



May 31, 2017

Clark County Historic Preservation Commission

REQUEST FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT ON PROPOSED REMOVAL OF BUILDINGS AT THE HOUSE OF PROVIDENCE ACADEMY

The city received a request to demolish and remove demolish the Laundry and Boiler Buildings, Boiler Smokestack, and the El Presidente Restaurant on the House of Providence site at 400 East Evergreen Boulevard.

The applicant states the reasons for demolition of the Laundry and Boiler Buildings and Boiler Smokestack include:

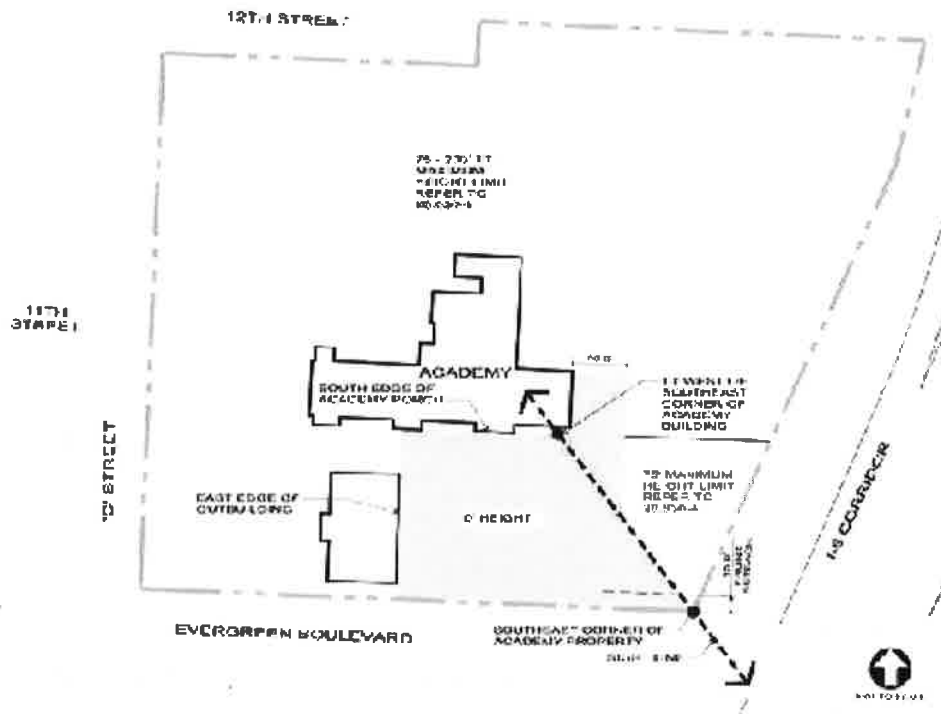
- The buildings have extensive deterioration and are unsafe.
- To make the buildings code-compliant for modern-day uses, they would have to be substantially reconstructed at an extremely high cost per-square-foot.
- The cost to make the buildings functional significantly exceeds their value when renovated.
- The disparity between the cost to reconstruct and the value of the buildings renders such reconstruction financially infeasible from a financing and return-on-investment standpoint.

The stated reasons for demolition of the restaurant building include:

- The building was constructed in 1976 and does not contribute to the historic significance of the Providence Academy site.
- The building was constructed in an unfortunate location that obstructs the view of the Academy Building and detracts from the significance, beauty, and public enjoyment of the Academy Building.
- The removal of this building and the restoration of the landscape restores the view and increases the integrity and historic value of the Academy Building.

20.510.020.A, Heritage Overlay District Number One

1. Establishment. Heritage Overlay District Number One shall be bounded by 12th Street, West Reserve Street, the north curb line of East Evergreen Boulevard, and C Street; Figure 20.510-1. This is primarily the site of Providence Academy, the dominant landmark and most important historic building in downtown Vancouver. The main Academy building is the major historic asset in the area, but the outbuildings and the grounds of the Academy are also important historical and architectural features because of their relationship to the main building, and their influence on views of the main building and on the character of the immediate environs.
2. Policy. Due to the importance of the site of Providence Academy, the Academy buildings, and the Academy grounds to the cultural, economic, and architectural history of Vancouver, and due to the unique character established by the buildings and grounds in combination with each other and with their surroundings, it is the policy of the city to preserve Providence Academy and critical open spaces integral to its site, and to ensure the compatibility of new construction or alterations to existing buildings, with the character of the historical buildings on the site. In order to accomplish this policy, special regulations are deemed necessary as an exercise of the city's legislative and police powers for the preservation and enhancement of the area.
3. Standards and requirements. The following requirements shall apply within Heritage Overlay District Number One, in addition to any other Zoning Ordinance regulations applicable to the area. The regulations are necessary to preserve the unique open space which provides a setting for and which is an integral part of the Providence Academy site, and to preserve views of the Academy from the East Evergreen Boulevard entrance to the downtown area.
 - a. Construction shall not be allowed in the identified (0 feet) height limit area shown and described in the diagram below. New construction in the identified (75 feet) area and the (75 feet - 200 feet) area shall comply with VMC20.630.050 and the standards and guidelines of this section VMC20.510.020.



- b. A view corridor of 50 feet in width and a zero-foot height limit from approximately 11th Street looking east to the Main Academy building shall be preserved. In addition, there shall be one or two view corridors with a zero-foot height limit looking south from 12th Street into the Academy site which shall be a cumulative total of 50 feet in width.
- c. All new construction shall be similar in materials and texture to that of the main Academy building, and shall be primarily composed of brick facing, similar in color to that of the main building.
- d. No sign shall be installed on the main Academy building above the first story. Free-standing signs on the property shall be limited to directional signs and necessary for parking and traffic control, and a limited number of signs advertising businesses on the premises containing an aggregate signage area of not more than 100 square feet. No sign or sign structure shall be more than 10 feet in height above the ground level.
- e. New construction shall minimize the removal of existing, mature trees exceeding 30 feet in height, and such construction shall be so located and designed as to preserve views of the main Academy building from East Evergreen Boulevard between the freeway and C Street, and shall preserve a setback from East Evergreen Boulevard of not less than 15 feet for open space and substantial planting, and such setback area shall not be used for parking.

Response

The application addresses only the removal of the buildings described above. The City Assistant Building Official has visited the site and noted these buildings are non-reinforced structures and are in very poor condition. Any attempt to restore them would require a full structural analysis by a Washington registered engineer and depending on what the proposed use is may trigger a seismic upgrade.

This application does not address any new construction. At some future date, if development is proposed, the Clark County Historic Preservation Commission will be asked to review the application and make recommendations related to any future development.

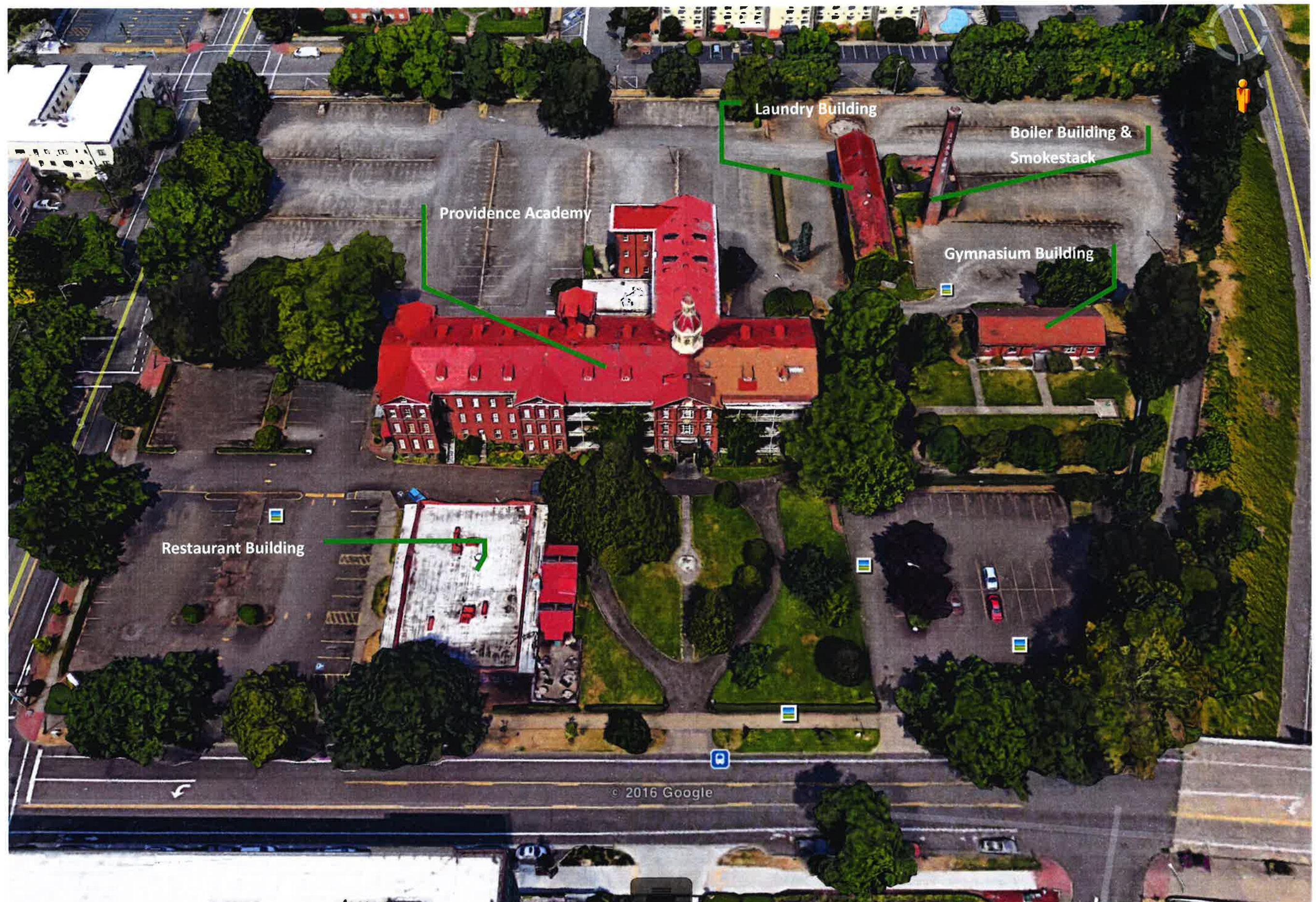
Staff requests the commission's input on the removal of the buildings as proposed.



Jon Wagner, AICP, Senior Planner
Land Use Team
Community & Economic Development Dept.

Attachments:

Application
Narrative
Drawings



Providence Academy Site



Laundry Building—East Elevation



Laundry Building, Boiler Building & Boiler Smokestack—West Elevation



Laundry Building, Boiler Building & Boiler Smokestack—North Elevation



Laundry Building, Boiler Building & Boiler Smokestack—South Elevation



Laundry Building—Level 1 Interior



Laundry Building—Level 1 steel structure



Laundry Building—Stairs at Level 1



Laundry Building—Level 1 Interior



Laundry Building—Level 1 Interior



Laundry Building—Level 2 Interior



Laundry Building—Level 2 Interior



Laundry Building—Stairs at Level 2



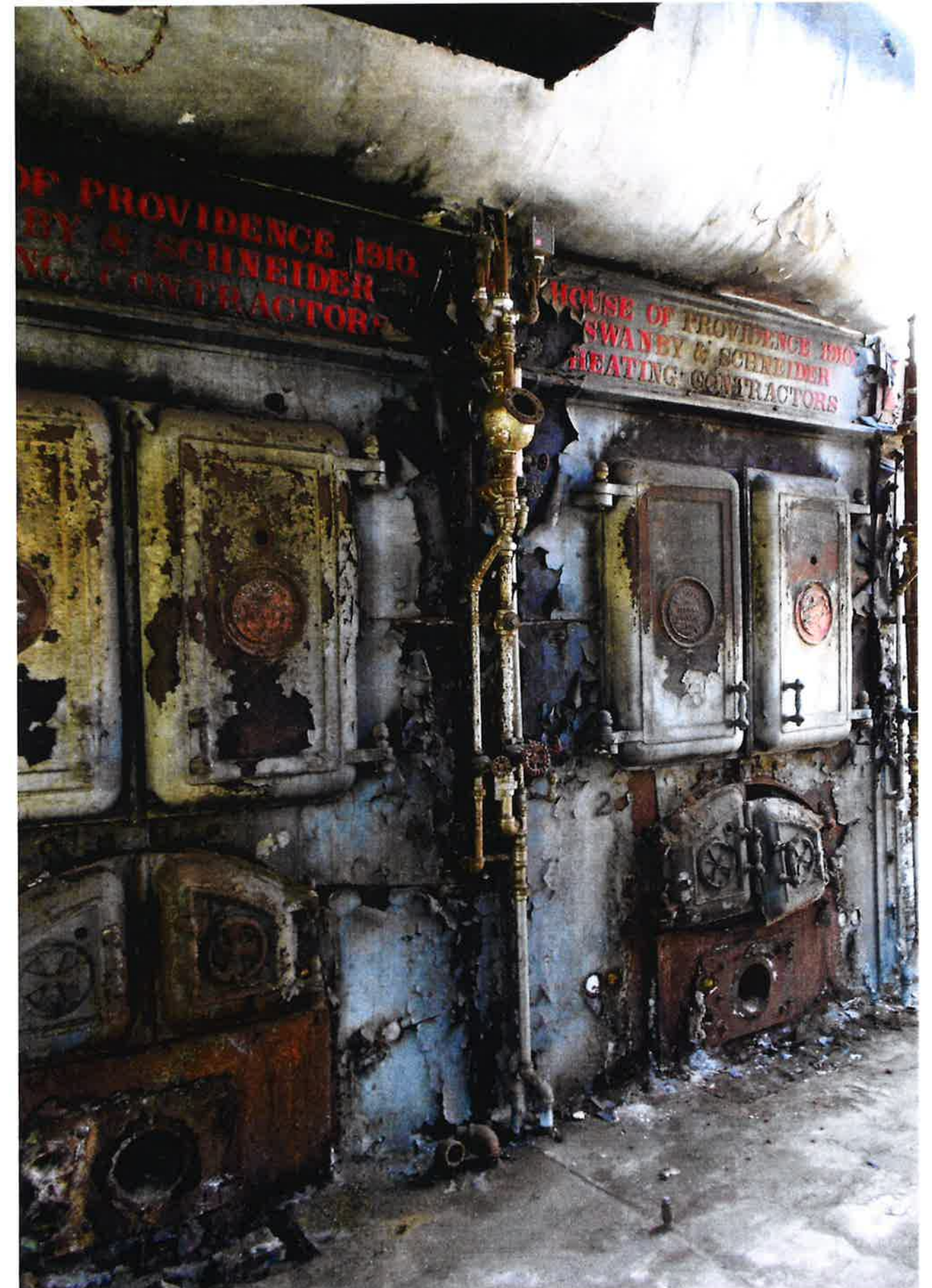
Laundry Building—Level 2 Interior



Laundry Building—Level 3 Interior



Laundry Building—Level 3 Interior



Boiler Building—Interior Photos



Providence Academy—Historic photo without restaurant

Providence Academy—Existing condition with El Presidente Restaurant



Google Earth view of El Presidente Restaurant in front of Providence Academy



El Presidente Restaurant in front of Providence Academy's west wing



CITY OF VANCOUVER
20.510 HERITAGE OVERLAY DISTRICT REVIEW APPLICATION


The Heritage Overlay Districts are intended to preserve the special architectural character and/or historic or cultural significance of certain areas within the City. The following additional regulations are imposed in areas so designated in order to do the following:

- A. Compatibility - To ensure that new development is compatible in scale, character, and design with existing buildings and with the preservation of existing architectural characteristics of significant buildings in the area
- B. Preservation - To preserve and encourage the restoration of existing older buildings in their original architectural style
- C. Retention of unique character - To retain, conserve, and improve historical, cultural, and architectural environments attractive to residents and to visitors, thereby promoting the economic health of the City while retaining its unique historical and architectural feature.

Property Owner:	Academy Development, LLC; Providence Academy, LLC, c/o Mike True		Telephone:	360.992.1805
(Print or Type Name)				
Mailing Address:	750 Anderson Street, Vancouver, WA 98661		mike.true@fortvan.org	
(No. City, State, ZIP)				
Applicant:	Marathon Acquisition & Development, Inc, c/o Aaron Wigod		Telephone:	503.582.8442
(Print or Type Name)				
Mailing Address:	30050 SW Town Center Loop West, Suite 200, Wilsonville, OR 97070		aaron@marathonpad.com	
(No. City, State, ZIP)				
Relationship to Owner:	Prospective Purchaser			
Tax Assessor Serial Number(s):	39220000 & 39220001			
Legal description:	Lot(s)	\$ee attached.	Block(s)	Plat name
(If a Metes and Bounds description, check here) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> and attach narrative to this application.)				
Site Address (if any):	400 East Evergreen Boulevard, Vancouver, WA			
Architect	Studio 3 Architecture, c/o Gene Bolante		Telephone:	503.390.6500
Contractor	Marathon Construction Services, LLC, c/o Aaron Wigod		Telephone:	503.582.8442

Type of Work (Check All That Apply)

- ☐ Alterations/Additions ☐ New Construction
- ☒ Demolition ☐ Relocation

Signature of Applicant: 

Date: 5/4/17



I certify by my signature below that the information in this application is accurate and complete.

Demolition Request

Laundry Building, Boiler Building, Boiler Smokestack, and El Presidente Restaurant Request

The Applicant and the Owner request land use approval to demolish the Laundry and Boiler Buildings, Boiler Smokestack, and the El Presidente Restaurant on the House of Providence site at 400 East Evergreen Boulevard. The Applicant will replace the Laundry and Boiler Buildings and Boiler Smokestack with new development to be submitted for historic review at a later date. The Owner will restore the landscaping in front of the Academy Building where the El Presidente Restaurant is now located following demolition. The Providence Academy Building (the "Academy Building") is the historically-significant resource on this site that should be preserved.

As will be expanded on in the following sections, the reasons for demolition of the Laundry and Boiler Buildings and Boiler Smokestack include:

- The buildings have extensive deterioration and are unsafe.
- To make the buildings code-compliant for modern-day uses, they would have to be substantially reconstructed at an extremely high cost per-square-foot.
- The cost to make the buildings functional significantly exceeds their value when renovated.
- The disparity between the cost to reconstruct and the value of the buildings renders such reconstruction financially infeasible from a financing and return-on-investment standpoint.

The reasons for demolition of the restaurant building include:

- The building was constructed in 1976 and does not contribute to the historic significance of the Providence Academy site.
- The building was constructed in an unfortunate location that obstructs the view of the Academy Building and detracts from the significance, beauty, and public enjoyment of the Academy Building.
- The removal of this building and the restoration of the landscape restores the view and increases the integrity and historic value of the Academy Building.

Historic Context

These three buildings are located on the seven-acre House of Providence site at 400 East Evergreen Boulevard. The Laundry and Boiler Buildings and Boiler Smokestack are situated to the northeast of the Academy Building and the restaurant is located in front of the Academy Building toward the southwest corner of the site.

Begun in 1873, the complex was built to serve as a boarding school, orphanage, and headquarters for the Sisters of Charity of the House of Providence. The main building was designed and constructed by Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart. It is widely regarded as her most outstanding architectural achievement.

The Academy grounds originally included numerous outbuildings. A historic site plan showed a total of fourteen at one point. Today, the historic outbuildings include the Laundry Building (c. 1873), Boiler Building and Boiler Smokestack (c. 1910), and the Gymnasium (c. 1930). The restaurant is non-historic and was built in 1976.



Constructed at approximately the same time as the main building, the Laundry features similar architectural design elements. The building historically had a steam engine and housed the laundry and ironing facilities for the complex. The building also served as lodging for the hired male help on the second floor.

The Boiler Building and Boiler Smokestack was appended to the east side of the Laundry Building in approximately 1910. The original boiler equipment remains on the interior. This boiler historically heated the main Academy Building, the original hospital building formerly located to the north, and the Laundry Building.

The restaurant is located directly in front of the Academy Building's west wing. Part of the building uses Hidden brick and fenestration similar to the Academy in an effort to be sympathetic to the Academy Building. The east side of the restaurant includes a solarium-type extension that is not compatible and detracts from the historic nature of the grounds.

Laundry Building, Boiler Building, and Boiler Smokestack Description & Condition Assessment

LAUNDRY BUILDING

The Laundry Building is a rectangular two-story brick structure with a partial-height attic. It is connected to the Boiler Building by a raised one-story connector. The current roof is a combination of standing-seam metal and composition shingles. The roof and floors are wood framing bearing on unreinforced masonry. The continuous wall opening for a small eastern one-story addition is framed with steel.

This structure has evidence of significant distress. Notably, the roof and gutters failed many years ago, as have the original wood-sash windows. Water is acting on both sides of the wall, resulting in the deterioration of the wood and steel structural members. The masonry walls exhibit failing brick and deeply weathered joints. The mortar is soft and easily produces powder when scratched.

The first floor is composed of four large rooms. The interiors are characterized by wall and ceiling areas of failed plaster leaving exposed brick and wood joists. Several pieces of equipment from the laundry operations remain in the two southern rooms. Machinery, tanks, raised concrete equipment pads, open utility trenches, and large diameter piping associated with the building and/or campus utilities are present in the northern two rooms.

There are wooden stairs connecting to the upper levels against the north and south exterior walls. These stairs have failed in sections. The second floor is characterized by smaller tenant rooms in the northern half and two large open rooms in the southern half. Interior finishes include plaster on wood and brick, ranging in condition from poor to failed. The floor finishes include wood strip flooring as well as tile products. Moisture and debris have compromised most of these finishes beyond repair with some floor areas feeling soft and spongy.

The attic condition is similar to that of the second floor. In addition, the potential for re-use is limited by the non-compliant ceiling height of approximately six feet.

There are no usable mechanical, electrical, plumbing/restroom, or fire sprinkler systems in the Laundry Building.

BOILER BUILDING & BOILER SMOKESTACK

The Boiler Building is a one-story brick structure connected to the east side of the Laundry Building. The building is roughly square in plan with an unreinforced masonry smokestack sitting on a square base near the center of the south façade. The wood-frame roof has been substantially lost to fire leaving the interior of the building open to the elements. This condition represents a safety hazard. The roof is/was supported by the unreinforced masonry bearing walls at the perimeter. The floor is concrete slab-on-grade.

The dominant feature of the interior space is the historic boiler, which consists of a massive masonry furnace with a cast-iron front. There are no usable mechanical, electrical, plumbing, or fire sprinkler systems in the Boiler Building.

The Boiler Smokestack is in fair condition and requires some repointing of the brick. However, because the masonry is unreinforced, it poses a significant seismic risk in its current state.

Laundry Building, Boiler Building, and Boiler Smokestack Renovation Feasibility

The Laundry and Boiler Buildings were designed primarily as utility facilities to support the Academy Building and original hospital building formerly located to the north. The Laundry Building is 5,984 sf over two floors and has a long skinny floorplate measuring approximately 118' x 24'. The Boiler Building is 1,830 sf and square in shape. The deteriorated condition of the buildings, the significant upgrade and modernization that would be required for their reuse, combined with their relatively small amount of rentable square footage and the Laundry's difficult-to-reuse floorplate make these buildings financially infeasible to renovate.

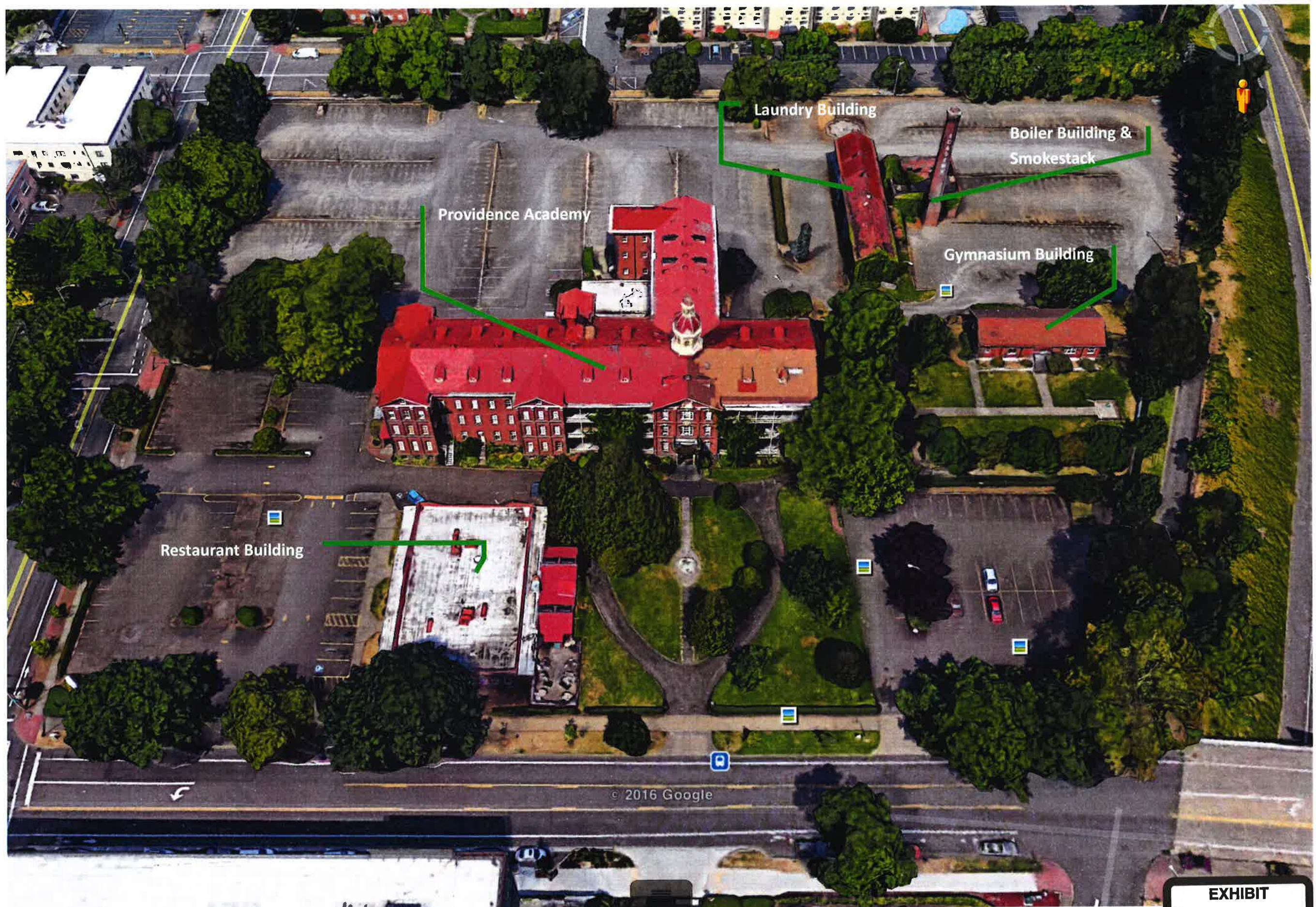
To adaptively reuse the Laundry Building, a change of use to "B" occupancy would be required. This, along with the deteriorated condition of the building, would require a code-level seismic upgrade. Such an upgrade would consist of effectively building a new wood structure inside of the existing masonry walls to support the gravity loads and address the lateral loads. The existing masonry envelope would be tied to the new interior structure. Extensive repointing and replacement of brick would be required at the exterior. The roof, windows, and doors would all have to be replaced. Step-up entries would have to be modified for ADA compliance. New, rated egress stairs and an elevator serving the second level would be necessary. All new mechanical, electrical, plumbing (including ADA-accessible restrooms), fire sprinklers, and telecommunications systems would be needed for this building. The building would also require abatement of hazardous materials.

Like the Laundry, the Boiler Building would also require a change of use to "B" occupancy. A full seismic upgrade would be required, including the smokestack. The roof, windows, and doors would also have to be replaced. All new mechanical, electrical, plumbing (including ADA-accessible restrooms), fire sprinklers, and telecommunications systems would be required for this building. The building would also require abatement of hazardous materials.

Based on a construction cost estimate obtained in 2012 (with an escalation factor applied), the above-described renovation for the Laundry Building would have a rough-order-of-magnitude cost of \$2.5M or \$420/sf for just construction costs alone (not including soft costs). For the Boiler Building and Boiler Smokestack, costs would be around \$1.2M or \$665/sf for just construction costs. Of this, a significant portion is tied to the seismic upgrade of the smokestack.

On a per square foot basis, these costs are astronomical and make such a project infeasible. Most financially feasible historic rehabilitation projects are in the range of \$100-200 per square foot. Not only would the return on investment be nil for a renovation of the Laundry & Boiler Buildings, but lender financing would be unattainable due to the significant disparity between the cost of the project and the value of the buildings.

Because of these reasons, we ask that the request to demolish the Laundry Building, Boiler Building & Smokestack, and El Presidente Restaurant Building be granted.



Providence Academy Site



Laundry Building—East Elevation



Laundry Building, Boiler Building & Boiler Smokestack—West Elevation



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Laundry Building, Boiler Building & Boiler Smokestack—South Elevation



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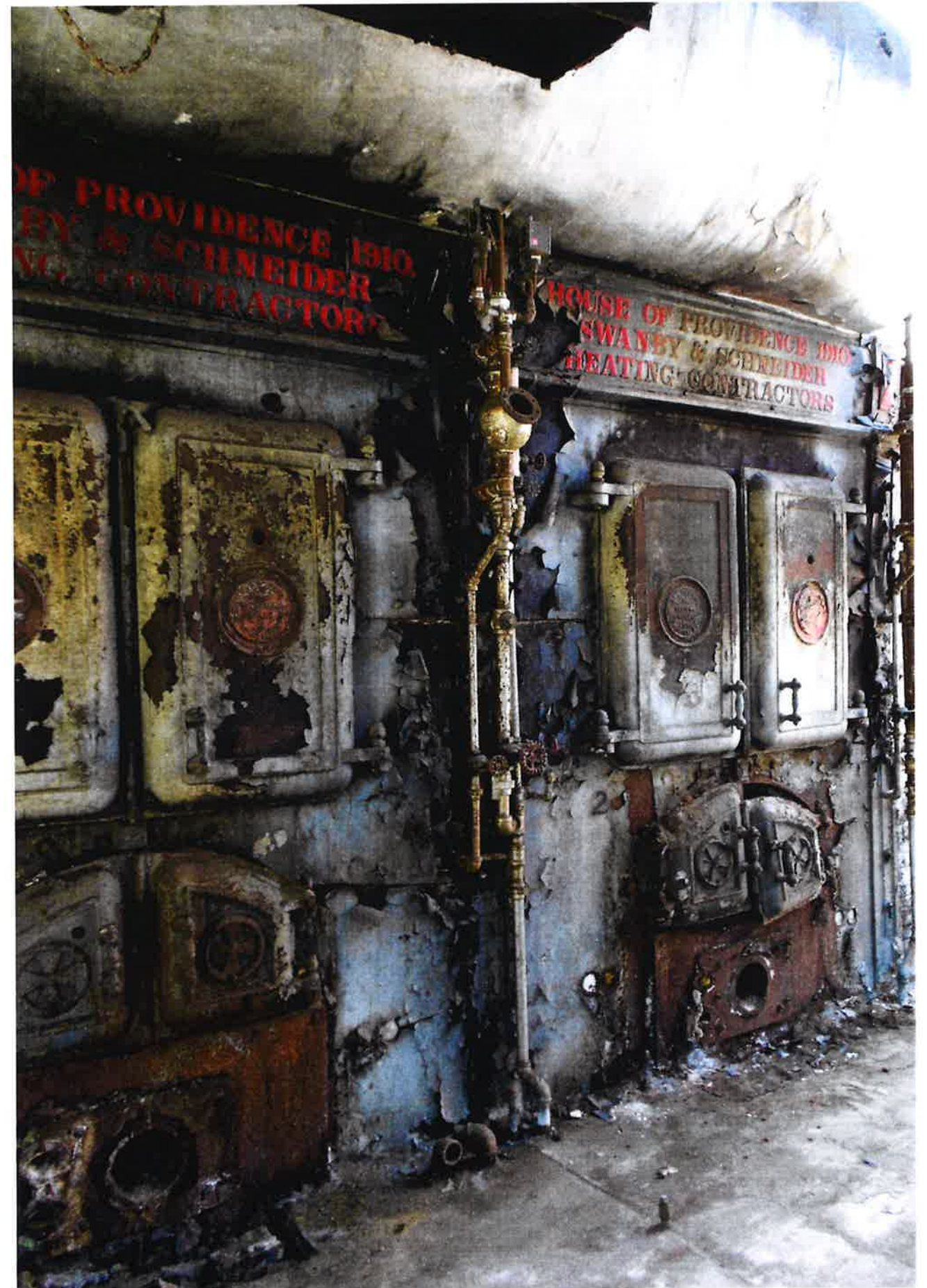
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Providence Academy—Existing condition with El Presidente Restaurant



Google Earth view of El Presidente Restaurant in front of Providence Academy



El Presidente Restaurant in front of Providence Academy's west wing