



## Design Review Staff Report Community Development Authority

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**Address:** 1110 S 10<sup>th</sup> Street/1001 Marshall Street

**Owner/Applicant:** St. Francis Assisi Parish

**Existing Use:** Vacant (former St. Boniface Catholic Church and Rectory)

**Project Description:** Demolition of former St. Boniface Church and Rectory for sale/future development.

### Historical Photos:

1908



1967



## Church and Rectory Exteriors



Church Interior



Rectory Interior



**Staff Notes:** The June 1988 published *Manitowoc Intensive Resource Survey Final Report*, states that the St. Boniface Church and Rectory were built in 1885 – over 140 years ago. The church building architecture is defined as gothic design with pointed arches and stone vaulting. The rectory is Queen Anne Style most notably by the use of cream city brick, roof pitch, wooden porch and stone work. While these structures are not located within the designated Historic District, demolition of any architecturally significant structure is not preferred and the City generally encourages reuse of existing buildings.

According to MMC 15.790(4), before granting a Certificate of Appropriateness, the CDA or the Department shall find that projects meet a series of criteria. This project’s applicability for the criteria are as follows:

- 1) The historic or cultural significance of buildings or structures affected is maintained or enhanced.**
  - a) The proposed demolition does not meet this criterion. Removal of the buildings would permanently eliminate structures that contribute to the historic and cultural character of the district. Demolition neither maintains nor enhances the property's historic significance and results in the irreversible loss of historic buildings in downtown.
- 2) The architectural style, value and significance and general design arrangement, texture, material, and color of the architectural features of buildings and structures are visually and functionally coordinated with other buildings and structures in the area.**
  - a) The proposed demolition does not meet this criterion. The result of the removal of the buildings will be a vacant site with topsoil and seed. A vacant lot does not provide the visual or functional intent of this criterion.
- 3) Principal entrances are visually and functionally related and coordinated with other buildings and pedestrian ways.**
  - a) The proposed demolition does not meet this criterion. While the site may be restored with topsoil and seed, a vacant lot does not provide the visual or functional intent of this criterion.
- 4) Activity nodes such as plazas and arcades are created, retained and coordinated.**
  - a) The proposed demolition does not meet this criterion. The project does not create or retain activity-generating features or public gathering spaces. Instead, it removes an existing structure and leaves a vacant parcel that does not contribute to the activity, vitality, or coordination of the area.
- 5) Building facades and other appurtenances such as fences, walls, and landscaping are coordinated to form cohesive walls of enclosure along streets or other public ways.**
  - a) The proposed demolition does not meet this criterion. Removal of the building would create a gap in the visual continuity provided by existing structures along the public way.
- 6) The scale, orientation, and directional expression of buildings and structures are visually and functionally coordinated with other buildings and structures in the area.**
  - a) The proposed demolition does not meet this criterion as demolition removes two structures. While the site may be restored with topsoil and seed, a vacant lot does not provide the visual or functional intent of this criterion.
- 7) Views are protected, created, or enhanced.**
  - a) The proposed demolition does not meet this criterion. While demolition may create an open view across the site, it does so through the loss of historic structures and does not enhance the character or significance of the site by creating a vacant lot in the downtown with no plan for redevelopment by the current owner.

**8) Conformance with the Downtown Manitowoc Design Guidelines as adopted by the CDA.**

- a) The proposed demolition does not meet this criterion because preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings are fundamental objectives of the Downtown Manitowoc Design Guidelines.
- b) The proposed demolition also causes irreversible loss of historical structures.

The applicant shared that the rectory building had a water main break and suffered significant damage, so there has not been heat or water for several years. It is also evident that both the rectory and church buildings have deteriorated over time due to a lack of ongoing maintenance and investment by the current owner during the ongoing discussion on the future of the buildings. The prolonged neglect has contributed to the deterioration of both structures and, as a result, the expense involved in making the buildings habitable is likely to present barriers for future development.

According to St. Francis of Assisi staff, they are working with companies to salvage as much of building as feasibly possible including alters, stained glass windows, bells, artwork and more. It is their church's stance that the buildings were created for Catholic worship/use and no alternate reuse allowed – further limiting their desire to pursue redevelopment of the buildings.

The location and buildings have been part of the City's downtown and skyline for generations. Their location at a well-travel intersection, for both residential and commerce, has further heightened their visibility within the community. While the City is aware of the church's, diocese's, and Vatican's rationale for pursuing demolition, staff feels that additional efforts could have been made to save the structures. No requests for redevelopment assistance has been received, and no redevelopment proposal or plan for the future use of the site has been provided.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends denial of the proposed demolition as it does not meet the standards and criteria for a Certificate of Appropriateness, nor has the City received a plan for redevelopment of the site.

**Draft Motion(s):**

I move to deny the proposed demolition of the buildings at 1110 S. 10<sup>th</sup> Street and 1001 Marshall Street, with the following conditions:

1. *Place holder.*