

Activists Say Bakhrushina Mansion First of Many

By [The Moscow Times](#)

August 02, 2010



The mansion was knocked down July 24 and 25 despite protesters' attempts to stop the demolition on Bakhrushina. A huge hotel will take its place.

Preservation activists are calling on City Hall to explain why a 19th-century mansion was knocked down despite protests and its location in a conservation area.

The Alexeyev mansion at 11 Ulitsa Bakhrushina in southern Moscow was a 19th-century townhouse. It was knocked down on July 24 and 25 despite a picket organized by Arkhnadzor, a grassroots conservation group.

Permission for the demolition was given by Deputy Mayor Vladimir Resin in 2007, who is also head of the city's huge construction department.

The building's demolition was justified, the city said, to ensure the "construction of a hotel complex as part of special measures taken, directed at the preservation and regeneration of

the historical urban environment,” a government decree stated.

State Duma Deputy Valery Bogomolov defended the demolition earlier this month by saying the mansion was in a poor state. “It’s shameful to have such a ruin in the center of Moscow,” the United Russia deputy said.

“I hope the new building that goes up on the site of the Alexeyev mansion will not interfere with the historical face of Zamoskvorechye,” he said, referring to the neighborhood where the mansion is located, across the Moscow River south of the Kremlin.

Photographs of the new hotel complex that is to house French hotel chain Accor show a huge modern building with a replica of the mansion’s facade incorporated into the design.

It has become common in Moscow for old buildings to be facaded, where a building’s front is left intact but the rest of the building is knocked down, or for a modern building to be built on or around a historical building.

Activists will hold a news conference on Wednesday at RIA-Novosti where they say they will ask what buildings will come next and appeal to the public to write letters to Valery Shevchuk, chairman of the Moscow Heritage Committee, the city official who is supposed to protect the city’s historical heritage.

“A summer attack has begun on historical Moscow. In the heat, investors and developers are active it seems because they think that defenders are on holiday,” Konstantin Mikhailov, an Arkhnadzor founder, wrote on the group’s web site not long before the Alexeyev mansion was knocked down. Mikhailov wrote that a number of other buildings were also in danger.

Experts say Moscow has had hundreds of its historical buildings demolished in the last two decades as the city has been transformed.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2010/08/02/activists-say-bakhrushina-mansion-first-of-many-a352>