

MEGAN BARRY  
MAYOR



**METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY**

Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission  
Sunnyside in Sevier Park  
3000 Granny White Pike  
Nashville, Tennessee 37204  
Telephone: (615) 862-7970  
Fax: (615) 862-7974

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**  
**1209 Forrest Avenue**  
**December 16, 2015**

**Application:** Demolition

**District:** Lockeland Springs-East End Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay

**Council District:** 06

**Map and Parcel Number:** 08309009700

**Applicant:** Jim Meystedt, Paul Davis Restoration

**Project Lead:** Paul Hoffman, paul.hoffman@nashville.gov

**Description of Project:** The applicant requests demolition of the structure due to fire damage suffered in March 2015.

**Recommendation Summary:** Staff recommends approval of the proposed demolition. The poor condition of the house and its structural issues will result in reconstruction rather than a true rehabilitation. Staff finds that the proposed demolition meets section IV.B.2 of the design guidelines for appropriate demolition.

**Attachments**

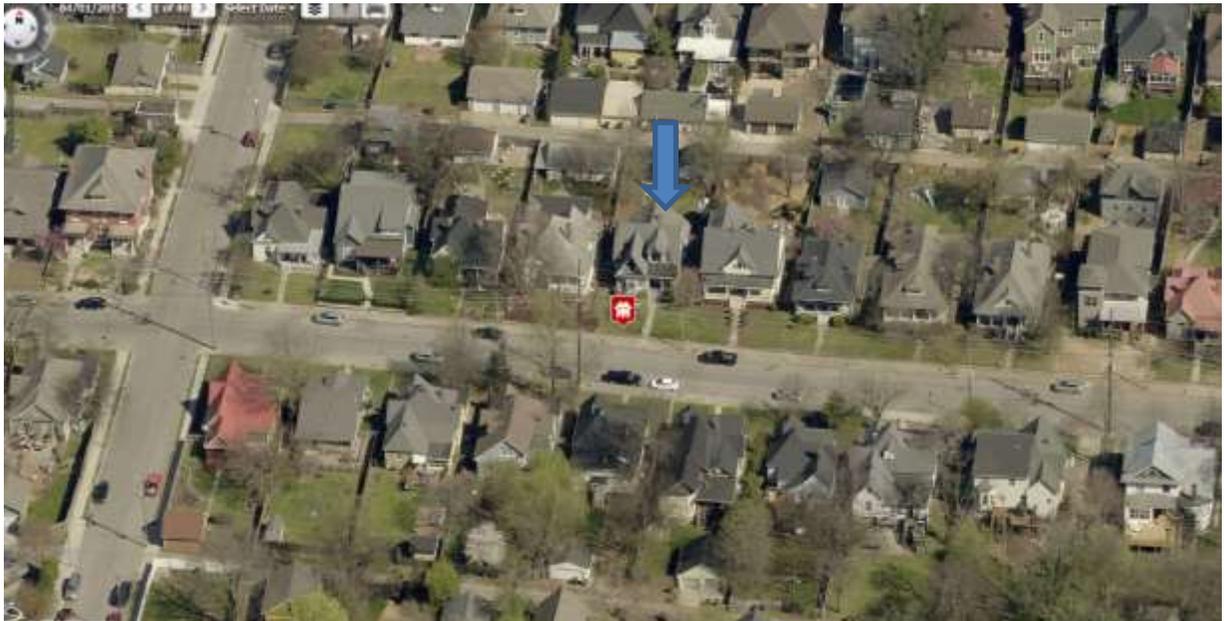
**A:** Photographs

**B:** Engineers reports

**Vicinity Map:**



**Aerial Map:**



## Applicable Design Guidelines:

### IV. B. Demolition

#### 1. Demolition is not appropriate

- a. if a building, or major portion of a building, is of such architectural or historical interest and value that its removal would be detrimental to the public interest; or
- b. if a building, or major portion of a building, is of such old or unusual or uncommon design and materials that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced without great difficulty and expense.

#### 2. Demolition is appropriate

- a. if a building, or major portion of a building, has irretrievably lost its architectural and historical integrity and significance and its removal will result in a more historically appropriate visual effect on the district;
- b. if a building, or major portion of a building, does not contribute to the historical and architectural character and significance of the district and its removal will result in a more historically appropriate visual effect on the district; or
- c. if the denial of the demolition will result in an economic hardship on the applicant as determined by the MHZC in accordance with section 17.40.420 (Historic Zoning Regulations), Metropolitan Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance.



Figure 1. Fire damage at 1209 Forrest Avenue

**Background:** 1209 Forrest Avenue is a one and a half-story Queen Anne-style cottage constructed circa 1905.

**Analysis and Findings:** In March 2015 the house suffered a fire which destroyed the second floor and damaged the first floor.

The structural integrity of the house is significantly compromised by the fire and preexisting conditions. The fire destroyed the roof, second story and the top of one first-story non-load bearing wall, according to the engineer's report. The first floor was damaged by water and smoke. In addition, the engineer's reports and the restoration company note the following significant preexisting deficiencies in the building's integrity, beyond the fire damage:

1. The structure's foundation is compromised, including insufficient pier construction, over-spanned girders;
2. There is termite damage to structural members of the foundation and subfloor;

3. Termite damage to interior and exterior walls on the first floor. This damage is significant enough as to require total replacement of the damaged material;
4. Plumbing and electrical issues existing outside of the fire damage that would need to be addressed to bring the building up to Code.



Figure 2. Fire-damaged ceiling joists

To save the building, the entire second level would need to be reconstructed. Because of termite damage the first floor walls would need to be fully replaced. Together this results in the more than fifty percent (50%) of the original building being replaced, the loss of original historic materials, and the reconstruction of character-defining features. For these reasons, Staff finds that after necessary repairs, the building would no longer have historic integrity. In addition, the cost of repairs would likely result in an economic hardship.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends approval of the proposed demolition. The poor condition of the house and its structural issues would result in reconstruction rather than a true rehabilitation. Staff finds that the proposed demolition meets section IV.B.2 of the design guidelines for appropriate demolition.

**ATTACHMENT A:  
PHOTOGRAPHS**





John G. Donan, Jr., P.E.  
Chairman of the Board

J. Lyle Donan, P.E.  
President, CEO



CORRESPOND TO:  
Donan Engineering Co., Inc.  
11321 Plantside Drive  
Louisville, Kentucky 40299  
800-482-5611  
502-267-6976 fax

July 28, 2015

Mr. Joe Dryden  
**Liberty Mutual Insurance Company**

P.O. Box 100131  
Marietta, Georgia 30061-7031

RE: **Jamie Lawrence**  
1209 Forrest Avenue  
Nashville, Tennessee 37206  
**Claim Number: 031675552**  
Donan Project Number: 07-15050359-0

Dear Mr. Dryden:

At your request, on May 22, 2015, a study was made on the house at the above-referenced address. The purpose of the study was to determine the structural integrity of the house following a recent fire. A summary report, dated May 28, 2015, was issued stating that the extent of visible structural damage related to the fire was limited to the roof structure, several first-floor ceiling joists over the two southernmost rooms along the west side of the house, and the partition wall that separates the two rooms. The purpose of the addendum is to clarify the structural integrity of the house, for rebuilding purposes.

The house is estimated to be over 100 years old and balloon-framed over a combination of masonry (CMU, brick, stone) foundation walls and piers, much like many other historical homes throughout the neighborhood. The foundation walls appear sound and the crawlspace stays mostly dry. Some of the timber piers in the crawlspace bear directly onto soil rather than a stone or concrete footing. While these piers were not studied up close, it is reasonable to assume that the timber posts that bear directly onto soil show some degree of moisture-related deterioration. All timber piers that bear directly onto soil should be supplemented

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or replaced with a masonry pier. At which time, it would be prudent for one to jack and shim sagging portions of the girder to make the floor more level before reinstalling any interior finishes. Given how wood creep is permanent to some degree, one should not expect to recover all creep and return the floor structure to a perfectly level condition. Contractors familiar with restoring historical structures are generally familiar with methods for leveling floors that are uneven due to creep deflections.

The entire roof structure is burnt and should be replaced. The only visible fire-related damage to other structural members is several charred ceiling joists over the two southernmost rooms along the west side of the house and the top of the partition wall dividing these two rooms. An estimated three to five charred joists should be replaced. The partition wall dividing the two rooms should also be reframed; this should not require temporary walls because the joists run parallel with the wall and the roof structure will be removed. Replacing the charred members described above and supplementing the timber posts that bear directly onto soil will make the house sound and in better condition than it was pre-fire.

### *Summary of Conclusions*

In summary, based on what is known at this time, I am of the opinion that:

- Replacing the roof structure, up to five ceiling joists over the two southernmost rooms along the west side of the house, and the partition wall dividing these two rooms will restore the structural integrity of the house to a sound and better-than-before condition. New roof framing should conform to current building code standards.
- It is recommended to supplement timber piles that are in direct contact with the soil. At which time, one should consider jacking portions of the girder to help straighten the floor structure.

This report is based on presently known and available facts, data, and information. To the extent that additional or different facts, data, or information develops or is discovered after the issuance of this report, Donan reserves the right to amend, alter, or change the report as needed to reflect consideration of said additional or different facts, data, or information.

**Liberty Mutual Insurance Company**  
**Claim Number: 031675552**  
**May 28, 2015**  
**Page 3**

We appreciate your confidence in our professional services.

Sincerely,

DONAN ENGINEERING CO., INC.

Matthew W. Hodge, P.E.  
Forensic Engineer  
Tennessee PE: 00110874  
Expires: January 31, 2017

Attachment

John G. Donan, Jr., P.E.  
Chairman of the Board

J. Lyle Donan, P.E.  
President, CEO



CORRESPOND TO:  
Donan Engineering Co., Inc.  
11321 Plantside Drive  
Louisville, Kentucky 40299  
800-482-5611  
502-267-6976 fax

August 20, 2015

Mr. Joe Dryden  
**Liberty Mutual Insurance Company**  
P.O. Box 100131  
Marietta, Georgia 30061-7031

RE: **Jamie Lawrence**  
1209 Forrest Avenue  
Nashville, Tennessee 37206  
**Claim Number: 031675552**  
Donan Project Number: 07-15050359-0

Dear Mr. Dryden:

At your request, on August 14, 2015, an additional study was made on the house at the above-referenced address. The purpose of the study was to investigate the structure for potential deficiencies that compromise the integrity of the structure. A summary report and addendum were previously published that address the structural integrity of the house as it relates to fire damage. Fire-related damage is confined to the roof structure, five charred ceiling joists, and the top of one first-story, non-load-bearing wall.

To clarify assumptions made in the report addendum, no critical pier supports in the crawlspace are founded directly onto the soil. The existing double 2-inch by 10-inch (2x10) girder running north/south along the center of the house is supported by timber piers on concrete pads spaced every 6 ½ to 8 feet. The floor structure has settled along the center girder in the south half of the house, and near both bathrooms near the north (rear) elevation of the house. The floor structure under the northwest bathroom is not fully accessible, but termite activity is visible on the underside of the floor structure and in two exposed wall cavities within the living space. The floor structure under the northeast bathroom has multiple joists that are cut/notched for the plumbing installation, and the cut joist

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ends are unconventionally supported. The foundation appears sound and absent of any appreciable recent movement.

The existing pier supports for the center girder are in sound condition, but they are well overspanned according to typical design prescriptions. The overspanned girder has sagged (creeped) over time due to improper support. It is recommended to add supplemental piers between each of the existing piers to reduce the girder's span under code limits. This will require five additional piers along the center girder. At the time these piers are installed, it would be prudent to jack and shim the existing girders to recover some of the long-term creep of the girder to make the interior floors more level. The subfloor should be removed from the two small rooms on either side of the termite damage in the wall cavity at the northwest bathroom, at which time all termite-related damage should be replaced. The floor sags along the north/south partition wall at northeast bathroom; a supplemental girder should be installed to code standards under this wall, in addition to sistering any of the cut/notched joists. The girder between the front porch and the south exterior wall is a single 2x10 member that should be sistered with another 2x10 for additional strength. The following Appendix A is a sketch of the house footprint and areas requiring non-fire-related repair to restore the integrity of the structure to a safe and better-than-before condition.

This letter is based on presently known and available facts, data, and information. To the extent that additional or different facts, data, or information develops or is discovered after the issuance of this report, Donan reserves the right to amend, alter, or change the report as needed to reflect consideration of said additional or different facts, data, or information. Donan Engineering Co. Inc. is not a design firm and its work shall not be interpreted as engineering design.

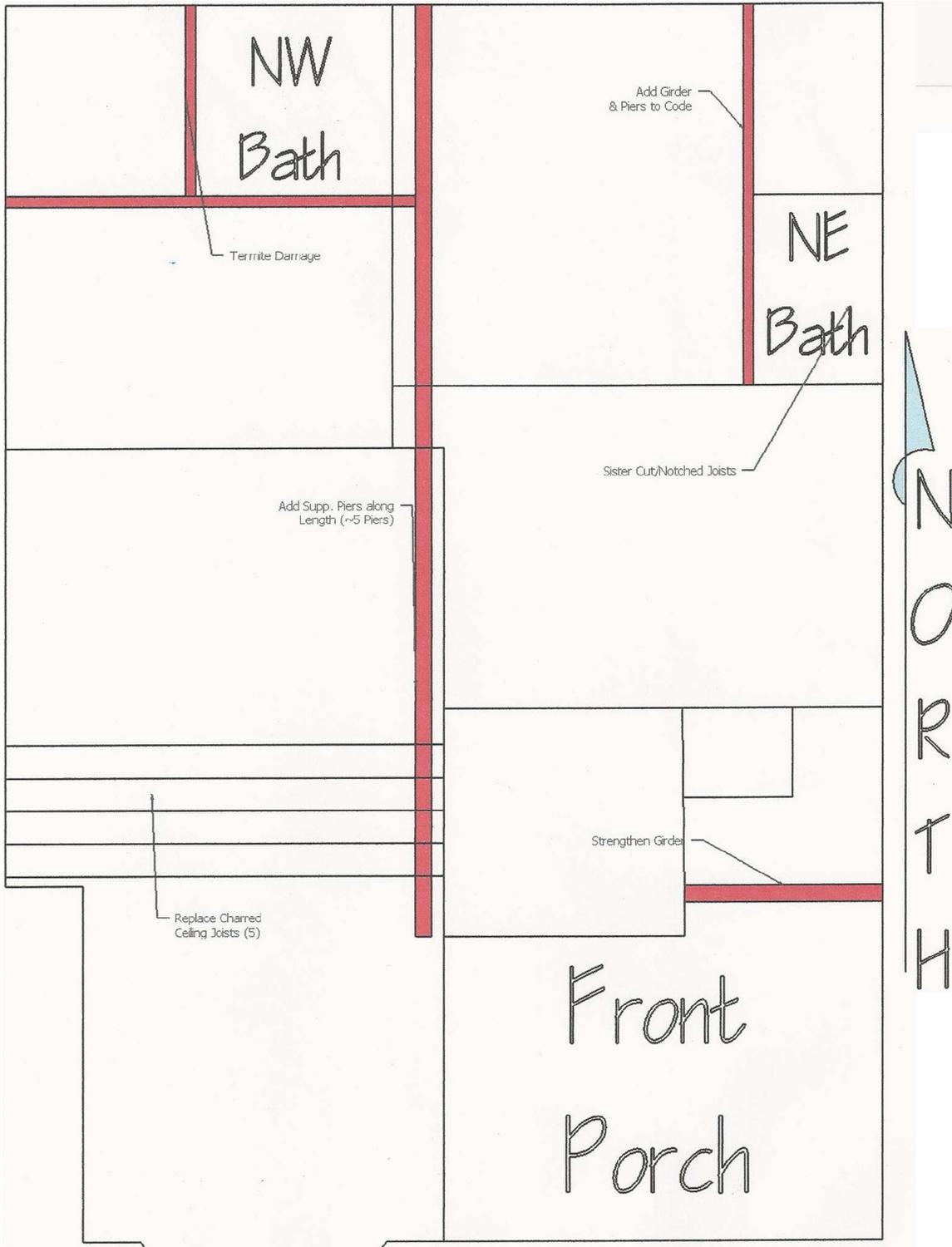
We appreciate your confidence in our professional services.

Sincerely,

DONAN ENGINEERING CO., INC.

Matthew W. Hodge, P.E.  
Forensic Engineer  
Tennessee PE: 00110874  
Expires: January 31, 2017

Attachment



**Appendix A: Sketch of Recommended Non-Fire-Related Repairs**

# Photo Sheet

Liberty Mutual

Southern Region

PO Box 1053

Montgomeryville, PA 18936-1053

Office: (800) 318-6572

Fax: (866) 644-9464

Insured: JAMIE LEIGHANN LAWRENCE

Claim #: 031675552-01

Policy #: H3725882871240



**DSCF3647**

Date Taken: 3/9/2015

Taken By: Joseph L. Dryden

Crawl Space



**DSCF3648**

Date Taken: 3/9/2015

Taken By: Joseph L. Dryden

Crawl Space

# Photo Sheet

Insured: JAMIE LEIGHANN LAWRENCE

Claim #: 031675552-01

Policy #: H3725882871240

Liberty Mutual

Southern Region

PO Box 1053

Montgomeryville, PA 18936-1053

Office: (800) 318-6572

Fax: (866) 644-9464



**DSCF3649**

Date Taken: 3/9/2015

Taken By: Joseph L. Dryden

Crawl Space



**DSCF3650**

Date Taken: 3/9/2015

Taken By: Joseph L. Dryden

Crawl Space

# Photo Sheet

Liberty Mutual  
Southern Region  
PO Box 1053  
Montgomeryville, PA 18936-1053  
Office: (800) 318-6572  
Fax: (866) 644-9464

Insured: JAMIE LEIGHANN LAWRENCE

Claim #: 031675552-01

Policy #: H3725882871240



**DSCF3645**

Date Taken: 3/9/2015

Taken By: Joseph L. Dryden



**DSCF3646**

Date Taken: 3/9/2015

Taken By: Joseph L. Dryden

Crawl Space