesman on Friday that he wants to work with neighbors to resolve their concerns.

Utting said he and his neighbors are working on the outline of a conservation district. The boundaries would include both sides of Mobley Drive, Jantoni Drive, a connecting road, and Jefferson Street between Mobley and Coston Street.

Utting expects the process to establish the district to take about six months. Simmons said that is a realistic schedule.

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CITATION (APA STYLE)

Berg, S. (2017, December 12). Don't like that building proposed near you? This Boise ordinance may help. *Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID)*. Available from NewsBank: https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/168C50B4BB69EA48.

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A Boise church lost a bitter fight to develop this - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - June 13, 2018

June 13, 2018 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Maria L. La Ganga, Idaho Statesman

Officials at the **Cathedral of the Rockies** might develop an affordable housing complex on a sought-after block adjacent to the Gothic Revival church in Boise's Near North End.

The block was at the center of a bitter preservation fight about 15 years ago. Today it is basically an empty lot that, depending on your point of view, is either a squandered opportunity or a flourishing community garden doubling as a teaching farm.

The Cathedral has scheduled a meeting for its congregation on Wednesday, June 20, to talk about the block's future.

Jerri Walker, executive director of the Methodist church at 717 N. 11 St., said it notified the congregation via email on Friday of the meeting to discuss so-called Lot 75, which is bounded by Fort, Hays, 11th and 12th streets. Another meeting, for neighbors and other affected parties, is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, July 11.

"Here we have this lot," Walker said, as she described what the congregation will be considering. "Really right now it is just totally a blank slate. ... Do we do anything or not? We have no real plans."

A flyover of the Boise Downtown Teaching FarmAerial footage shows the Boise Downtown Teaching Farm, which used to have historical homes on its lot.

Church demolished, moved historic houses

Cathedral officials have a rocky history with preservationists and neighbors in the graceful swath of homes and offices that separates Downtown from Hyde Park and the rest of the North End.

The church proposed building a massive apartment complex with 176 units and more than 500 underground parking spaces. "I think the Near North End needs apartments, and they need parking," then-Pastor Steve Tollefson told the Statesman in 2002, when the project was going through the government approval process.

After protests from the neighborhood, the church altered the Cathedral Place project to include just 137 apartments and 417 underground parking spaces. But the Ada County Highway District and the Boise Planning and Zoning Commission both rejected the proposal.

The damage, however, was already done. In preparation for development, the church demolished at least three historic houses on the property and had at least four moved to other Boise locations, the last one in 2006. Since then, the block has remained undeveloped, except for the orchard and the teaching farm.

0613 cathedralrockies.jpgCathedral of the Rockies, also known as the First United Methodist Church, ignited a bitter neighborhood fight about 15 years ago in the Near North End when it tried to build a massive apartment building with underground parking on an adjacent lot. After moving or demolishing at least eight historic homes on the church-owned block, church officials put the plans on hold. Now, the congregation is meeting to decide the fate of so-called Lot 75

Housing project tour

Julie Robinson is one of two lay leaders gathering information to make recommendations to the church about what it should do now with Lot 75.

She told the Statesman that Senior Pastor Duane Anders recently toured a project in California built by Jamboree Housing Corp., which develops, builds and manages low-income and workforce housing.

Robinson said Anders visited the project with Bart Cochran, president of Boise-based LEAP Charities, whose focus is creating and managing affordable housing properties.

"They liked what they saw," Robinson said. "That doesn't mean there aren't other ideas. What we will be doing at the June 20 meeting is putting up other ideas. We could try and sell it ... there's other mission work we could do.

"We have a very large, growing youth program," she continued. "We might want to do something for youth in the area. Another need that is growing is health care for low-income people. There are lots of things that are needed. The question is funding. We're not taking anything off the table initially."

In fact, she said, the lot is large enough that it could hold a variety of uses, perhaps a combination "youth center, affordable housing and a small clinic. We want to be creative. We might not move forward at all. If we do move forward, we want to be creative and we want to be helpful."

Mary Jo Goelzer, Jamboree's vice president for marketing, said by email that "there have been no specifics as to what or when to build and what populations to serve," but Jamboree has "extensive experience serving families, seniors, veterans, the homeless, those living with mental illness."

The block has a small surface parking area, a grassy lot with mature trees, the First Fruits Orchard, and the Downtown Teaching Farm, an outdoor laboratory for Boise High School students that is used at other times as a community garden and is cared for by a loose cadre of volunteers.

Cathedral of Rockies and empty lot.jpgThe **Cathedral of the Rockies** is in the background in this view looking south from Fort Street toward Lot 75, a city block. Homes there were torn down or moved elsewhere more than a decade ago to make way for a church-planned apartment and parking complex that was never built. Now the church is considering building affordable housing there. The garden in the foreground is used by Boise High School students and local residents. A church parking area is behind the garden.

Lay leader pledges openness

Robinson said her primary concern today is simple: "I want to make sure that people feel involved and knowledgeable about what we are doing."

Longtime garden volunteer Lawrence Shapiro on Tuesday mourned the possible loss of the raised beds and the compost, the summers filled with blossoms and the pollination project, and the neighbors and school kids who wander through on a regular basis.

One community garden volunteer hopes to see land developed into a public spaceLawrence Shapiro is a community garden volunteer on lot 75, a parcel of land owned by the Cathedral of the Rockies.

"My hope is that community volunteers can help with the transition plan to keep the garden beautiful and productive through the planning and construction process," said Shapiro, an architectural historian. "We'd like to make an ongoing contribution to guiding development of useable and attractive garden space."

The Cathedral's Walker said the teaching farm will continue through the next school year.

Hays Street Historic District

The fight over the block's fate spawned the Hays Street Historic District, which instituted a set of design guidelines and protections for the neighborhood.

The district encompasses nearly 22 blocks from the northern half of the original Boise town site. Half of its buildings were built before 1912. But only the Fort Street half of Lot 75 is included in the historic district. The section facing Hays Street and the Cathedral itself do not have the same strict guidelines.

Beyond spawning the historic district, the fight left a deep reservoir of anger and distrust in the Near North End that could be a challenge for church officials and the congregation all these years later.

Dan Everhart, an architectural historian who gathered petitions for the Hays Street Historic District, said he trusts the guidelines to "have a positive effect" on the church's proposal. But that's about where his trust ends.

"The truth is, when they chose to demolish three-quarters of a block of houses with no project to replace it, they did about the worst thing you can do," Everhart said. "They can't do worse in my opinion than demolish them for dirt, for a surface of dirt that they cannot even park on.

"That's the ultimate insult to a historic neighborhood," he said. "Take historic resources, remove them and do nothing with the land, leave them unreplaced for 15 years. Can they do worse? Probably not. They will be required to do better."

House Moving.jpgJim and Monica Walker's house, purchased for $1 from the Cathedral of the

Rockies, awaits its move in 2006 to a new site. The church moved or demolished at least eight homes to make way for a planned apartment house with underground parking. The project was never built. The then-101-year-old house was the final historic dwelling moved from the block adjacent to the cathedral. The house didn't go far: it now stands at the corner of 12th and Hays streets.

0613 cathedralhomes.jpgTwelve years later, the home of Jim and Monica Walker that was moved off Lot 75 in 2006 has been moved one block closer to the cathedral and extensively renovated. Renowned Boise architect J.E. Tourtellotte designed the house and quarried the sandstone for it from the Table Rock area.

Mark Baltes, interim president of the North End Neighborhood Association, said his main hopes are that the church will be transparent in its decision-making and that the greater neighborhood will be involved in the "visioning process."

"I don't know what we can expect from the Cathedral in that regard," Baltes said. "There could be some good, enlightened development that could occur on that property."

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CITATION (APA STYLE)

L. La Ganga, M. (2018, June 13). A Boise church lost a bitter fight to develop this lot. Now it might build housing there.. *Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID)*. Available from NewsBank: https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/16C89DD073653618.

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Neighbors, Cathedral of Rockies members resist - Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) - September 6, 2018

September 6, 2018 | Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID) | Maria L. La Ganga, Idaho Statesman

It was billed as an evening of education, a chance for members of the **Cathedral of the Rockies** to learn about Boise's need for affordable housing and what they might accomplish if the church builds on a square block it owns in the Near North End.

Instead, the Thursday meeting turned into a polite but testy interlude filled with angry questions from congregants and neighbors alike. Some wondered whether building affordable homes in one of Boise's most desirable neighborhoods is "the highest and best use" for the pricey parcel.

Others thought the church should simply sell the property. During this, the third church meeting called this summer to talk about the parcel's fate, some of the 50 or so people who attended said church officials were not being transparent and were not trustworthy.

"We bought [the land] for the purpose of parking," said one longtime church member who declined to give his name. "We told everybody that was the reason. I'm not against affordable housing. I just don't know that that's the place for it."

He was interrupted by applause.

"There's emotion on one end and on the other end, economics," said another man, who described himself as a 43-year church member and a former trustee. "I have no doubt how much need there is. But there's also a need to marshal our asset. ... My plea is that we back up. ... We have an asset, and we should be very careful in how we use that asset."

The block, variously referred to as Lot 75 or Block 75, is adjacent to the cathedral and bounded by Fort, Hays, 11th and 12th streets. About 15 years ago, it was at the center of a bitter preservation fight. Today it is basically an empty lot that, depending on your point of view, is either a squandered opportunity with a little bit of surface parking or a flourishing community garden doubling as a teaching farm.

Earlier this year, church officials floated the idea of building low-income housing on the property. Such housing is defined by the government as being for residents who make 60 percent or less of the area median income, or AMI. For a family of four, the AMI is about $70,000 a year, said Bart Cochran, president of LEAP Charities, a Boise nonprofit that focuses on affordable housing. Cochran, who spoke at Thursday's meeting, said that means such a family would earn about $42,000 annually.

Cochran and Erik Kingston, housing resources coordinator for the Idaho Housing and Finance Association, talked about the growing desperation Boise's poorer residents feel as they try to make ends meet and find places to live in this fast-growing and increasingly expensive city.

Kingston described the ripple effects of spiking housing costs. Every time someone buys an apartment building, he said, "all of a sudden they have carrying costs and raise rents. ... It's happening in a lot of different places in the country. If you're identified as a hot market and a great place to live, it's going to happen."

In addition, because of construction costs, he said, "new housing will be out of reach for low-income people." The result, Cochran and Kingston said, is a gap of 80,000 units of affordable housing statewide and a vacancy rate for such rental units of 0.4 percent in Ada County.

"The question of the night is what can the **Cathedral of the Rockies** do? What's the opportunity?" Cochran asked. "I believe, and this is just my take, the church is powerfully positioned to make a major impact on affordable housing in the city and to help meet that big deficit."

Lot 75 meeting at Cathedral of Rockies 9-6-18 by Maria IMG_0623.jpg

But Kate Garvey, who attends the church and hopes to join in coming months, said she worried about who might move into such housing if it were built beside the stately house of worship.

"Even though the church wouldn't be involved in managing this, there's a potential for lawsuits," she said. "There are issues of safety for members of our church who are most vulnerable. ... Having lived next to subsidized housing twice, I experienced a lot of unattended children who caused a lot of issues in our neighborhood."

Julia Robinson, a co-leader of the church's Block 75 Mission Team, told the Idaho Statesman after the meeting that officials understand the concerns and have worked to be as open as possible. And, in retrospect, she said, she wishes she had invited someone struggling to afford housing to speak Thursday.

"When you have a house and a job," she said, "you don't understand how desperate people can be. ... I don't think we communicated it enough tonight for folks how desperate people are. If we had, I believe people would open their hearts more."

Echoes of an old fight

Cathedral officials have a rocky history with preservationists and neighbors in the graceful swath of homes and offices that separates Downtown from Hyde Park and the rest of the North End.

In the early 2000s, the church proposed building Cathedral Place, a massive apartment complex with 176 units and more than 500 underground parking spaces. After protests from the neighborhood, the church altered the project to include just 137 apartments and 417 underground parking spaces. But the Ada County Highway District and the Boise Planning and Zoning Commission both rejected the proposal.

In preparation for development, the church demolished at least three historic houses on the property and had at least four moved to other Boise locations, the last one in 2006. Since then, the block has remained undeveloped, except for the orchard and the teaching farm.

The fight spawned the Hays Street Historic District, which instituted a set of design guidelines and protections for the neighborhood. The district encompasses nearly 22 blocks from the northern half of the original Boise town site. Half of its buildings were built before 1912. But only the Fort Street half of Block 75 is included in the historic district. The section facing Hays Street and the Cathedral itself do not have the same strict guidelines.

Church might not proceed

On Thursday, Robinson sought to calm some of the concern about what church officials would do with the property. She said they hope to circulate a request to developers for letters of interest. Before picking a possible developer, the church wants to know what kind of experience interested developers have, whether they'd ever worked with churches before, what their financial resources are, and how they planned to finance any project they might build.

And, in the end, she said, the decision might be not to build at all.

"We may stop the process at any time," she told those gathered at the cathedral. "Our timeline is to do it right. The lay council has to decide in October if there's enough support in the church to send out letters of interest. In the summer there was not. ... We need to have the church be comfortable, or we will not go forward."

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CITATION (APA STYLE)

L. La Ganga, M. (2018, September 6). Neighbors, Cathedral of Rockies members resist affordable housing across street. *Idaho Statesman, The (Boise, ID)*. Available from NewsBank: https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/16E4A1B0A89075E0.

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