



Staff Report

May 27, 2008

TO: Historical Resources Management Commission

FROM: Danielle Foster, Housing and Human Services Superintendent
Mike Webb, Principal Planner

SUBJECT: 233 and 239 J Street Project Options, Historic Review

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Historical Resources Management Commission:

1. Accept public input; and
2. Provide input and recommendation on the five conceptual project options (Attachment 1) for the Redevelopment Agency-owned properties at 233 and 239 J Street as advisory to the City Council/Redevelopment Board, in light of the Historic Review obtained on the options (Attachment 2) and based on the historic qualities of the Old East Neighborhood in which the project properties are located.

Project Description

In August 2005, the Davis Redevelopment Agency purchased the two 6,000 square foot lots located at 233 and 239 J Street, within the Old East neighborhood R-2 CD area (Residential One and Two Family Conservation District). As currently zoned, these lots could accommodate two primary housing units on each, for a potential of four single-family homes. The Agency originally purchased these lots with affordable housing funds with a goal to achieve the following objectives:

- Provision of affordable ownership housing near the downtown.
- Provision of owner-occupied units on these lots.
- Consideration of the relocation of historic and contributing historic homes to these lots, based on rehabilitation costs, moving costs, and the availability of appropriate homes.
- Consideration of site-built affordable housing as an alternative to the relocation of homes, estimating a minimum of 4 to 6 units.

It has been over two and a half years since the purchase of these lots. The Agency has a five-year deadline to renew its intent to develop, use, or sell the properties and repay the affordable housing fund. In the time since purchase, approval of the B and Third Streets Visioning Plan has revived discussions related to the relocation of homes. Staff conducted outreach to owners of vintage houses in the B and Third Streets area. Only the owners of 311 and 315 B Street (Paul and Nancy Aiken) have indicated interest in considering opportunities for relocating one or both

of their houses to the J Street properties. Using this information, five conceptual project options have been developed for review and consideration as potential projects for these properties.

Project Setting

The project site is located on the southwest corner of Third Street and J Street, within the 200 block of J Street. The two properties are currently vacant, aside from a couple of trees and a driveway easement on the west end of the property. The driveway is shared with the existing duplex at 227 J Street that has both access from J Street and the shared driveway off of Third Street. This shared driveway is also intended to serve as the primary access for residences on the project properties at 233 and 239 J Street. The project properties are surrounded by single-family residential units and some multi-family residential uses. Continuing a block east or west, some commercial uses can be found, but they do not appear in the immediate surroundings of the project. The project site is zoned R-2 CD (Residential One and Two Family Conservation District), which allows either two single family units or a duplex on each lot as a permitted use. The zoning on the project properties also works to ensure compatibility with the historic character of the existing neighborhood.

HRMC Review

According to Zoning Ordinance Section 40.23.050, the HRMC's duties include to:

- (i) Perform advisory review of new construction, significant renovation projects, and demolitions within 300 feet of designated individual landmarks and merit resources; and
- (j) Perform advisory review of new construction, significant renovation projects, and demolitions within adopted conservation overlay districts.

Given that 311 B Street is eligible for designation as a Merit Resource, the future relocation/alteration of the building will be subject to The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Since 315 B Street also has some characteristics that could make it a contributing structure to a historic district, staff contracted for a historic review of the five project options being considered for the project properties at 233 and 239 J Street. These options include the relocation of one or both of these houses within them.

Project Options

Based on stated interest by the owners of 311 and 315 B Street, five conceptual project options were developed to aide discussion of how the project properties could be developed in an effort to accomplish the City Council/Redevelopment Agency Board's original objectives in purchasing the Third and J properties. Please note that both of the potential relocated houses from B Street are three bedroom units. The five options are summarized as follows:

Option A

This option would move both the 311 and 315 B Street buildings to the project properties. The houses would be sited on individual parcels oriented facing east toward J Street. The relocated houses would be set back from the sidewalk and street consistent with other residences on the block at twenty feet. Under this proposal a two car garage with an upper story unit would be constructed at the rear of each lot behind the relocated houses. The upper story unit would be a studio unit comprised of 400 square feet and would be provided as either a secondary unit or a

condominium unit. Access to the parking and these rear units would be from the shared driveway on the west end of the project properties.

Total units: 4 units (2 relocated houses and 2 secondary studio apt or condo)

Total parking spaces: 6 spaces (4 covered spaces and 2 uncovered spaces)

A conceptual site plan of this option can be found as Attachment 1A.

Option B

This option is similar to Option A, but the secondary structures on the west end of the property are larger. The option includes relocation of both the 311 and 315 B Street buildings to the project properties. The houses would be sited on individual parcels oriented facing east toward J Street. The relocated houses would be set back from the sidewalk and street consistent with other residences on the block at twenty feet. Under this proposal a three car garage with an upper story unit would be constructed at the rear of each lot behind the relocated houses. The upper story unit would be a one-bedroom unit comprised of 580 square feet and would be provided as either a secondary unit or a condominium unit. Access to the parking and these rear units would be from the shared driveway on the west end of the project properties.

Total units: 4 units (2 relocated houses and 2 secondary one-bedroom apt or condo)

Total parking spaces: 6 spaces (6 covered spaces)

A conceptual site plan of this option can be found as Attachment 1B.

Option C

This option includes the relocation of 311 B Street only and orients it towards Third Street, while maintaining a twenty foot front setback. It attaches a two car garage to the rear of the relocated structure, but the two car garage could be detached if the rear setback was reduced to less than fifteen feet. The option would also include the development of two new two-bedroom houses facing J Street with an attached one-car garage to the south side of each unit. Access for the 311 B Street house would be from the shared driveway and the two new units would have access from J Street.

Total units: 3 units (1 relocated house and 2 new houses)

Total parking spaces: 6 spaces (4 covered spaces, 2 uncovered spaces)

A conceptual site plan of this option can be found as Attachment 1C.

Option D

This option also includes the relocation of 311 B Street only but orients it towards J Street, maintaining a twenty foot front setback. It includes a detached two car garage to the rear of the relocated structure with a 400 square foot unit above it, similar to Option A. The second floor unit would provide a studio apartment or condominium unit. This option would also include the development of two new two-bedroom houses. One of the new houses would face Third Street and the other would face J Street, both would include an attached one-car garage to the south side of each unit. Access to the detached garage, 400 square foot unit, and new unit oriented towards Third Street would be from the shared driveway. Access to the new unit facing J Street would be off of J Street.

Total units: 4 units (1 relocated house, 2 new houses, and 1 secondary studio apt or condo)

Total parking spaces: 7 spaces (4 covered spaces and 3 uncovered)

A conceptual site plan of this option can be found as Attachment 1D.

Option E

This option also includes the relocation of 311 B Street only and orients it towards J Street, maintaining a twenty foot front setback. It includes a detached two car garage to the rear of the relocated structure with a 400 square foot unit above it, similar to Options A and D. The second floor unit would provide a studio apartment or condominium unit. This option would also include the development of a triplex with units facing both Third Street and J Street. The unit on the west end of the triplex and the unit in the middle of it would both face Third Street. Access to the west end of the triplex would be on the shared driveway to an attached two-car garage. Access to the middle unit of the triplex would be from Third Street to a one-car garage. The last unit on the east end would face J Street and would have access to a one-car garage from J Street. Each unit in the triplex would be a two-bedroom unit.

Total units: 5 units (1 relocated house, 1 triplex and 1 secondary studio apt or condo)

Total parking spaces: 9 spaces (6 covered spaces and 3 uncovered spaces)

A conceptual site plan of this option can be found as Attachment 1E.

Conceptual massing isometrics were created, without any design specifications, in order to provide a general idea of what the mass of each project option might introduce on the project properties. An isometric for each project option can be found in Attachment 3 of this report.

Public Outreach/Neighborhood Meeting

A neighborhood meeting was held on May 12, 2008, and twenty neighbors attended the meeting to discuss the five project options. Feedback from the neighbors of the project properties included the following:

Items of Neighborhood Consensus

- Support for the relocation of at least one existing house
- Request for neighborhood involvement/input on the project design
- Project adherence to existing historic guidelines
- General preference towards ownership housing
- Concern regarding existing parking for 227 J Street in shared driveway (easement)

Questions/Concerns of Individual Neighbors

- Question regarding the effects of affordable housing on property values
- Discussion of possibility of preserving existing tree
- Consideration of common open space within the project
- Request to consider potential survey mistake on block, which could reduce actual property sizes by up to 30’

The neighbors voiced general support for the neighborhood consistency showing with Options A and B, in keeping with zoning and historic guidelines. Support for Option C was stated, based on condition for good design of the new houses. There was some concern that this option took some on-street parking from J Street. Option D was only briefly discussed, it was noted that it also eliminated a parking space from J Street. A few of the neighbors felt that Option E was too dense for the neighborhood. The neighbors discussed the potential for a follow-up meeting to discuss a potential “neighborhood-supported option”, but to staff’s knowledge a follow-up meeting has not occurred and there is not an option that the neighborhood supports by consensus at this time.

Notice of the neighborhood meeting was mailed to owners and residents within a 500-foot radius

of the project properties, including whole blocks where the radius intersected them. The date of the Historical Resources Management Commission meeting was included in the neighborhood meeting notice mailed the beginning of May. The contact list from the neighborhood meeting was also used to notice neighbors again of the HRMC meeting.

Staff is working on the completion of a project webpage that will contain all of the related project information. It is anticipated to be online by the end of May.

Environmental Review (CEQA)

A future project at 233 and 239 J Street would require additional planning review, including an environmental review, but it is likely that such a project would be found exempt from additional environmental analysis. Such a project would likely be categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15332, which exempts projects characterized as in-fill development. These properties are not subject to any historical requirements, aside from the zoning they are located in that aims at preserving the historic qualities of the city's old east neighborhood.

Additionally, it was determined that the cottage located at 315 B Street is not eligible to become a designated historic resource. The 3rd and B Street visioning Process FEIR (SCH#2006012026) also adequately assessed and addressed any impacts to the properties at both 311 and 315 B Street should demolition or alteration be considered for the structures, and provided mitigation measures to address such impacts. Depending on the project option that is chosen, it is possible for one or both of the structures to maintain their historic integrity, even after relocation. Otherwise mitigation measures may be required of the Aikens with their townhouse project on B Street.

Historic Evaluation

The 2006 Historic Research and Cultural Resources evaluation for the 3rd and B Street Area evaluated the potential historical value of the downtown commercial and residential areas. It included the University Avenue/Rice Lane neighborhood where the two B Street houses being considered for potential relocation are currently located. The report described the house at 311 B Street as “an excellent example of an uncommon Medieval revival style that retains a high level of integrity and contributes to the character of the 300 block of the B Street corridor and the house at 315 B Street as “a good example of a revival style house that retains a high level of integrity and contribute to the character of the 300 block of the B Street corridor”.

The property at 311 B Street meets the City of Davis Criteria for a “Merit Resource” under criterion 3, for distinctive architecture, and for its role as an important contributor to the area neighborhood. It therefore is a 5S2 under the California Status Code as an “individual property that is eligible for listing or designation.” The property at 315 B Street was reviewed by the Historical Resources Management Commission in May of 2004 and found not to be eligible for designation, but would contribute to a district if one existed.

In the consideration of relocating one or both of these B Street houses to the project properties at 233 and 239 J Street, staff and the Aikens agreed that a historic review of the project options would be necessary and appropriate. The historic review, included as Attachment 2, reviewed and considered each of the project options A through E within the context of the Old East

Neighborhood and based on the existing historical qualities of the B Street Houses. The reviewer, Carol Roland, included site visits, review of the *Historic Research and Cultural Resource Evaluation for the 3rd and B Street Area of the City of Davis* prepared by Sheila McElroy in 2006, consultation of the 2004 City of Davis Historic Resource Survey update, and analysis of the Davis Historic Resource Management Ordinance. A summary of the historic review is as follows:

Project Option	Physical Integrity	Consistent Setting	Local Ord. Standards
Option A	Maintained	Achieved	Met*
Option B	Maintained	Achieved	Met*
Option C	Partially, affected by the attached garage at back of the house	Concern with orientation to Third Street and separation from historic character of J Street. Design of new structures on J Street would require sensitive design.	Not met, building integrity of 311 B Street compromised and different contextual setting
Option D	Maintained	Achieved	Met*
Option E	Maintained	Triplex introduces size and massing not consistent with 311 B Street's existing residential context.	Not met, alteration of context and environment has potential to affect house as a merit resource.

*Options A, B, and D achieve the most goals related to historical resources. Although these options ensure that one or both of the B Street houses are relocated into a historical conservation district, Old East has not been identified as a potential historic district in which these houses could act as historical contributors. They would however assist in maintaining the historic character of this neighborhood within the City.

The historic review states preference for Options A and B because it achieves the historical goals of maintaining physical integrity and a consistent setting for both of the B Street houses.

Conclusion: City Council/Redevelopment Agency Board Direction

Since the project properties are owned by the Redevelopment Agency, the Agency Board will direct staff on which project option to pursue subject to information related to accomplishments of original objectives, costs, timing, and historical impacts. Information from this Commission will assist the Agency Board in directing staff on how to proceed with a project at 233 and 239 J Street. The Board will also decide what role it wishes to take in the development of the properties. A date for the Board's review of the options and further direction to staff has not yet been determined. Further analysis of the options is necessary prior to setting a date for the item to be heard by the Agency.

Attachments

1. Project Site Plans: Options A through E
2. Historic Review of the Options
3. Project Isometrics: Options A through E