

We Are Columbia

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of City Council
From: Amy Moore, Planning Department
Date: November 4, 2013
RE: Demolition Delay Proposal

Summary: Currently, many potentially architecturally and/or culturally significant structures fall outside of areas of design review; therefore, demolition may be granted by permit immediately. A demolition delay ordinance provides a process of review to ascertain an unprotected building's significance as well as a means to explore alternatives to demolition.

Attached is a proposal for a demolition delay process for the City of Columbia; this is based in part upon the demolition delay processes which other SC municipalities use.

Overview

- Review of structures 50 years old or older
- Review of structures within the City's Design District only
- Demolition delay would be a 180 day delay
- A checklist of criteria would be reviewed at the end of the demolition delay period.

Implications

- Protection of cultural and architectural resources
- Staff time and resources
- Processing of permit requests

Guidance Needed

- Age of structures reviewed
- Length of demolition delay
- Design District as focus area
- Inclusion of partial demolitions
- Revised guidelines for Old Shandon/Lower Waverly and Waverly Historic Districts

Staff recommendations for implementation of Demolition Delay Ordinance

- 1) Utilize the Demolition Delay for buildings 50 years old or older
 - Encompasses any unrecognized Civil Rights era buildings/sites as they emerge through research

- 2) Utilize only within the Design District (–DD) for now
 - The Design District is an urban design district. The East/West boundaries are Pickens Street to the river and the North/South Boundaries are Elmwood to Catawba Street.
 - The Design District is central to the City of Columbia; hence there are likely to be buildings important to the City’s development within this area.
 - The Design District has guidelines but entails no demolition review.
 - Roughly ½ of the structures on the potential landmarks list fall within the –DD.
 - Partial demolitions would be reviewed on front facades and secondary (corner) facades; limited to changes to veneer materials, existing openings, roof forms.

Parameters of the 180 day Demolition Delay period

- 1) The delay period provides time during which consultation with civic groups, interested citizens, local organizations, etc. occurs to determine if there is an adequate alternative to demolition.

- 2) Considerations during the delay period:
 - Whether an offer has been made to purchase the property with a price that is within the range of its fair market value based upon a certified appraisal of the building in its current condition.
 - Whether the building is eligible for relocation. As a last resort, this would require a sign-off by an experienced house or building mover that the building could indeed be moved and who could provide an estimate for the work. An appropriate site for the building (appropriate context, lot size, etc., would have to be demonstrated as well).

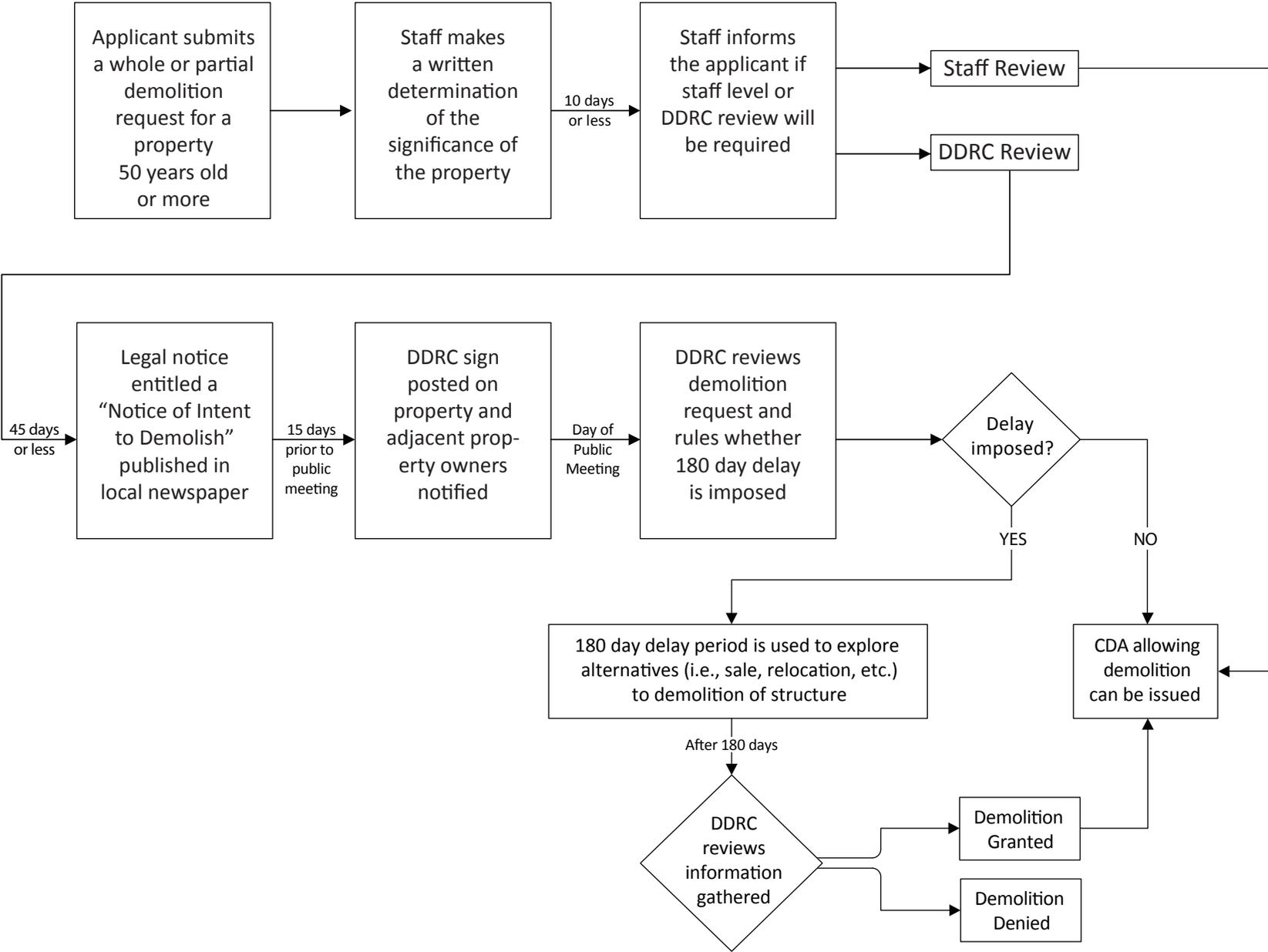
Additional Action

Amend the guidelines for two historic districts, Waverly and Old Shandon/Lower Waverly to allow for demolition review in each district’s Area B.

- Area A in each district is the core of the neighborhood and demolition is reviewed.
- Area B in these two historic districts are largely the outer edges of the neighborhoods; demolition was not sought when the guidelines were originally written because demolition/infill had already been heavy in these areas or else existing structures had lost much of their original architecture.
- Amended guidelines in these two areas would allow time for research of potentially culturally important buildings.

City of Columbia

Application Process & Procedures - Delay of Demolition





**HISTORIC OR ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE
PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION**

Application for complete or partial demolition

APPLICANT	
Printed Name	Signature
Mailing Address	
Phone	Email
Is the applicant the current property owner? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (If no, please complete and submit a Letter of Agency form)	

PROPERTY	
Street address	TMS#

TYPE	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial building	Date of construction	Fifty (50) years or older? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Apartment building	<input type="checkbox"/> Request for complete demolition	<i>Complete demolition refers to the entire removal of a building, structure, object or site.</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Dwelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Request for partial demolition (as defined by ordinance)	<i>A scope of work with detailed descriptions is required for any alteration that would result in partial demolition.</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Accessory building		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____		

CRITERIA FOR SIGNIFICANCE	
Individually listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Contributes to a Historic District listed in the National Register of Historic Places?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, economic, or social history of the city?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Architecturally or historically significant by itself or in the context of a group?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown

PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION
<input type="checkbox"/> Staff has determined that the property IS NOT architecturally or historically significant. A demolition permit may be issued for the complete removal of the building, structure, object or site.
<input type="checkbox"/> Staff has determined that the property IS architecturally or historically significant and will require D/DRC review. The D/DRC may impose a 180 day delay period to explore viable alternatives to demolition.
<input type="checkbox"/> Staff has determined that the property IS architecturally or historically significant, but the proposed partial demolition will not affect the architectural or historical integrity of the property. A demolition permit may be issued ONLY for the scope of work attached to this application.

Reviewed by	Date
-------------	------



We Are Columbia

1136 Washington Street, Columbia, SC 29201 • Phone: 803-545-3222 • Fax: 803-733-8647

MEMORANDUM

TO:	Arts & Historic Preservation Committee
FROM:	Amy Moore – Preservation Planner
CC:	
DATE:	September 10, 2013
RE:	Demolition Delay Research Data (SC, Boston, and Chicago)

The data below was collected by interviewing planning staff from six South Carolina cities that have demolition delay components to their demolition review. The smallest city interviewed was the City of Laurens (pop. 9,139) while the largest city was the City of Charleston (pop. 120,083). Columbia's population was 129,272 in 2010, which is slightly higher than Charleston's and more than twice than Greenville's (pop. 58,409). However, the City of Greenville was not included in this study as their zoning code does not include a demolition delay component.

For comparison purposes, staff contacted planning staff from the City of Chicago and the City of Boston to understand how demolition delay is utilized in larger cities.

South Carolina Cities with Demolition Delay

Aiken, SC – Staff contact: Susan French- (803) 642-7608

- 2010 Population - 29,524
- Ordinance: Yes
- Instituted: 1997
- How successful? Never used; small town, not a lot of development pressure. Use typical demolition language in districts.
- Impact on commercial development: none

Beaufort, SC – Staff contact: Lauren Kelly – (843) 525-7014

- 2010 Population - 12,361
- Frequency: Used about 1 to 2 times per year
- Outcomes: Some small cottages have been moved. Others have been torn down. Not many saved on original site.
- Scope: Applies to all contributing buildings listed on a county wide historic sites survey regardless of whether they are in the historic district.
- Impact on commercial development: none; one house in the middle of a commercial district was demolished.
- Period of delay: Maximum delay of 180 days.



We Are Columbia

1136 Washington Street, Columbia, SC 29201 • Phone: 803-545-3222 • Fax: 803-733-8647

- Other: Works closely with Historic Beaufort Foundation during the delay period to find an alternative for the building. Also works with a house mover.

Bluffton, SC – Staff contact: Erin Schumacher – (843) 706-4561

- 2010 Population - 12,530
- Frequency: Haven't used yet as their ordinance was recently amended (Dec. 2012). The demolition ordinance was updated after a contributing historic building was allowed to be demolished. The old ordinance didn't have enough "teeth."
- Success: Not used yet.
- Scope: Applies to all structures located within a historic district or constructed 50 years ago or more within the town limits.
- Period of delay: Maximum delay of 180 days.
- Other: Works closely with local historic organizations to gauge significance of properties that have little or no documented history.

Charleston, SC – Staff contact: Debbi Rhoad Hopkins – (843) 724-3779

- 2010 Population - 120,083
- Frequency: Charleston's preservation ordinance allows for a 180-day delay of demolition, but in practice the delay component has not been used. Ms. Hopkins believes it is remnant of the days before the Board of Architectural Review had the authority to deny demolitions outright. Now, when a request for demolition comes in the Board either approves it (which is fairly rare), denies it, or defers it for more information if they feel that it's warranted.
- Outcomes: Not used. However, Charleston has a culture of protecting their historic resources. In 1931, they became the first historic district in America and formed a Board of Architectural Review to monitor any exterior changes to historic buildings.
- Scope: Applies to all contributing buildings listed on a historic sites survey regardless of whether they are in the historic district.
- Impact on commercial development: None
- Period of delay: 180 days
- Comments: Both of the design review boards, the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) and the Design Review Board (DRB), review demolitions in certain geographical areas that don't necessarily correspond to designated historic districts. The DRB primarily handles commercial developments and has jurisdiction over specific roads or streets. It also has to approve demolition of any building over 50 years of age that is located on a property with frontage on one of those roads. The BAR has to approve demolition of any building 50+ years old that is located south of Mt. Pleasant Street (effectively all of downtown Charleston) and also



We Are Columbia

1136 Washington Street, Columbia, SC 29201 • Phone: 803-545-3222 • Fax: 803-733-8647

anything located on one of the 27 individually landmarked properties in the city.
The review process is the same in each case.

Laurens, SC – Staff contact: Misty Dawkins – (864)984-2613

Main Street Laurens: Jonathan Irick, Executive Director – (864) 984-2119

- 2010 Population – 9,139
- Was told that no review was necessary and a demolition permit for a historic building could be issued as long as it was cleared by DHEC (even though Laurens has a Historic Preservation Overlay Ordinance with Commission review and a 180 day delay component).
- Spoke with Jonathan Irick with Main Street Laurens and he said that the City of Laurens design review Commission was not active at the moment and fortunately no requests for demolitions had been made.

Summerville, SC – Staff contact: Lucy Dryer – (843) 871-6000

- 2010 Population – 43,392
- Frequency: used about 4 times in last 15 years
- Outcomes: one house moved, two denied for demolition, one demolished
- Scope: historic districts only, all residential
- Impact on commercial development: none
- Period of delay: up to 180 days and then extension if necessary



We Are Columbia

1136 Washington Street, Columbia, SC 29201 • Phone: 803-545-3222 • Fax: 803-733-8647

Large Cities with Demolition Delay (Boston, MA and Chicago, IL)

Boston, MA – Staff contact: Ellen Lipsey, Director of Historic Preservation and Executive Director, Boston Landmarks Commission – (617) 635-3850

- 2010 Population - 617,594
- Frequency: Approximately 100 buildings annually, 12-20 that require hearings, the others receive a sign off at the staff level without invoking the delay period.
- Outcomes: Two or three notable examples saved annually – including owners who withdraw the demo application and properties that are subsequently designated as Boston Landmarks.
- Scope: Demolition delay only applies to buildings that are not in local historic districts and properties that are not designated as individual Boston Landmarks.
- Impact on commercial development: The review can improve project design for the new replacement construction or for retaining the building and adding new construction on the property.
- Period of delay: 90 days
- Board or staff involvement with the project during the delay period: No involvement unless the owner or community initiates it.
- Comments: Boston's demolition delay ordinance is one of the shorter ones in Massachusetts. In addition, it doesn't address partial demolitions.

Chicago, IL – Staff contact: Matt Crawford, City Planner IV – (312) 744-9146

- 2010 Population - 2,695,598
- Frequency: One or two applications under review at any given time. Number of cases reviewed per year can vary greatly. For example: 62 cases reviewed in 2004 and 25 cases in 2012.
- Outcomes: Landmarked buildings cannot be demolished. In rare cases, buildings reviewed through demo delay have been proposed for landmark designation.
- Scope: Demolition delay ordinance is tied to a survey of the entire city which was completed in 1996. That survey applied color codes to buildings. The two highest color codes are red (city-wide or national significance) and orange (significant at the neighborhood level). In 2003 the city passed a demolition delay ordinance which applied a 90-day hold on applications to demolish red or orange ranked buildings. The delay applies to all red- or orange-rated buildings. The demo delay is not applicable in historic districts because buildings within these districts cannot be demolished.
- Impact on Commercial Development: The impact on commercial development has been negligible because most demo delays are for single family houses.



We Are Columbia

1136 Washington Street, Columbia, SC 29201 • Phone: 803-545-3222 • Fax: 803-733-8647

- Period of Delay: 90 days max, though this can be extended by mutual agreement of the owner and city. An extension is rare as the owner typically has no incentive to extend.
- Board or staff involvement with the project during the delay period: No board or staff involvement unless the staff believes the building should be designated as a landmark. Staff handles the correspondence, research and internal review of the building to determine if it meets criteria for designation as a landmark.