

2023TimmonsKayleigh-Abstract

Abandoned buildings are commonplace in cities across the United States. As industries move, businesses open and close, and cultures change, large structures are often left behind to decay. Adaptive reuse re-purposes these buildings to preserve the existing buildings, maintain neighborhood streetscapes, and revive values, pride, and confidence within communities.

This thesis examines how an abandoned property can be reclaimed to serve its neighborhood.

The Ritz was built as a neighborhood movie theater in 1927. After closing the theater in 1960, the building was used to house different gatherings of people. The Ritz façade has remained relatively unchanged through the years. In 1981, the Ritz closed its doors for the final time, only to stand abandoned for the following 40 years. This thesis explores one option for the revitalization of the original building, the full site, and the nearby neighborhood. This strategy is to provide supportive transitional housing, long-term shelter for people suffering from homelessness, and more general neighborhood services. Providing job training, physical and mental wellness services, as well as theater and meeting spaces as forms of community outreach and engagement would benefit the surrounding community and residents alike.