

Agenda Item B. Review of National Register Status for Properties Proposed for Demolition

In addition to reviewing new nominations, the State Historic Preservation Review Board is tasked with completing evaluations of National Register eligibility for other specific properties when necessary to assist the SHPO.

In Connecticut, a State Historic Preservation Review Board opinion is necessary in some cases when demolition is proposed and action under Connecticut Environmental Protection Act is being considered. The Protection Act applies to properties that are listed on the National Register. However, there are many cases where lack of clarity in the original nomination or a change in the physical integrity of a property warrants re-evaluation of the property's designation status.

At the June 13, 2025 meeting, the SRB will be asked to assess whether or not one property, located within a National Register-listed historic district, retains enough integrity to continue to contribute to said district.

This package includes current information about the property and a copy of the nomination for the district it is a part of.

Agenda Item B.

B.1. Review of National Register Status for Property Proposed for Demolition, St. Peter's Church, 98 Franklin Square, New Britain, Downtown New Britain Historic District (NR# 16000210)

Staff requests that the SRB evaluate whether the property known as St. Peter's Church, located at 98 Franklin Square, New Britain, continues to contribute to the Downtown New Britain Historic District.

The Downtown New Britain Historic District was listed on the National Register on May 3, 2016 (NR# 16000210). The property in question was designated a contributing resource at the time of listing. There are four structures on the parcel; however, only St. Peter's Church is under consideration for demolition.

The building is identified in the nomination, in Section 7, pages 17 and 18, where it is listed in the inventory of contributing buildings as, "98 Franklin Square, Gothic Revival, 1890. Brownstone church known as St. Peters German Catholic Church, 3 Buildings. Architect: Michael O' Donohue." It is again referenced in Section 8, page 38, in a discussion of the important of religious structures in the development of the district:

Churches like these had a significant impact on the development of the downtown district and provided buildings that remain as defining pieces of the district's architecture. They reflect the diverse community histories found in the downtown district. Immigrants were able to use these churches to build a strong sense of ethnic heritage and make the downtown into a rich, cultural and economic center....From 1890-1900, the Catholic parish of St. Peter's German Church, located at 98 Franklin Square, was dedicated to serving German, Austrian, and later French Canadian immigrants.

as well as Section 8, page 45, noting the prominence of its architect, Michael O'Donohue.

The Downtown New Britain Historic District was listed on the National Register under Criterion A and C at the local and state levels, "as the historic commercial center of one of Connecticut's most prominent industrial cities [Criterion A] and for its concentration of high-style nineteenth through mid-twentieth century commercial and civic architecture that developed in correlation with the city's industrial economy [Criterion C]."

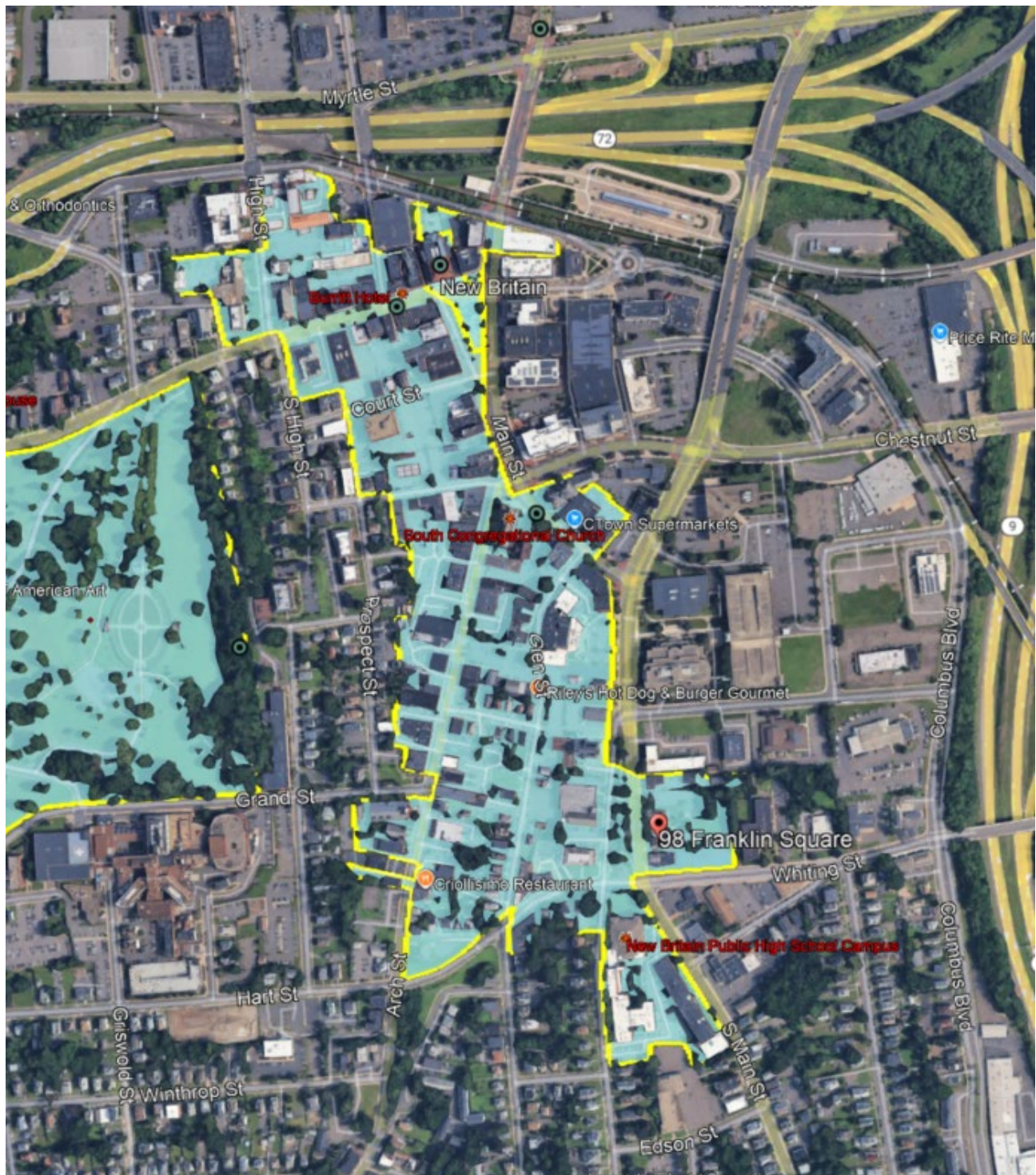
Description

According to the nomination, the building is a brownstone ecclesiastical building, constructed in the Gothic Revival style. A review of photographs indicate the building is constructed of red brick, with brownstone trim. The façade is dominated by a central tower, surmounted by a spire. Fenestration includes three pairs of double doors, each with a pointed arch tympanum, containing quatrefoils. Within the tower is a large panel window consisting of four lancet windows and, a rose window, above which is a pair of lancet windows, and a gothic arch filled with a louvered panel.

Demolition Delay

The City of New Britain has a 180-day demolition delay ordinance, which much be enacted by the Historic District Commission. At the February 24, 2025 regularly scheduled meeting, the Commission did not enact a demolition delay for the property.

Photographs and figures are below:



Location of 98 Franklin Square, New Britain, within the Downtown New Britain Historic District, map oriented north (google earth). National Register boundary shown in yellow.



Location of 98 Franklin Square, St. Peter's Church, outlined in red (google earth).



Franklin Square, New Britain, view looking north. St. Peter's Church to the right. *Google Earth*, July, 2024.



Franklin Square, New Britain, view looking south. St. Peter's Church to the left (partially obscured).
Google Earth, July, 2024.



St. Peter's Church, 98 Franklin Square, New Britain, camera facing east, *google Earth*, July 2024.



St. Peter's Church, 98 Franklin Square, New Britain, camera facing east, *google Earth*, July 2024.



St. Peter's Church, 98 Franklin Square, New Britain, camera facing northeast, March 5, 2025.