78. The issue of whether to raze an old, historic building to make way for progress is a complex one, since it involves a conflict between our interest in preserving our culture, tradition, and history and a legitimate need to create practical facilities that serve current utilitarian purposes. In my view, the final judgment should depend on a case-by-case analysis of two key factors. One key factors the historic value of the building. An older building may be worth saving because it uniquely represents some bygone era. On the other hand, if several older buildings represent the era just as effectively, then the historic value of one building might be negligible. If the building figured centrally into the citys history as a municipal structure, the home of a founding family or other significant historical figure, or the location of important events, then its historic value would be greater than if its history was an unremarkable one. The other key factor involves the specific utilitarian needs of the community and the relative costs and benefits of each alternative in light of those needs. For example, if the need is mainly for more office space, then an architecturally appropriate add-on or annex might serve just as well as a new building. On the other hand, an expensive retrofit may not be worthwhile if no amount of retrofitting would permit it to serve the desired function. Moreover, retrofitting might undermine the historic value of the old building by altering its aesthetic or architectural integrity. In sum,

neither modernization for its own sake nor indiscriminate preservation of old buildings should guide decisions in the controversies at issue. Instead, decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis, considering historic value, community need, and the comparative costs and benefits of each alternative. 100Test

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