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**LAWRENCE HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION**  
**ITEM NO. 3: L-2-1-10**  
**STAFF REPORT**

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**A. SUMMARY**

**L-2-1-10:** Hold public hearing for consideration of placing the structure located at 645 Connecticut Street on the Lawrence Register of Historic Places.

**B. HISTORIC REGISTER STATUS**

645 Connecticut Street not listed on the State or the National Registers of Historic Places. The property is within the environs of the North Rhode Island Street Residential Historic District, National Register of Historic Places and the Otto Fisher House (621 Connecticut St.), Lawrence Register of Historic Places.

**C. REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS**

**1) History Summary**

According to the nomination and supporting documents, Andrew J. Griffin, an early Lawrence businessman, was born in East Milton, VA. In 1861, he enlisted in Company F. Thirty-fifth Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry and then served 3 years with "Baltimore Cook" brigade. He later re-enlisted in the Fifth United States Veteran Volunteers for one year. In 1867, he settled in Lawrence, Kansas and started a modest lime and stone business, adding coal, ice and cement as he enlarged his business. William G. Cutler's *History of the State of Kansas*, Douglas County, Part 19, states that Griffin was "operating two lime kilns with a capacity of 160 bushels daily" and a "stone quarry of heavy dimension stone (located 1 ½ miles from the city)...He has supplied fully three-fourths of the stone used in Lawrence since he established business." In 1892, Griffin paid off disgruntled laborers of the Polar Ice Company and incorporated with J.D. Bowersock, President and J.K. Rankin, manager to establish the Griffin Ice Company that was 15,000 square feet located on North Vermont Street. Griffin and his partners slowly bought the other ice businesses in the city capitalizing on the control of supply and demand for the city and by 1902 had successfully established a monopoly owning every ice house in the city. Griffin purchased a Hercules ice-making machine in 1894. After the 1903 flood the plant was moved to 616 Vermont Street (razed 1994). By 1909, the company was again making 50 tons of artificial ice with two plants and 20 employees.

A.J. Griffin was a member of the City Council representing the fourth ward in 1893 (Lawrence Weekly Journal, Thursday, September 28, 1893) and was known for his high but fair standards and his life principals and ideals. "In his death Lawrence has lost a man hard to spare but whose record will be an inspiration to the people of the city." (Lawrence Daily Journal-World, Monday, Aug. 12, 1907 p.1-2).

## 2) Architectural Integrity Summary

Constructed in 1902, the Andrew J. Griffin House at 645 Connecticut Street is significant because of its architecture. With circular and angular lines, the structure is unique to its surrounding neighborhood. Its location on a corner lot, several feet above street level, at a busy intersection makes the house a prominent structure. It is one of a relatively few hard (vitrified) brick structures built in Lawrence's original town site. It is built with Lola vitrified brick which Griffin's company produced. The house is a symbol of Griffin's character as a hard-working self-made businessman that preferred to live on the 'working-class' side of town in a structure that was reflective of his success.

This 1-1/2 story, Victorian house has high architectural integrity and represents Queen Anne residential architecture. Its elevated site, diagonal orientation and entry to the street, gables and dormers, modified octagonal porch and tower, and copious mix of architectural expressions, fine materials, and articulated building elements accentuate the desired complexity of the exterior. The interior spatial arrangement of double parlors and dining room focuses on a grand parlor staircase, original woodwork, fireplaces, built-ins, paneled pocket doors, brass hardware, colored glass, tiles, pressed metal ceiling and light fixtures.



The original house constructed at 645 Connecticut Street is a sound and solid irregular shaped structure, built of Lola vitrified brick in ca. 1902 for approx. \$4,000 (Lawrence Daily Journal, January 1, 1902). The house has a limestone foundation, roughhewn bricks along the bottom few courses, stone lintels, a wooden porch and trim. The exterior of the house features an angular semi-circular

front porch with a porch swing. Two brick archways adorn the eastern wall, one encasing a stained glass window, and the other framing is a carved or cast design. The house has a complex roofline, with six gables and a round shaped turret.

The property line is marked by semicircular stone steps at the southeast corner of 7<sup>th</sup> and Connecticut streets. The steps are flanked by original sculpted stone posts which lead to the front yard and the porch steps.

The original house contains an entry way, living room, formal dining room with atrium, two parlors, a kitchen, a pantry, a bathroom, four bedrooms and an additional bedroom which was converted into a bathroom. The house retains its original woodwork throughout, most of which remains unpainted. There are two large sliding pocket interior doors, three heavy exterior doors with beveled glass and original hardware. Several original light fixtures remain, including two with four original painted globes each. Other features include a built-in china cabinet, original five-panel doors with original hardware throughout the house, original tin ceilings, beaded-board wainscoting in the kitchen and downstairs bath, hardwood floors throughout, a gas fireplace with tiled hearth and wooden mantle in the living room, a fluted pedestal sink in the downstairs bath, transoms above the bedroom doors, and original double hung windows.

A major change to the original structure occurred in the early 1960s when a frame addition was built onto the rear of the home. The original brick walls remain intact. Other changes include the replacement of wooden roof shingles with asphalt shingles, the covering of hardwood floors with linoleum in the dining room and upstairs hall, and the covering of beaded-board wainscoting with plastic tile. The structure maintains integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship to make it worthy of preservation.

The house is prominently featured in the 1913 Souvenir Magazine supplement to the Lawrence Daily Journal-World. The enclosed photograph from that publication shows how little the house has changed over the last 100 years. The 1898 Souvenir supplement lists Mrs. Griffin as a member of the Ingleside Club, a women's society which still exists today.



There is one outbuilding that is a contributing structure. It is in moderate condition and serves as storage/garage. The yard surrounding the property has rose bushes, rose of Sharon bushes, maple trees and a ginkgo tree.

### **3) Context Description**

645 Connecticut Street is a good example of the housing that was constructed in Lawrence during the "Agricultural and Manufacturing" (1874-1899) and the "Quiet University Town (1900-1945)" context as defined by the Historic Resources of Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF). This MPDF notes that prospects in east Lawrence were negatively impacted around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century due to the removal of the Leavenworth, Lawrence, and Galveston Railroad bridge and the closing of the Barb Wire manufacturing plant. The loss of jobs in manufacturing enterprises located on the Kansas River contributed to the neighborhood's decline. This house is a unique structure in the context of its current neighborhood as it was built by a successful industrialist in a working-class neighborhood.

The area surrounding 645 Connecticut Street (lot 17 & 19 Connecticut) was included in Holland Wheeler's original town site of Lawrence in 1858. Connecticut Street ends at the north end of the 700 block. The Wheeler map plated this area as "Levee." Today the 'levee' area north of the train track is a parking lot for 1 Riverfront Plaza and is separated by a natural tree line. The residential neighborhood that is to the south and east of the property is characterized by vernacular turn of the century working class homes with the exception of 319 E 7<sup>th</sup> which is another Queen Anne style home built by S.W. Sawyer, a wealthy and successful lumber merchant. The other four properties along the 700 block of Connecticut are also larger than most single-family homes in the neighborhood. Across the street, immediately east, of this home is a mid-century commercial building that housed the Coca-Cola bottling company (646 Connecticut). Behind the nominated property to the west are single-family homes built during the turn of the century.

There are 21 Queen Anne style houses in the Historic East Lawrence Neighborhood. This type accounts for 2.6% of all the house types in Historic East Lawrence neighborhood survey area. This house is an exemplary structure because it retains its architectural integrity; it was constructed with the best materials and craftsmanship of the time and embodies the distinguishing characteristics of the Queen Anne style.

### **4) Planning and Zoning Considerations**

645 Connecticut Street is zoned RSO, Single-Dwelling Residential – Office District. The RSO Districts are designed to accommodate low to medium-intensity Administrative and Professional Offices that are compatible with the character of low and medium-Density residential neighborhoods. The District is also intended to be used as a transitional Zoning District between higher intensity commercial areas and residential neighborhoods. The District allows Detached Dwellings, Duplexes, Attached Dwellings and Administrative and Professional Offices uses, which may be combined in the same Structure.

At the time of construction and throughout the historic period of significance, the property was located in a residential area.

## **5) Fiscal Comments**

There are no monetary benefits directly associated with nomination of a structure to the Lawrence Register of Historic Places at this time. However, Chapter 22 of the Code of the City of Lawrence does identify mechanisms for financial incentives. If these programs become available in the future, structures listed on the Lawrence Register will be eligible for participation.

Listing on the local Register does help preserve built resources important to Lawrence's history and helps to maintain streetscapes in older neighborhoods through environs reviews.

The original information submitted with nominations for properties to the Lawrence Register is kept on file in the City Planning office for public review and consultation with regard to development projects within the notification area. This type of information is useful, for example, if present or future property owners seek nomination to the State or National Register of Historic Places.

## **6) Positive/Negative Effects of the Designation**

The positive effect of designation is the creation of a permanent record of the historical significance of an individual property, for its architectural quality or its association with a significant local individual or event. This provides the local Historic Resources Commission with pertinent historical data which can help to provide an 'historic' perspective to property owners when they desire to improve, add on, or redevelop a property within an older section of the City.

The public accessibility of this information is also a resource as it can be used by realtors, builders/developers, and others in the community prior to a property's resale, redevelopment or rehabilitation. In a more general sense, this information can be used by the Chamber of Commerce and existing businesses and industries to 'identify' one of the facets that makes up Lawrence's *Quality of Living*.

Additional effects of designation are the creation of an arbitrary, 250' environs notification and review area. Within this 250' circle, projects which require city permits, e.g., demolition, redevelopment, renovation or modification, require review by Historic Resources staff or the Commission. These environs reviews permit scrutiny of proposed development/redevelopment by individuals sensitive to historic preservation.

A *Certificate of Appropriateness* or a *Certificate of Economic Hardship* is required to be issued by the Historic Resources Commission before a City permit can be issued for the proposed project. If the Historic Resources Commission denies a *Certificate of Appropriateness* or a *Certificate of Economic Hardship*, the property owner can appeal to the City Commission for a new hearing. The City Commission can uphold the decision of the HRC or it can grant the proposed development over the Historic Resources Commission's action.

The local ordinance 250' environs review area is exceeded by State law with regard to State and/or National Register properties. Certificates of Appropriateness or Economic Hardship are required for a project within the 250' radius of a Local Register property.



Examples of projects which would require review and approval are: projects involving the exterior building which are considered 'structural' changes, demolitions or partial demolitions, rezonings, replats, site plans, variance requests or other items which require a city permit or are the direct result of an action of the City Commission. Minor changes which require a city permit can be administratively approved by the Historic Resources Administrator.

## **7) Summary of Applicable Designation Criteria**

Chapter 22, of the City Code is the *Conservation of Historic Resources Code* for the City of Lawrence. Section 22-403 of this code establishes criteria for the evaluation of an application for nomination to the Lawrence Register of Historic Places.

### **D. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION AND DESIGNATION - Section 22-403**

Nine criteria are provided within this section for review and determination of qualification as a Landmark or Historic District. These criteria are set forth below with staff's recommendations as to which this application qualifies for:

#### ***(1) Its character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the community, county, state, or nation;***

The East Lawrence neighborhood as identified in the context document Living in East Lawrence: An Essay for a Multiple Listings Nomination, encompasses approximately 50 city blocks east of Massachusetts Street to Oregon Street and from the Kansas River to 15<sup>th</sup> Street. This neighborhood and the structures located therein are valuable as part of the development of the City of Lawrence documenting residential land use from the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. The East Lawrence neighborhood followed local population, social, economic and architectural building patterns described in the MPDF *Historic Resources of Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas*. The vernacular architecture and the cohesive streetscapes of the neighborhood emphasize the commonalities of the diverse populations that settled in this area of Lawrence. While the structures in the neighborhood reflect the evolution of vernacular architecture and the incorporation of stylistic details over time, the relationship between the structures based on location, streetscape, building materials, workmanship, mass and scale create a distinct neighborhood identity that is of value to the study of the history of the City of Lawrence. The context describes the neighborhood as a "working class" neighborhood and the history of the people who lived in these vernacular structures is important to the understanding of the growth and development of the community as a whole.

#### ***(2) Its location as a site of a significant local, county, state, or national event;***

#### ***(3) Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the community, county, state, or nation;***

A.J. Griffin was an early Lawrence businessman and was most notable for his citizenship to the Lawrence Community. His vitrified brick company and stone quarry supplied the bricks and stones necessary to build many of Lawrence's structures and his ice company provided a much needed service to the community. A.J. Griffin managed ice and coal companies throughout Kansas. He was a business partner of J.D. Bowersock and served as alderman from the 4<sup>th</sup>

Ward while living in the house.

*(4) Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials;*

*(5) Its 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;*

***(6) Its embodiment of elements of design, detailing, materials, or craftsmanship that render it architecturally significant;***

This 1 ½ story Victorian house has high architectural integrity and represents Queen Anne residential architecture. Its elevated site, diagonal orientation and entry to the street, gables and dormers, modified octagonal porch and tower, and copious mix of architectural expressions, fine materials, and articulated building elements accentuate the complexity of the exterior. The home is constructed of vitrified brick from Mr. Griffin's company in Iola.

*(7) Its embodiment of design elements that make it structurally or architecturally innovative;*

*(8) Its unique location or singular physical characteristics that make it an established or familiar visual feature;*

*(9) Its character as a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian structure; including, but not limited to farmhouses, gas stations, or other commercial structures, with a high level of integrity or architectural significance.*

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The HISTORIC RESOURCES CODE establishes a procedure to follow in the forwarding of a recommendation to the City Commission on applications for listing on the local register.

*"Following the hearing the commission shall adopt by resolution a recommendation to be submitted to the city commission for either (a) designation as a landmark or historic district; (b) not to designate as a landmark or historic district; or, (c) not to make a recommendation. The resolution shall be accompanied by a report to the city commission containing the following information:*

The Historic Resources Commission needs to formulate its recommendation in response to the following subsections section 22-404.2 (b):

- (1) Explanation of the significance or lack of significance of the nominated landmark or historic district as it relates to the criteria for designation as set forth in section 22-403;*
- (2) Explanation of the integrity or lack of integrity of the nominated landmark or historic district;*
- (3) In the case of a nominated landmark found to meet the criteria for designation:*
  - (A) The significant exterior architectural features of the nominated landmark that should be protected; and,*
  - (B) The types of construction, alteration, demolition, and removal, other than those requiring a building or demolition permit, that cannot be undertaken without*

- obtaining a certificate of appropriateness.*
- (4) *In the case of a nominated historic district found to meet the criteria for designation:*
    - (A) *The types of significant exterior architectural features of the structures within the nominated historic district that should be protected;*
    - (B) *The types of construction, alteration, demolition, and removal, other than those requiring a building or demolition permit, that cannot be undertaken without obtaining a certificate of appropriateness.*
    - (C) *A list of all key contributing, contributing and noncontributing sites, structures and objects within the historic district.*
  - (5) *Proposed design guidelines for applying the criteria for review of certificates of appropriateness to the nominated landmark or historic district.*
  - (6) *The relationship of the nominated landmark or historic district to the on-going effort of the commission to identify and nominate all potential areas and structures that meet the criteria for designation.*
  - (7) *A map showing the location of the nominated landmark or the boundaries of the nominated historic district.*

#### **E. RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the A.J. Griffin Residence located at 645 Connecticut Street for designation as a Landmark on the Lawrence Register of Historic Places pursuant to Criteria #1, #3, and #6 as described in Section 22-403.

If the Historic Resources Commission recommends this property for local nomination, the Commission should adopt a resolution for recommendation to be submitted to the City Commission for designation as a landmark. In addition to the resolution, the Commission should direct staff to prepare a report to accompany the resolution including the information set forth in Section 22-404.2(1) - (7) and the environs definition.

Staff recommends the following for the report to the City Commission:

- (1) *Explanation of the significance or lack of significance of the nominated landmark or historic district as it relates to the criteria for designation as set forth in section 22-403;*

The house is architecturally significant because it is a good example of Queen Anne residential architecture and it was built and lived in by A.J. Griffin. Griffin served as alderman from the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward while living at the house.
- (2) *Explanation of the integrity or lack of integrity of the nominated landmark or historic district;*

The structure maintains significant integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship that make it worthy of preservation.
- (3) *In the case of a nominated landmark found to meet the criteria for designation:*
  - (A) *The significant exterior architectural features of the nominated landmark that should be protected; and,*

The stone, wood frame and leaded glass windows, vitrified brick, tower and porch should be protected.



- (B) *The types of construction, alteration, demolition, and removal, other than those requiring a building or demolition permit that cannot be undertaken without obtaining a certificate of appropriateness.*

Alterations to the windows and porch should require a Certificate of Appropriateness.

- (5) *Proposed design guidelines for applying the criteria for review of certificates of appropriateness to the nominated landmark or historic district.*

U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, published in 1990, and any future amendments, in addition to any criteria specified by Chapter 22 of the Code of the City of Lawrence, Kansas.

The HRC may also adopt ***An Analysis of the Environs for 645 Connecticut Street*** and delineate how environs review will be conducted in relation to the listed property. The analysis is attached with the delineation of environs areas.

- (6) *The relationship of the nominated landmark or historic district to the on-going effort of the commission to identify and nominate all potential areas and structures that meet the criteria for designation.*

A primary goal of the HRC is to build a Register of properties which show the diversity and growth of Lawrence since its inception. The nomination of this property is another step toward registering a wide variety of historic properties which together present a visual history of Lawrence's past. The goal of the Lawrence Register of Historic Places is to represent all socioeconomic strata; businesses and industries which illustrate the diversity that has been prevalent in Lawrence since its inception.

- (7) *A map showing the location of the nominated landmark.*

See attached

Environs Definition

See attached