

Analysis of Environs of 1100 Massachusetts Street, Douglas County Courthouse

Step One

Historical Significance and Context

According to the application for Historic Landmark Designation, the property was constructed in 1904. The property is being nominated to the Lawrence Register of Historic Places under local criteria one, three, five, six and eight. Local criteria one is *a property's character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the community, county, state, or nation*. Local criteria three is *a building's identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the community, county, state, or nation*. Local criteria five is *a building's identification as a work of a master builder, designer, architect, or landscape architect whose individual work has influenced the development of the community, county, state or nation*. Local criteria six is *a buildings embodiment of elements of design, detailing, materials, or craftsmanship that render it architecturally significant*. Local criteria eight is *a property's unique location or singular physical characteristics that make it an established or familiar visual feature*.

The importance of this structure's visual and physical characteristics influences the environs definition process in that it is a prominent building in central core. The structure's architectural significance is important in the environs definition process because it is excellent example of the Richardsonian Romanesque influence on the architecture of Kansas courthouses. The structure also maintains a high degree of integrity.

The period of significance for the related nomination categories is as follows:

- Local Register Criteria 1
1904-1964
- Local Register Criteria 3
John G. Haskell 1903-1904
- Local Register Criteria 5
John G. Haskell 1903-1904
- Local Register Criteria Six
1904-1964
- Local Register Criteria Six
1904-2014

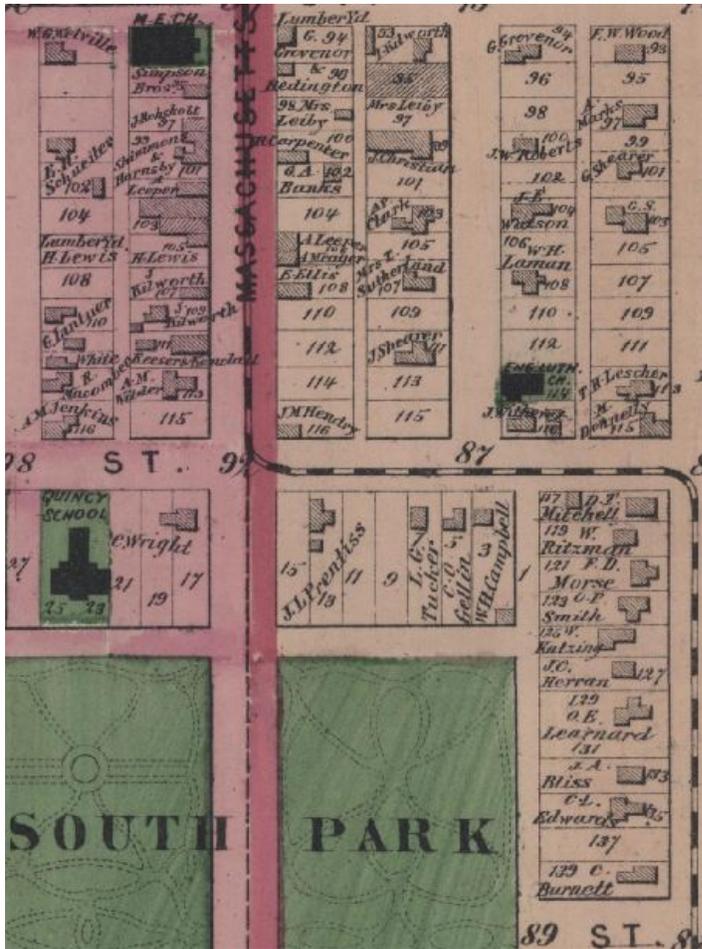
Step Two

Historical Character of the Area Surrounding the Property

Historical character is the primary issued considered in this section. Historic photographs, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, the nomination information, *1873 Douglas County Atlas, Living with History: A Historic Preservation Plan for Lawrence, Kansas*, by Dale Nimz, and Historic Resources of Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) were the primary sources used to identify the historic character of the area.

Natural Features The property is located in the original townsite of Lawrence. The environs consist of platted lots on relatively flat ground. There were no significant natural features in the environs of the subject property.

Property Boundaries and Ownership Patterns The area surrounding 1100 Massachusetts Street is platted into typical original townsite lots of 50 feet by 117 feet. Many lots were parceled into 25 feet by 117 feet. The platted lots on which the Courthouse stands were platted as 50 by 200 feet and ran from north to south. The lots directly to the west across Massachusetts Street were platted the same way. The 1873 Beers Atlas shows a residential structure on the Lot 13. This structure exists on the 1897 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps and faces north (Quincy/11th Street). Other lots in this block developed with residential structures that remained after the construction of the Courthouse. By 1912, the County Jail had been constructed on lots 9 and 11, but residences remained on Lots 7 and 5. Lot 3 had four dwellings facing New Hampshire Street. The property ownership changed during the period of significance. However, the traditional pattern of multiple property owners within the environs has remained constant over the period of significance.



Land Use Patterns and Zoning Land use on in the surrounding area during the period of significance was primarily commercial on Massachusetts Street. New Hampshire Street was primarily residential. The park to the south was open space. Zoning was not established until 1927. The Courthouse was included in the business district.

Circulation Patterns The streets in the area reflect the traditional grid pattern of the original town site.

Planned Vegetation Patterns The planned vegetation patterns were lawns around houses, schools and religious buildings and the Courthouse. Street trees were common before the 1920s in the residential areas. Little or no vegetation was located on Massachusetts Street. A photo of the Courthouse taken before it was occupied but after completion shows a few trees had been maintained on the site.

Signs and Pedestrian amenities Typically the historic signs were street name signs. The only pedestrian amenities were stone and cast iron hitching posts and stone steps to provide assistance in getting in and out of carriages. A photo of the Courthouse taken before it was occupied but after completion shows sidewalks along the Massachusetts Street side of the Courthouse.

Primary Structures The primary structures in the environs of the property were single-family residences and commercial structures. The structures were primarily 1, 1 ½ and 2 stories in height and constructed of wood or masonry materials. Various styles were represented in the area. Of note was the Watkins Bank Building to the northwest. This masonry structure (c. 1887) also has Richardsonian Romanesque influence and dominates the west side of Massachusetts Street.

Secondary Structures. Secondary structures were nearly always carriage houses or garages, smoke houses, sheds, and garden structures. There may have been a few kitchen buildings. They would have been constructed of brick, stone, wood. They typically would have been 1 to 2 ½ stories in height. There were also retaining walls, wood and iron fences that generally marked property line boundaries.

Outdoor Activity Spaces South Park was located directly south of the property.

Utilities and mechanical Equipment Electrical and telephone lines were common by 1937. Water and sewer and natural gas lines (1905) were buried under ground.

Views The views to the listed property were typical of urban lots. Because the subject property was so massive compared to the other structures in the area, expanded views to and from the structure were possible. The clock tower in particular could be seen from the north end of the business district at the Kansas River.

Step Three

Present Character of the Area Surrounding the Property

The primary source of information on this section is personal observation, city zoning maps, and recent aerial photographs.

Natural Features There are no major natural features.

Property Boundaries and Ownership Patterns Property boundaries and ownership patterns along Massachusetts Street still reflect the 50 ft by 117 ft original townsite lots under multiple ownerships with some storefronts divided into 25 foot parcels. The platted lots of 50 by 200 feet have remained platted in this form but have developed in forms similar to lots surrounding the area. The County now owns all of the land surrounding the north east corner of South Park.

Land Use Patterns and Zoning Land use on in the surrounding area has had the most dramatic change. While the commercial use and zoning has been maintained on Massachusetts Street, the residential area directly to the east of the Courthouse has been removed. This area now has a large landscape garden and the Judicial and Law Enforcement Center. The residential area now starts on the east side of Rhode Island Street. A large parking lot is directly to the east of the north half of the east side of South Park.

The Zoning in the area is commercial and general public use districts. The area contains a mixture of CD, GPI and OS zoning districts. The residential area to the east is zoned RM12.

Circulation Patterns The circulation patterns have not changed significantly. Access to the properties is still primarily from the State-named street and alleyways. North Park Street functions more as a private drive for the Courthouse and Judicial and Law Enforcement Center. Parking lots have been introduced into the area.

Planned Vegetation Patterns The planned vegetation patterns have changed from the historic patterns. Commercial street trees and planters have been installed in the downtown area. The landscape garden between the Courthouse and the Judicial and Law Enforcement Center adds significant green space to the property.

Signs and Pedestrian amenities The signs within the area are almost entirely street names and traffic control signs. Signs have been added to the landscape area to direct pedestrians to the Courthouse or Judicial Center.

Primary Structures

All of the residential structures have been removed from the immediate surroundings of the Courthouse. Commercial structures dominate the area. The English Lutheran Church and

parsonage still stands at the corner of New Hampshire and 11th Street. Parking lots have been introduced into the area. Most commercial structures are 1 and 2 stories in height. The Watkins Bank Building dominates the northwest corner of 11th and Massachusetts Street.

Secondary Structures Almost all of the secondary structures have been removed.

Outdoor Activity Spaces South Park and the Japanese Friendship Garden are the closes public parks. The amount of public green space has been increased.

Utilities and mechanical Equipment There are storm sewer inlets, traffic signs and street lighting along all of the streets in the area. Water meter and manhole covers are typical through the area. Fire hydrants are located along the streets. Electrical and telephone lines are both above ground and below ground in the area.

Views While some of the views to and from the subject property have changed due to the loss of residential structures and the changes to commercial structures along Massachusetts Street, the dominant view to and from the Courthouse has remained. The clock tower in particular is still the dominant feature of the Massachusetts Street corridor. It can still be seen from 6th Street and is still the visual landmark for all of Downtown.

Time Time of the day has an impact on the perception of the subject property, especially during peak hour traffic on Massachusetts streets. Nighttime appearance with lighted porches and interior lights through windows is also quite different from the normal day time appearance. Seasonal changes in vegetation are an important aspect of the experiential quality of the area.

Weather The full range of weather conditions common to this area influence the perception of this place.

Sounds, Smells, Tastes In general this area has the usual sounds of cars and conversation associated with historic commercial areas. There are no unusual or distinct sounds, smells, or tastes that characterize the area.

Imagination and Expectation The area surrounding the subject property is considered part of the Downtown area.

Step Four

Comparison of the Historic and Present Character of the Area Surrounding the Property.

Natural Features The natural features remain the same.

Property Boundaries and Ownership Patterns The platting of the property has changed.

The ownership patterns in the area have changed. There is a consolidation of parcels in the area to provide for larger parking lots and structures.

Land Use Patterns and Zoning The land use and zoning patterns have changed to the east of the property. Originally, the area directly to the east was single-family residential. Today the area is developed as County property. Massachusetts Street has remained commercial in use and zoning.

Circulation Patterns Street and sidewalk patterns have changed very little, but the paving materials have changed.

Primary Structures The most significant change is the removal of the residential structures to the east. Watkins Bank Building still stands as a dominant feature in the area.

Secondary Structures Overall, the number of secondary structures has been reduced and is limited mainly to the residential area to the east.

Outdoor Activity Spaces There is more green outdoor activity area space than was present during the period of significance.

Utilities and Mechanical Equipment The character of the utilities and mechanical equipment in the area is not obviously different than in the period of significance.

Views The differences in the views of the area have been caused by demolition of residential structures and changes to commercial structures along Massachusetts Street. The dominance of the clock tower of the Courthouse still remains in most of the views of the downtown area.

Time The amount of nighttime lighting has increased over time. The time when people were leaving and returning from work may have been characterized by more pedestrians and fewer automobiles.

Weather While the weather patterns are generally similar to the historic period of significance, the advent of air conditioning has altered the way the residents may react to weather. Historically, people would have utilized open windows and porches to react to the heat.

Sounds, Smells, Tastes The introduction of more traffic and higher density living has introduced more sounds and smells.

Imagination and Expectation The area is now totally associated with Downtown Lawrence.

Conclusion

The majority of the area has developed in commercial patterns. It is anticipated with downtown commercial zoning that this area will continue to develop with commercial uses. The Environs for 1100 Massachusetts Street, the Douglas County Courthouse, should be divided into two areas and reviewed in the following manner.

Area One

The proposed alteration or construction should meet the intent of the Criteria set forth in 22-505. Design elements that are important are scale, massing, site placement, height, directional expression, percentage of building coverage to site, setback, roof shapes, rhythm of openings and sense of entry. Maintaining views to the listed property and maintaining the rhythm and pattern in the environs are the primary focus of review. Views to the clock tower should be preserved.

Minor projects will be approved administratively by the Historic Resources Administrator. The proposed alteration or construction should meet the intent of the Criteria set forth in 22-505.

Major projects (demolition of main structures, new infill construction, significant additions, etc.) will be reviewed by the Historic Resources Commission. The proposed alteration or construction should meet the intent of the Criteria set forth in 22-505.

Area Two

This area is currently listed in the Lawrence Register of Historic Places and should be reviewed according to the environs definition for South Park.

75 37.5 0 75 150 225 300 Feet

1 inch = 156 feet

Environs for 1100 Massachusetts Street

