



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, February 26, 2024

Statement by Historic Kansas City
Planned demolition of the CARMEN BUILDING
[formerly Salvation Army] at 101 W. Linwood Blvd

Historic Kansas City has learned that the CARMEN BUILDING [formerly Salvation Army], at 101 W. Linwood Blvd, was threatened with demolition. A pre-demolition inspection permit was issued on December 11, 2023 to Industrial Salvage & Wrecking Co., Inc., utility kill permits have been issued in the last month, and fencing is placed around building.

This threat of demolition, coupled with little chance for the community to respond, heightens our belief that Kansas City needs a demolition review ordinance to keep this type of situation from occurring over and over again.

Formerly the Deane Dental Institute, it opened in 1923. The Architect is Arthur Frederick Adams and Collins Brothers Construction Company served as Contractor. In 1927, it became the national headquarters of the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen. They worked for shorter working hours, higher pay and a retirement system. During this time, it was called the Carmen Building. The Carmen moved in 1949 and the building became a diagnostic research clinic initially funded by William Volker, who hoped it would become the Mayo Clinic of Kansas City. During this period it was called the Research Clinic or Midwest Clinic. It later became the home of Burns & McDonnell. The Salvation Army moved out in approximately 2021. This historic resource tells a unique and important story, defines the development history of the community, and provides tangible reminders of the past that create a unique sense of place.

This building was recently listed for sale. The owner per Kansas City records is Kansas 101 Linwood LLC 10951 Lake View Avenue, Lenexa, Kansas 66219. That address goes to MISH Hospital and Clinics.

Historic Kansas City is collaborating with the OLD HYDE PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD, as well as members of the *Main Street Forum of Street Car Neighborhoods*. The developer has not met with the neighborhood to discuss the demolition or any plans for redevelopment on the site. At this point, scant information is available.

"In addition to individual properties, Historic Kansas City works with historic neighborhoods to help them preserve the history and character that is important to them. We believe the residents of the Old Hyde Park Historic District Neighborhood deserve to have input into such an important decision affecting their neighborhood and that demolition should not move forward until they have been given a chance to meet with the developer and understand plans," said Lisa Briscoe, Executive Director, Historic Kansas City.

"Historic District" is in our name, and preservation is our mission. Historic buildings provide value to the neighborhood and future redevelopment. We also know that building reuse is ecological and preserves resources. It would be irresponsible to tear down the Carmen building until we know that it is absolutely beyond repair, and until a development plan for the site has been determined and approved," said Nadja Karpilow, President, Old Hyde Park Historic District Neighborhood.

Historic Designation Nomination

A local historic district application was filed by the Old Hyde Park Historic District for the CARMEN BUILDING located at 101 W. Linwood Blvd. The application triggers a temporary hold on demolition. CH-PRES-2024-00001 designation application will be heard by the Historic Preservation Commission **FRIDAY, MARCH 22, at 9 am at City Hall**. This is the first of a three-part public hearing process. Only if the Historic Preservation Commission affirms the application by 5 votes will the case advance to the City Plan Commission.

You Wouldn't Throw Away A Can. Why Throw Away An Entire Building?

Adaptive reuse is a great opportunity to save and honor the heritage of a city and the history within. Adaptive reuse projects retain unique and authentic characteristics that cannot be manufactured in new construction. Successful implementation of adaptive reuse development, blends together modern technology with historic structures, creating an atmosphere and sense of place that is impossible to imitate.

Reuse projects can save between 50-75% of embodied carbon emissions compared to new builds, but reuse is often overlooked in favor of demolition and new construction. The most sustainable buildings are the ones that already exist. [Source: savingplaces.org/climate-and-culture]

Main Street Corridor land assemblage and speculative development.

Land assemblage and speculative development is underway, with various developers purchasing large swaths of commercial blocks on Main Street. As the corridor continues to be developed there will be more pressure on the remaining historic buildings to be demolished to make way for large-scale development projects. Developers have now snapped up strategic corners at four of the six streetcar stops between downtown and the Country Club Plaza: 31st, 39th, 45th streets and Armour Blvd.

The Carmen building is part of the Main Street Corridor, listed on Historic Kansas City's "Most Endangered Places List" since 2019. Although the Main Street Corridor is under the jurisdiction of the *Main Street Special Character Overlay District*, that status does not include demolition review. Kansas City ordinances do not currently allow pre-demolition review for most historic structures.

The Main Street corridor has lost many historic buildings and many that are left are threatened. The City has no ordinance protection for any significant and meaningful review of snap demolitions of most historic buildings. This building is not protected by listing on the Kansas City Register of Historic Places.

Is any historic building in this city safe when destruction so readily occurs? The historic and scenic assets of the city must be protected and warrant better.

Kansas City ordinances do not currently allow pre-demolition review for most historic structures. Snap demolitions proceed with little more than an application filed with the City and a quick counter review. How can an historic building be demolished without any warning or a meaningful review?

With the recent threats to historic resources at 31st and Main and 4516 Warwick Blvd., several members of the City Council have verbalized support of a "Demolition Review Ordinance." The recently adopted City Comprehensive Plan the KC Playbook - Historic Preservation Plan - Action 9 - Strengthen and streamline the historic preservation ordinance, calls to "Create a demolition delay review as part of historic preservation ordinance and a deconstruction requirement."

Under the City's current demolition ordinance, securing a demolition is little more than a ministerial application including no review of a structure's historic or architectural significance unless listed in the KC Register of Historic Places. Local historic overlay districts are currently the only method of requiring a review process for demolition permits. Currently, overlay districts have not been utilized to delay demolition of buildings, although development standards may reduce the financial incentive to demolish and redevelop a site.

Many other cities that are smaller, larger, and of a similar caliber to Kansas City utilize these measures to make sure their heritage is not lost to quick demolition efforts. Many demolitions in Kansas City go unnoticed until the situation is often too late for preservation. Kansas City as a whole could benefit from adopting a demolition delay ordinance. By allowing a specific amount of time for preservationists, neighborhoods, rehabilitation specialists, structural engineers, architects, developers, and other people in the field to work together to determine the fate of a proposed structure, everyone could avoid situations of disagreement and another structural loss.

Think of the Demolition Review as "a safety net" for historic resources to ensure that buildings worthy of preservation are not inadvertently demolished. The process may not always prevent a demolition but it does allow for a review for a specific period of time. We want the burden of proof to be placed on those proposing demolition. They should have to demonstrate via a Demolition Review Ordinance, why demolition is better for the city.

Contact your 4th District Council Persons and the Mayor and demand that Kansas City initiate a process to adopt a "demolition review" ordinance.

- Mr. Crispin Rea, crispin.rea@kcmo.org
- Mr. Eric Bunch, Eric.Bunch@kcmo.org
- Mayor Lucas, MayorQ@kcmo.org



From the left, a recent photo known more recently as the Salvation Army Building, middle, the Carmen/Deaner Dental Institute Building around the time of its 1923 opening, and right, under construction. Archive photos: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Mo.

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