

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Historic Architectural Review Board Special Meeting
March 27, 2026

The Historic Architectural Review Board met in formal session at 2:30 P.M., Friday, March 27, 2026, in the Alcazar Room at City Hall, St. Augustine, Florida. Brad Beach, Chairperson, called the regular meeting to order, and the following were present:

1. ROLL CALL: Brad Beach, Chairperson
Linda Potter, Vice-Chairperson
Catherine Duncan
Gaere MacDonald
Barbara Wingo

City Staff: Julie Courtney, Historic Preservation Officer
Candice Seymour, Historic Preservation Planner
Buddy Schauland, Building Official
Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney
Michele Fudo, Recording Secretary

2.General Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda

none

3. Public Hearing and Discussion Related to Emergency Demolition

3.(a) 7 Aviles Street

KRB Construction LLC – Contractor
SAR 2020 Partners, LLC – Owner

**Convened by Chief Building Official
Richard Schauland**

For emergency partial demolition, as detailed in the structural engineer's report, of the north, south, and west walls of a building, originally constructed c. 1885-1888 with later additions between 1899 and 1910, that is recorded in the Florida Master Site File and contributing to the St. Augustine National Register Historic District

Ms. Lopez confirmed that the matter would be open to public comment after the presentation.

Richard Schauland, City Building Official
Chad Swaninger, KRB Construction and

Jude Kostage, Structural Engineer reviewed the request for demolition.

Ms. Courtney explained that this hearing was different from a regular HARB meeting, because this was an informational hearing being held under the statutory authority of the City's Building Official. She stated it had been determined that the building was a public safety danger to life and property.

Ms. Seymour gave a history of the application process for 7 Aviles Street and included the conditions of each meeting regarding the rehabilitation of the building.

Mr. Schauland gave a presentation to inform the board of the structural integrity of the building. He told the Board that the contractor had contacted his office to advise him of the concerns regarding taking down the approved wall on the south side of the building. He said that after a closer inspection, a report was compiled to show that the walls were buckling and were a threat to the other buildings as well as any pedestrians in the area. He consulted with a structural engineer and said that he determined at that time an emergency demolition was needed. He wanted to have

the input of the board to determine what would need to be saved for reconstruction.

Mr. Kostage stated he originally wanted to try to save the building. He told the Board that the wall studs had deteriorated and the brick had no integrity and was completely deteriorated. He said the north wall was pulling away from the building and he advised that there was no way to fix the mortar, so the walls needed to come down.

Mr. MacDonald agreed with the assessment of Mr. Kostage after visiting the site on his own. He said that the balcony was compromised and he wasn't sure that there had ever been a footing under the bricks. He said that one of the biggest questions was the fact that the floor systems were taken out, removing any support.

Mr. Swaninger explained how the floor had been placed in the building and described that the building was riddled with termite damage. He advised that previous remodels had not been completed using any code. He continued his explanation of the deteriorating condition of the building.

Mr. MacDonald said he concurred with Mr. Schauland's decision to take the walls down. He thought that a good list of salvageable materials was needed to be used in the rebuilding of the structure. He thought the building should be rebuilt in the same style and fashion of the original building.

Mr. Swaninger advised that the exterior would look the same.

Ex Parte Communication:

Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Beach advised that they had visited the site for closer inspection. Mr. Beach asked about the fact that there were no barriers on the site.

Mr. Schauland advised that it was in progress and a right-of-way permit was being issued.

Mr. Beach questioned Mr. Kostage in relation to his experience with the building.

Mr. Kostage advised that there was nothing bonding the bricks and he added that if the building had been taken care of properly the mortar would not be so deteriorated.

Ms. Duncan asked about the process of taking the building down safely.

Mr. Kostage explained that whalers would be placed on the outside of the wall and those would be anchored to new columns that had been placed to shore up the building and keep the walls from buckling outwards.

Mr. Swaninger explained the process of shoring and deconstructing the building. He told the board that there had been a complete 3D scan completed on the building.

Ms. Duncan asked about the planned elevation for the reconstructed building, adding that the desire was to keep the streetscape the same as it was now.

Mr. Swaninger said that there was no plan to change the elevation.

Mr. Beach asked Mr. Schauland to explain the proposed elevation of the building, and he said that eight feet would be the minimum; however, a flood zone map showed that the building was not in a flood zone.

Mr. MacDonald confirmed what was not being removed to include the three jail walls, which were in the interior, three coquina walls, the block walls in the back of the building, and the garage.

Ms. Potter was concerned that there had been no mention of the current problems at the outset of this restoration project.

Mr. Swaninger said that the original plan had been to save the building; however, because of the problems discovered as it was deconstructed, it had become very evident that the original plans would have to change.

Ms. Wingo expressed the thought that it seemed that the problems being discussed at this meeting should have come to light much earlier in the process.

Mr. Kostage explained that because of the process of deconstruction, certain problems would not have been visible. He explained how the mortar could have become so deteriorated.

Mr. MacDonald added that limestone was mixed with sand to make the mortar and it was likely that the sand had not been washed enough causing there to be salt in the mortar which broke down much faster.

Public hearing was opened.

Melinda Rakoncaj said that she appreciated that this project had been brought to the board, and she added that there was no doubt that this building was in dire shape.

Nancy Pellicer thought that this was most unusual that someone had come into the community to save a building rather than to tear it down. She asked the board what would be done in the future to continue to save the old structures in the city.

Leslee Keyes reminded everyone that there was a minimum maintenance ordinance as well as a demolition ordinance in place to protect areas and buildings from deterioration.

Public hearing was closed.

Ms. Duncan referenced the staff report and confirmed the wall from the February 12, 2026 meeting had been taken down.

Mr. Beach confirmed the conditions and recommendations from Mr. Schauland's letter; he added that there was a 3D scan of the building and that materials from the building had been catalogued. He confirmed that the contractor would maintain the finished floor elevation as it is now.

Ms. Duncan asked about ground disturbance and the need to get the archeologist to examine the area.

Ms. Courtney advised that the archeologist was already involved. And she said that if the building was taken down completely the area would have to have a complete archeological review.

Ms. Potter added the French doors on the second story should be salvaged as well as the front doors on the first floor.

Mr. Swaninger advised that the ceiling joists had been salvaged and would be reused, but not as joists as they were too small.

Ms. Duncan wanted to save the wood where possible. She thought that there should be an informational sign to inform the public what was happening to the building.

MOTION

Mr. MacDonald made a RECOMMENDATION based on the discussions of this meeting to clarify that the Board was approving the demolition of three- and one-half walls to include the north, west, and south walls and the upstairs of the east wall of the building at 7 Aviles Street; the garage and the jail structures would remain intact and would have to come back to the board for any future changes. The 3D scans and as built plans documentation given to the city prior to the demolition. The new building would replicate the existing building as it was with the jail building being incorporated in the kitchen. The fenestration patterns would remain the same as a complete replica of the original building. The second option would be to use the Spanish or British Colonial Style. There should be a good faith effort to salvage as much as possible, specifically bricks, the front door and another that should be rebuilt if possible, any glass in the building should be salvaged, as well as any custom Spanish style tiles. Ms.

Courtney added a statement from the City's archeologist that this building was in Archeological Zone 1B and that all conditions regarding archeology within the site should be followed. Ms. Wingo **SECONDED** the recommendation

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYES: MacDonald, Wingo, Duncan, Potter, Beach

NAYES: NONE

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Other Business

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:42 P.M.¹

For Linda Potter
Brad Beach, Chairperson

¹ Transcribed by Michele Fudo