



SAISD, city at odds over fate of old elementary school

Beacon Hill Elementary School hasn't been used in 20 years

By [Stephanie Serna](#) - Reporter October 25, 2018

SAN ANTONIO - The fate of an old elementary school that hasn't been used in 20 years will soon be decided by the city's Historic Design Review Commission.

Some parents at Beacon Hill Academy and community leaders are hoping the [San Antonio Independent School District](#) will get approval to demolish the building to make room for students at the growing academy.

The vacant building, Beacon Hill ES #22, was built in 1915 on West Ashby Place and is next door to Beacon Hill Academy.

Victoria Cavazos, of [Communities Organized for Public Service Metro Alliance](#), has a daughter in kindergarten at Beacon Hill Academy. Cavazos said the old building is not only cutting into the children's green space, but as of April, the children haven't been allowed to use the playground.

"The district had an assessment done of the building, and because of the hazard of the building, they put a fence around, not only the perimeter of the building, but it also includes the playground," Cavazos said.

SAISD spokeswoman Leslie Price said the district has no need for the building and it would be extremely expensive to restore. In fact, the district has requested a demolition permit from the city.

"We'd really like to demolish the building to give children the space that they deserve," Cavazos said.

"We've worked with a lot of different people and a lot of groups to try and get that money," said Michelle Ricondo, of COPS Metro Alliance. "But no one has come forward with the money to renovate the building."

Shanon Miller, director of the city's Office of Historic Preservation, said Wednesday that unfortunately, the building has been sitting for a number of years, but the structure is significant and an example of architecture from that period. Miller also said demolition is not the only option.

"We've worked with a reputable structural engineer that's an expert in dealing with historic buildings (which) has found that building is absolutely reusable," Miller said. "We are absolutely in agreement with all the people concerned about this building in that we don't want to see it sit like it is today. We want to see something happen with it, but we believe it's a beautiful building that can contribute to the fabric of the neighborhood."

The Historic Design Review Commission is scheduled to vote on the issue Nov. 7.

We reached out to District 1 Councilman Roberto Trevino, who said he will not comment until after the vote.

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