

DEMOLITION

The Least You Need to Know:

- Demolition is forever. The decision to tear down a historic building requires careful consideration.
- When determining whether demolition is acceptable or not, strong consideration of what will replace the lost building is very important.

Introduction

The demolition of a historic structure is irreversible and its negative impact is far-reaching. Demolition is not an appropriate treatment for historic buildings because:

- The demolition of a building can have great negative social and psychological effects on the residents of a neighborhood. The loss of familiar and meaningful landmarks is disturbing, upsets the established sense of community, and decreases livability.
- Demolition also has a negative effect on the environment and the economy. It adds materials to our already overcrowded landfills, and it necessitates the use of money, energy, and materials to rebuild, with the energy and materials coming from already depleted natural resources.
- A demolished historic building is a lost educational resource. It can no longer illustrate the accomplishments of historical figures, the occurrence of historical events, or the construction techniques of the past.
- The demolition of a historic building creates a great physical loss in the streetscape. The loss is particularly harsh in a historic area that derives its character from the consistent appearance of more or less equally spaced buildings on the street.



DEMOLITION

When Demolition May Be Appropriate:

When the public safety and welfare requires the removal of the structure.

When the structural instability of the building has been amply demonstrated by the report of an engineer or architect, and after sufficient documentation.

When the building does not contribute to the historic district.

Guidelines for Demolition of Historic Structures:

- Document the structure with photographs and/or in drawings before demolition.
- Ensure that demolition will not damage other historic buildings.
- Consider donating salvageable materials (such as windows, doors, bricks, or siding) to an architectural salvage yard, so that they may be used for other projects.