

NEW ORLEANS HISTORIC DISTRICT LANDMARKS COMMISSION  
CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT HISTORIC DISTRICT LANDMARKS COMMISSION

LaToya Cantrell  
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Bryan Block  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Tuesday, September 02, 2025

Honorable City Council  
1300 Perdido Street  
New Orleans, LA 70112

Re: 2339 – 2341 Laharpe Street

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Attached, please find a report regarding an appeal of the New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission's denial of an application for demolition to grade of a contributing-rated, multi-family residential building to grade, located in the Uptown Local Historic District.

Should you have any questions or require any additional information, please feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Yvette Jett  
Principal Architectural Historian

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**HDLC Guidelines:**

Section 12, Pages 23-24 of the Guidelines for New Construction, Additions and Demolition states that the demolition of all or portions of historic resources within a local Historic District or Landmark site are considered drastic actions, since they alter the character of the area. Once historic resources or buildings that contribute to the heritage of the community are destroyed, it is generally impossible to reproduce their design, texture, materials, details and their special character and interest in the neighborhood. When reviewing demolition applications at properties located within a Historic District or at a Landmark site, the HDLC uses the following criteria in its evaluations:

- **The historic or architectural significance of the building or structure as designated by its “rating”:** Contributing
- **The importance of the building or structure to the tout ensemble of the area:** FEMA survey research estimates that 2339 - 2341 Laharpe St. was constructed ca. 1915. The modest Craftsman style building is on a block of highly altered buildings in the Esplanade Ridge historic district. The building retains its massing, form, original footprint, and architectural detailing.
- **The alternatives to demolition that have been explored by the applicant:** None

- **The difficulty or impossibility of reproducing such a building or structure because of its design, texture, material or detail:** Replication of the building may not be cost prohibitive but would be highly unlikely.
- **The special character and aesthetic interest that the building or structure adds to the local Historic District:** The building retains its Craftsman detailing including lattice gables, decorative vergeboards, tapered wood columns on brick piers, rafter tails, wood siding, wood windows, chimney, and multi-lite front doors with side lights.

- **The condition of the building or structure:** An interior and exterior inspection was performed on July 1, 2025. The building appeared to be in very poor condition

structurally and cosmetically. The building sits above grade on masonry piers and utilizes a standard wood framed flooring structural system. The building framing and roof structure are mostly square and plumb. Several areas show signs of water intrusion, rot,



and wood destroying insect damage where the weatherboards are deteriorated. The asphalt shingle roof appears to be in poor condition and is not functionally intact. Most of the windows are improperly boarded but are salvageable. Further damage could be mitigated with proper boarding.

A second visual inspection was performed on July 30, 2025. There was essentially no exploratory demolition past the areas of the building which were previously open. There was no further evidence that the structure of the building was beyond rehabilitation.

- **Case History:** 2339 - 2341 Laharpe St. was cited for Demolition by Neglect on August 28, 2023, for deteriorated weatherboards, roof shingles and fascia; as well as vegetation growing on the building. No action was taken to correct the conditions. On June 6, 2025, the applicant requested a full demolition to grade. At the July 9, 2025 meeting, the Commission voted to Defer action on this application until the next Commission meeting with the proviso that an interior exploratory demolition should be conducted along with a follow-up inspection. Selective demolition of interior floor and wall finishes would allow HDLC staff to fully inspect the structural integrity of the building. and determine the structural integrity of the building. While the HDLC was able to conduct a second inspection, the applicant did not do any further exploratory demolition, so the condition could only be examined visually.
- **Staff Recommendation:** Without proper enclosure of the building envelope, considerably more damage to the building will occur. Further neglect could quickly create conditions for an Imminent Danger of Collapsing.

Due to the condition and contributing nature of the original front portion of the home, Staff does not believe that full demolition is appropriate. During the second inspection, there was no further evidence that the structure of the building necessitates full demolition to grade. However, the rear section of the building showed the highest level of structural degradation and Staff would accept a partial demolition of the structure.

**The Commission voted to deny the application for a full demolition to grade but approve the demolition of the rear portion of the structure, provided that the front façade and at least one original room back from the front wall of the building is retained. HDLC staff respectfully requests that you deny the appeal and uphold the decision of the Commission.**

Additional information and photos may be found in the staff report:

<https://sites.google.com/view/no-cmm-081525/old-demolition-applications/2339-2341-laharpe-st>

Audio of the hearing may be found here:

<https://nola.gov/getattachment//NEXT/HDLC/Meetings/Agendas/New-Orleans-Agendas/Commission/2025/8-6-2025-1-00-00-PM/NO-CMM-08-15-25.mp3>