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**LAWRENCE HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION**  
**ITEM NO. 9: L-2-28-10**  
**STAFF REPORT**

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**A. SUMMARY**

**L-2-28-10:** Hold public hearing for consideration of placing the structure located at 1002 Pennsylvania Street on the Lawrence Register of Historic Places.

**B. HISTORIC REGISTER STATUS**

1002 Pennsylvania Street is not listed on the State or the National Registers of Historic Places. The property is in the environs of Hobbs Park (702 E 11<sup>th</sup>), Lawrence Register of Historic Places.

**C. REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS**

**1) History Summary**

Albert B. Sirpless was an engineer who worked at the J.N. McFarland & Son Planing Mill three blocks east of his house at the AT&SF railroad track. McFarland came to Lawrence in 1863 and started his mill in 1887 with about 20 men and all new machinery. He did a large business in the manufacture of doors, sashes, blinds, mouldings, brackets, frames, wood turning, scroll sawing, and stair work which adorned many houses in the city. McFarland furnished estimates for all kinds of mill work and his mill operated as a subcontractor for builders, designing and manufacturing with precision woodwork of any hardwood finish, solid or veneered doors, furniture, mantles, sideboards, casings, blocks, and baseboards. The mill undertook large jobs, such as Snow Hall and Bailey Hall at the University of Kansas. Sirpless lived in this home for approximately 50 years and was known for hosting "an annual Fourth of July affair which is always very pleasant occasion" (Lawrence Daily World, July 6, 1907; and 1926). This home was also used to host the funerals for both Emmet Leslie Sirpless (son) in 1893 and Albert. B. Sirpless in 1939.

**2) Architectural Integrity Summary**

This circa 1890 two story T-house with kitchen ell and large hipped roof with wide eaves is sited high on a corner lot which helps create its imposing architectural presence. The house retains its architectural integrity with boxed balloon frame of large size 2" by 4"s covered with clapboard siding. The original doors and window sash have thin proportions which give the house a sparse Victorian character. The interior presents exceptional and original details, especially the varied and elaborate



styles of head blocks, casings, and baseboards in the stair entry hall, the parlor, and the living room which make the house exceptional in East Lawrence. The hearth surround has unique sunflower head block details.

The house has gone mostly unchanged since it was constructed. The 1-story enclosed porch located at the southeast rear of the home was added in ca. 1920 and has recently been remodeled and updated on the inside.



Sirpless used his own house to experiment and create his own mill work designs that eventually would end up, in rare instances, throughout early Lawrence homes. The most notable is the sunflower carvings around the hearth and the altered wood trim in the front parlor.

*Sunflower block on hearth in the back parlor/living room.*



*customized wood trim around windows with alteration of chamfered edges with notching and embellished bullet blocks.*



*Typical trim that is unaltered also found in the front parlor of 1002 Pennsylvania.*



1"x8" boxing exposed in the kitchen during survey

Exposed window weight system

The nominated property also has a secondary structure located along the southeast property line near the alley which contributes to the environs of the property. The secondary structure is a 1-story gable end wood frame structure with wood clapboard siding and wood windows. The siding along the west elevation has been replaced with vertical wood planks but retains its original wood door and openings.





### **3) Context Description**

The Albert & Sarah Sirpless House is an example of L-house type with suggestions of Neo-Classical and Greek Revival architectural styling that was constructed during the historic context associated with the development of Lawrence--the Agricultural and Manufacturing Period (1874-1899), as defined by the Historic Resources of Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF).

The area surrounding the property is a mix of residential and open space zoning and uses. The residential properties surrounding the nominated property are zoned RS5, Single-Dwelling Residential. Hobbs Park is located to the east of the property which is zoned OS, Open Space.

The nominated property is in the environs of Hobbs Park (702 E 11<sup>th</sup>), Lawrence Register of Historic Places.

This property represents the housing and land use patterns during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century which followed local population, social, economic and economic trends. This property expresses the traditional building practices found during the "Agriculture and Manufacturing" period of Lawrence.

This structure is a 2-story T-house type with an Ell kitchen and stair hall entry. The L-house and T-house types combined represent 10.8% of the houses in East Lawrence (6<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> Streets and New Hampshire to Oregon Streets). Of the 44 houses surveyed, this is one of three T-house house types submitted to the Lawrence Register of Historic Places for nomination. This structure is the only T-house with an ell kitchen addition.

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

1002 Pennsylvania Street is zoned RS5, Single-Dwelling Residential District. The RS Districts are designed to accommodate predominantly single detached dwelling units on individual lots. The Districts are intended to create, maintain and promote housing opportunities for individual households, although they do permit nonresidential uses that are compatible with residential neighborhoods. The minimum lot size for RS5, Single-Dwelling District is 5,000 square feet.

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, an advisory board, 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;***

Sirpless was an engineer and contractor for McFarland & Son's planing mill which supplied the building materials and construction management to construct numerous local structures.

***(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;***

- (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 Albert & Sarah Sirpless House located at 1002 Pennsylvania Street for designation as a Landmark on the Lawrence Register of Historic Places pursuant to Criteria #1 and #3 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 the L-house type and was constructed by Albert Sirpless. Sirpless was an engineer and contractor who worked for McFarland & Son's Planing Mill.
- (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 wood windows, siding, and front 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, front porch and siding 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 1002 Pennsylvania 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



Beers Atlas 1873

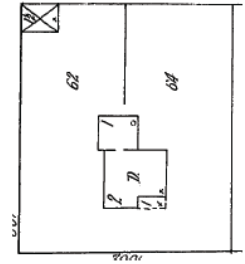
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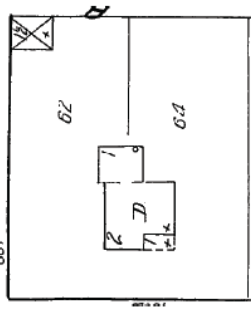
Sanborn 1883

Sanborn 1889

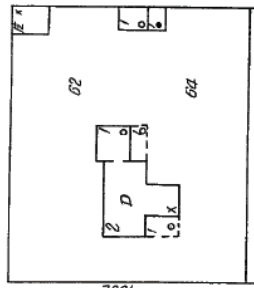
Sanborn 1897



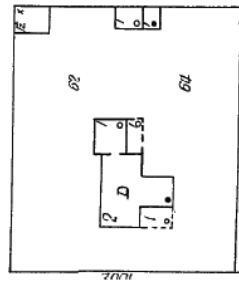
Sanborn 1912



Sanborn 1918



Sanborn 1927



Sanborn 1949



DBK 2008

1002 pennsylvania  
lot 62 & 64

## Change Over Time

East Lawrence Neighborhood Association