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**LAWRENCE HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION**  
**ITEM NO. 4: L-2-4-10**  
**STAFF REPORT**

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**A. SUMMARY**

**L-2-4-10** Hold public hearing for consideration of placing the structure located at 742 Connecticut Street on the Lawrence Register of Historic Places.

**B. HISTORIC REGISTER STATUS**

742 Connecticut Street is not listed on the State or the National Registers of Historic Places. The property is in the environs of the North Rhode Island Street Historic Residential District, National Register of Historic Places.

**C. REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS**

**1) History Summary**

R.W. Sparr came to Lawrence in 1859, established a brick manufacturing company that lasted until 1867, and was responsible for producing most of the brick that was used to build early Lawrence. A *Tribune* reporter paid a visit to this brick works in 1866 and was surprised by the perfection and rapidity of Sparr's brick making. "Saw two men mold 2,004 bricks in 30 minutes, which in a day of 10 hours, would be 41,280." The reporter went on to say that "Mr. Sparr has sold near half million of this brick this summer, fully as many as he had sold last year up to this time, though at about half the profit." Sparr closed his brick company in 1867 and became a grading contractor for the Santa Fe Railroad throughout the state. In 1881 he received the contract to grade the 20-mile railroad bed from Lyons to Ellinwood. His company owned 54 head of mules and 125 scrapers which employed 150 teams. He completed the work in 60 days. In 1899, the *Portrait and Biographical Record of Kansas* stated, "It would be impossible to write a complete history of Lawrence and omit mention of Mr. Sparr...His long life of usefulness and industry has had a direct bearing upon the progress of his city, and his voice has been heard, directly or indirectly, upon many of the questions affecting the administration of local and national affairs." At the time of his death in 1902, Mr. Sparr was the Vice-President and manager of Lawrence National Bank.

**2) Architectural Integrity Summary**

The original brick core of this 1-story cottage was built ca. 1865. The core is a standard two-room portion of the two-over-two house with a stair entry hall and leads to the basement kitchen and cellar, which was typical layout for this house type in Lawrence during the 1860s. Because of its small size, the framed additions expanded the house very early (ca. 1889) and changes continued to be made into the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in response to changing needs. Ironically, this starter house that R.W. Sparr built from his own brick survived while his great house located at 1411 Tennessee did not. While the old core of this house, established by 1889, has good integrity, the



overall architectural integrity of the structure is average.

The core of the home retains high architectural integrity with original locally made soft brick walls, limestone foundation, original wood trim, floor, detailing, plastered walls and hardware. The early additions retain architectural integrity in the wood detailing and numerous built-ins found in the hallways and bedroom areas. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century stucco was applied to the brick structure while the additions retain wood lap siding.

According to the Sanborn maps the dwelling has had minor alterations; the first occurred prior to 1889 and the second occurred between 1912-1918. The first alteration added two rooms to the northern portion of the home. The second alteration added two bedrooms, a bathroom and an enclosed porch to the rear of the home. This addition is differentiated by its projection along the north elevation and setback along the east elevation.

The original 1-story gable-front brick dwelling that was built ca.1865 and is exemplary of Greek Revival homes built during the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in America and in Lawrence during the same period. The property was owned by R.W. Sparr, one of the city's leading brick manufactures and prominent business, who used brick from his local brick manufacturing plant to construct the dwelling at 742 Connecticut. The limestone foundation was also queried from native stone found in the region. The core plan is a standard two-room plan of the two-over-two house with a stair entry hall; the stair leading to the basement kitchen and cellar was a typical layout for this house type in Lawrence during the 1860s.

This gable-front house type is associated with the Greek Revival movement which dominated American homes during the period from approximately 1830-1850. The gable-front was particularly common in the northeast regions of America where simple gable-front folk houses also became popular during the pre-railroad era. The gable-front house type quickly made its way across the states and became a dominate Folk National subtype when it was built in numbers with the spread of the railroad. The popularity of this house type is also attributed to it being well suited for narrow urban lots, especially in rapidly expanding cities. The gable-front house continued to be a prolific house type well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century as its styling evolved and its form became identified with the Craftsman movement.

The primary (west) façade has a high pitched gable front roof with a lean-to side addition and a front porch with a very low pitched hipped roof that spans the original core of the house. The porch is a modification to the home. Square fluted columns with three square fluted elephantine plinths are covered with stucco and wood railings that are characteristic of bungalows during the Craftsman movement support the porch. The 5-panel front door with a textured single light and period hardware as well as the one-over-one double hung wood sash windows appear to be original to the structure.

The south elevation is flush with symmetrically aligned windows and stucco over brick siding except for the bedroom addition toward the rear which retains its wood lap siding. The north elevation is similar however the most recent bedroom and bathroom addition projects outward from the early shed addition.

The east elevation shows the raised concrete over limestone foundation and the fenestration pattern reflects the interior spatial arrangements with a paired one-over-one double hung wood sash bedroom window next to a smaller single one-over-one double hung wood sash bathroom window. A 1-story raised enclosed porch resting on concrete blocks projects to the east. Wood paneling and series of 6-light wood casement windows encloses the porch. The cellar door is attached to concrete over limestone walls and limestone steps which lead to the full basement.



The secondary structure, located on the northeast corner of the lot adjacent to the graveled parking area, has a low pitched hipped roof and retains its original wood windows, doors and flooring. According to the Sanborn maps this structure was added ca.1905-1912. The secondary structure has wood lap siding on the east elevation and half of the south elevation. The west and north elevations are covered with either cementitious siding and/or stucco. The south elevation has a pair of double folding three-panel, four-light wood doors.

### 3) Context Description

742 Connecticut Street is a good example of the housing that was constructed in Lawrence during the "City Building (1864-1873)" context as defined by the Historic Resources of Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF). This MPDF notes that during the brief period from 1864 to 1873, many modest wood-frame houses were built in east and north Lawrence for workers on the railroad and in associated manufacturing, agricultural processing, and business enterprises.

The area surrounding the property is a mix of residential and commercial zoning and uses. The properties to the north along 7<sup>th</sup> Street are zoned CS-Commercial Strip and the residential properties are RM24-Multi Dwelling Residential District. The property to the east is zoned RM24. The property to the south is zoned RM24 - Multi Dwelling Residential District with the exception of 313 E 8<sup>th</sup> which is zoned CN1 - Inner Neighborhood Commercial District with the condition that financial, insurance, and Real Estate services shall not be permitted.

The nominated property is in the environs of North Rhode Island Street Historic Residential District (2004), National 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 "Settlement Period" and "Agriculture and Manufacturing" period of Lawrence.

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

742 Connecticut Street is zoned RM24, Multi-Dwelling Residential District. The RM Districts are designed to accommodate multi-Dwelling housing. The Districts are intended to create, maintain and promote higher density housing opportunities in areas with good transportation Access. On the basis of maximum allowed Net Density, the RM24, Multi-Dwelling District allows 24 Dwelling Units per acre.

#### **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;*

R.W. Sparr came to Lawrence in 1859, established a brick manufacturing company that lasted until 1867, and was responsible for producing most of the brick that was used to build early Lawrence.

*(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 R.W. Sparr House located at 742 Connecticut 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;*  
742 Connecticut is significant for its vernacular architecture and for its association with R.W. Sparr.



- (2) *Explanation of the integrity or lack of integrity of the nominated landmark or historic district;*

This structure is a 1-story cottage with craftsman influenced alterations. The 1-story house type accounts for 14.9% of the East Lawrence house types. Of the 44 houses surveyed, this is the only 1-story house type submitted for nomination. The structure is in fair condition but maintains 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 and siding

- (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 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 742 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.


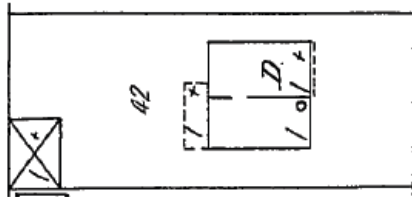
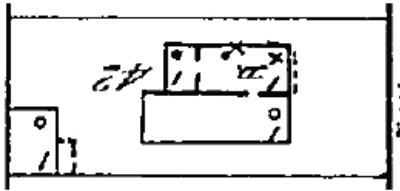
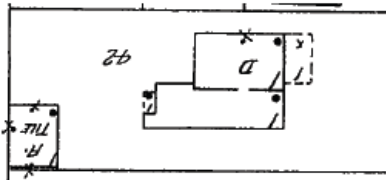
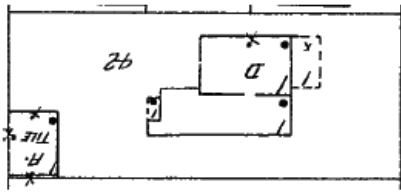

- (7) *A map showing the location of the nominated landmark.*

See attached

Environs Definition

See attached



	Beers Atlas 1873		Sanborn 1912		Sanborn 1918		Sanborn 1927		Sanborn 1949		DBK 2008
742 Connecticut		Change Over Time					East Lawrence Neighborhood Association				