

To: Historic Resource Subcommittee

From: Sarale Hickson, Assistant Development Planner

Date: September 4, 2019

Re: Staff findings and recommendation, 19-26000290, Alteration of the Zimmerman House campus by removing the Buttery Building

Attachments: Application  
Excerpt from Historic List

**PROPOSAL:**

Pursuant to application 19-26000290, East County Historical Organization (ECHO) seeks approval to make alterations affecting the exterior appearance of a historic landmark (the Zimmerman House, 17111 NE Sandy Blvd, Gresham, Oregon).

The specific change requested is to remove the old dairy building (known as “the Buttery Building”). The building has been deteriorating for many years and collapsed in 2016. The chimney and remnants of the building were further demolished later that year when a tree fell on them. ECHO would like to remove the remains of the building. ECHO proposes to use an archeological consultant to document the building remnants during removal.

**BACKGROUND:**

The house was listed on both the National Historic Register and the Gresham Historic and Cultural Landmarks List in 1986.

The house was built in 1878 as part of a dairy farm. The 1999 Zimmerman Heritage Farm Master Plan (Master Plan) describes the 350 square foot “Buttery Building” in the following way:

“The buttery was built circa 1890’s west of the farmhouse for storage of milk and processing milk to make cheese and butter on the family’s farm. Oral history suggests that the structure was also a sales room for Zimmerman dairy products.

The structure was built with wood-framed floor, walls, and pitched roof covered with wood shingles. The buttery was constructed on a sloping site with two rooms on the main level and a small crawl-space below that was reached through a small opening on the downhill, north side. A brick veneer was added



to the walls for insulation value to preserve dairy products until removal from the building.

Prior to refrigeration, butteries such as the Zimmerman's, were cooled with large amounts of block ice, typically in a lower floor or crawl space. This technique provided adequate cooling for temporary storage of milk and other perishable products. The structure is in a seriously deteriorating condition throughout."

The lack of maintenance of the building was earlier noted in the nomination forms which states "Boston Ivy has overtaken the building and has damaged the brick veneer facing".

The 1999 master plan calls for restoration of the buttery building. It shows the Buttery Building as a future reception area (for ticketing, education, and sales). The phase 1 (1-5 years) implementation plan is to stabilize the resource and includes Friends of the Zimmerman House (FOZH) and ECHO's parent organization "(d)ismantle, record, and store the Buttery Building for future reconstruction". The Phase 2 (6-10 years) shows FOZH "Reconstruct(ing) the Buttery Building". The rebuilding of the Bunk house is shown in Phase III.

In 2013 Fairview Rockwood Wilkes Historical Society (FRWHS the parent organization of ECHO) requested a demo permit to demolish the garage and Buttery Building. The HRS discussed the request at the time. The minutes of that meeting are part of the application. FRWHS was told they would need to comply with 5.0322(B) regarding demolition of landmark buildings. The HRS suggested hiring a structural engineer and trying to obtain grants to preserve/stabilize/restore the building.

In 2014 the HRS was updated on the situation. FRWHS stated that they did not have the funds to rehabilitate the building and SHPO noted that deterioration doesn't remove the historic character. The process for demolition was shared and it was indicated that FRWHS has not been in further contact with the City.

In the 2015 Joint Use Agreement ECHO agrees to maintain the buildings and carry out the master plan. The agreement also authorizes ECHO to apply for any and all permits required.

Photograph from the Master Plan showing the buttery building (photo circa 1970)



Photograph showing the condition of the buttery building from the natural register nomination (1985)





Photographs of the condition of the battery building provided with the application (undated but seem to predate 2014)





Photograph from ECHO News (Spring 2016) after the building collapsed.



Photograph from the application showing the current condition



**SCOPE OF REVIEW:**

Gresham Community Development Code (GCDC) Section 5.0328 states that an application for a building permit for work that would affect the exterior appearance of a Class 1 landmark shall be reviewed by the Historic Resources Subcommittee (HRS) and by the Hearings Officer. The Committee shall act to recommend approval, approval with modifications, or denial of the proposed action, and shall make its recommendation based on findings made in response to the criteria of GCDC 5.0321. The recommendation and all findings shall be transmitted to the Hearings Officer who will hold a public hearing and make the decision. The HRS is tasked with providing a recommendation to the Hearing's officer based on their expert knowledge of historic issues and the relevant code standards.

**TIMELINE:**

The HRS will meet to discuss its recommendation to the Hearings Officer on September 11, 2019. The Hearings Officer will hold a public hearing on this application on October 3, 2019. Upon issuance of the Hearings Officer decision, a 12-day appeal period will commence.

**DEVELOPMENT CODE FINDINGS:**

The code standards (in bold) and Gresham staff findings and recommendations are found below:

**5.0321 (A)(1). The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The relocation of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships shall be avoided.**

The proposal is to remove the buttery building from the site. The building has been on the site since shortly after the house was built. The building was integral to the use of the dairy farm. The building has eroded through lack of maintenance and is no longer salvageable. There is a master plan which calls for reconstruction of the building and in order to preserve the historic character of the site, its features, and spatial relationships reconstruction would be required.

**5.0321 (A)(2). A property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, shall not be undertaken.**

The proposed changes will not create a false sense of historical development. The proposed change is to remove a building not adding anything to the site.

**5.0321 (A)(3). Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.**

The building was built around 1890 and is called out as a contributing factor. The proposal is to remove a deteriorated original building.

**5.0321 (A)(4). Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.**

The building is no longer salvageable. It has been neglected for many years and there are very few if any distinctive features. The proposal does include archeological documentation and partial preservation if possible.

**5.0321 (A)(5). Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.**

As discussed above, the building is destroyed and the materials are in a state of disrepair. The archeological investigation and subsequent report should be used when the building is being replaced.

**5.0321 (A)(6). New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.**

No additions to the site are proposed. The removal of the building is proposed for safety reasons. Any materials that can be salvaged should be, and reconstruction of the building should be based upon the aforementioned archeological report.

**5.0321(A)(7). New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.**

No new additions or construction are proposed.

**5.0321(A)(8). Chemical and physical treatments, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used.**

No treatments are being proposed.

**5.0321(A)(9). A property shall be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.**

The building was used as a dairy farm and is currently used for historical education and interpretation. The use of the site will not be changed.

**5.0321 (A)(10). Archaeological resources shall be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.**

An archeological investigation is proposed and any recommendation from that report should be followed.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Staff recommends that the HRS recommend approval of the application with modifications as detailed below; and forward its recommendation to the Hearings Officer per 5.0328.

- The building shall be removed from the site within one year of the date of the decision in order to preserve public safety.
- The applicant must consult with the building department and obtain any permits required before any demolition/removal work is performed.
- All work shall be reviewed by the Building and Planning Departments, any appropriate demolition or building permits shall be obtained, and plans and methods approved by the manager before the work is undertaken.
- An archeological inventory and report is required. The scope of the work/contract shall be provided to the manager with any permit application.



- All materials of historic value, including but not limited to any building materials able to be reused in the reconstruction of the building, shall be catalogued and made part of the Zimmerman House collection.
- A copy of the inventory/report shall be provided to the City of Gresham before the demolition permit is finalized.
- The buttery building shall be the first building to be reconstructed on the site. The reconstruction shall be based on the historical record including photographs and the archeological inventory. Where possible, any salvageable materials shall be included in the rebuilt buttery.