

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

LaToya Cantrell
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Bryan Block
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Wednesday, March 25, 2026

Honorable City Council
1300 Perdido Street
New Orleans, LA 70112

Re: 7309 Freret Street

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Attached, please find a report regarding an appeal of the New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission's approval of an application to demolish the above referenced building to grade.

This appeal was made by a concerned citizen not the owner of the property.

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”:** Non-Contributing
- **The importance of the building or structure to the tout ensemble of the area:** None; the current building does not appear on the 1951 Sanborn map, confirming it was constructed outside the period of significance for the local historic district (1840-1937).
- **The alternatives to demolition that have been explored by the applicant:** No alternative proposals have been submitted.
- **The difficulty or impossibility of reproducing such a building or structure because of its design, texture, material or detail:** N/A
- **The special character and aesthetic interest that the building or structure adds to the local Historic District:** None: the one-story brick slab-on-grade structure does not appear to have a

specific architectural style and does not contribute aesthetically to the surrounding historic district.

- **The condition of the building or structure:** No inspection was conducted as this building is non-contributing.

Staff Recommendations:

Due to the Non-Contributing status, Staff had no objection to the request for the demolition to grade. At their hearing of March 11, 2026, the Commission reviewed photos of the structure and the Staff report. The Commission then voted to approve the demolition. The HDLC does not have jurisdiction over the use of structures or the design of new construction in the Uptown partial control local historic district.

Staff respectfully request that the City Council uphold the decision of the Historic District Landmarks Commission.

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

<https://sites.google.com/view/nocmm031126/old-demolition-applications/7309-freret-st>

DEMOLITION

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.

As a result, the HDLC rarely considers the demolition of Significant or Contributing buildings or structures within a local Historic District or on a Landmark site to be an appropriate option.

When reviewing demolition applications at properties located within a Full Control 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";
- The importance of the building or structure to the tout ensemble of the area;
- The alternatives to demolition that have been evaluated and explored by the applicant;
- The special character and aesthetic interest that the building or structure adds to the local Historic District or Landmark site;
- The difficulty or impossibility of reproducing such a building or structure because of its design, texture, material or detail;
- The condition of the building or structure;
- The future utilization of the site; and
- The proposed mitigation measures such as, but not limited to, fencing, landscaping and maintenance contracts.

If the proposed demolition involves only a portion of a building or structure or if there are multiple buildings on a site, demolition applications must include a site plan that clearly shows the area proposed for demolition. The application should include details for the stabilization and protection of the remaining portion of a building or structure for partial demolition proposals. The HDLC may also require photographs or drawings of the existing building or structure as part of the application. If the applicant believes the building is structurally unsound or a hazard, they are encouraged to provide documentation of the unsound conditions prepared by a licensed structural engineer or architect. The only instances in which the HDLC Staff can approve demolition applications are when:

- The HDLC's Building Inspector indicates the building, monument or structure is in a state of imminent danger of collapse; or
- It is a Non-Contributing building or structure which is less than 1,000 square feet in area and its demolition is approved by the Executive Director of the HDLC.

All demolition Applications that do not meet the criteria for Staff review will be considered by the Commission at a public hearing. After initial review, the Commission typically requires demolition applications to lie over for 30 days. This allows further investigation by Staff and the Building Inspector, particularly as to the historic importance and current condition of the resource, and provides an opportunity for public comment.

If the Commission votes in favor of a proposed demolition, a Certificate of Appropriateness (CofA) will be issued for the work after all conditions of the Commission's approval have been met. No work may begin on a proposed demolition until a CofA has been issued by the Staff and the applicant has obtained all other necessary permits from the applicable City agencies including the Department of Safety and Permits.

HDLC DEMOLITION JURISDICTION

The HDLC's demolition jurisdiction varies depending whether the property is located within a Partial Control Historic District or a Full Control Historic District. (Refer to HDLC District Jurisdiction, Guidelines Introduction, Page 01-4.)

- Partial Control Historic Districts:** In Partial Control Districts in which the HDLC's jurisdiction is limited to demolition review, the review criteria shall be limited to criteria a through f. The design of any proposed redevelopment will not be considered.
- Full Control Historic Districts:** In Full Control Historic Districts, the HDLC has jurisdiction over the demolition and retains jurisdiction over alterations or new construction visible from a public way. The Commission strongly encourages the submission of redevelopment plans concurrently with Demolition Applications for all properties in Full Control Historic Districts.



The Isidore Newman House, constructed in 1890, designed by Thomas Sully, was demolished in 1972. Its demolition galvanized the organization of what is now known as the St. Charles Avenue Association, and the push for preservation ordinances to protect historic districts.