
LAWRENCE HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION

ITEM NO. 5: L-2-6-10

STAFF REPORT

A. SUMMARY

L-2-6-10: Hold public hearing for consideration of placing the structure located at 1004 Connecticut Street on the Lawrence Register of Historic Places.

B. HISTORIC REGISTER STATUS

1004 Connecticut Street is not listed on the State or the National Registers of Historic Places. The property is within the environs of the North Rhode Island Historic District, National Register of Historic Places and the Shalor Eldridge Residence (945 Rhode Island), Register of Historic Kansas Places.

C. REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS

1) History Summary

Along with German, Scots-Irish, English, and Africans, Swedish immigrants also came to Lawrence. August Wahl was born in Sweden in 1849 and in 1873 he married Louisa Drag with whom he had four children. In 1882 he brought his family to America, Illinois, and Lawrence. August Wahl was a stone mason, a profession he practiced for 18 years. About 1900 he took a laborer's job with Barteldes & Co. As was often the case in the early 20th century, the Wahl's house was also home to their extended family, including Hilda Wahl who was a waitress and Mamie Wahl who was the head waiter at the Eldridge House and Minnie Wahl who was a cutter for Wilder Brothers. The Wahl's son, Joe, was one of the two Lawrencians killed in the Spanish American War in the Philippines. After August's death in 1917, Louisa sold the house to Nelson Piper who worked for Boring & Co and Wiley Brothers, both grocery stores.

2) Architectural Integrity Summary

Less than 5% of the ELNA neighborhood houses have side-entries like the one August Wahl built in 1899, replacing the older 1-story house on his lot. Wahl built a gabled front 2-over-2 home in 1899. Between 1912 – 1918 an Ell was added to make this home into an L-shaped house with a cross-gabled roof. The core of the home retains very good integrity with full balloon frame construction, the original clapboard siding that is conserved under the 1961 wavy asbestos siding, original 2-over-2 double hung wood windows throughout, and a wrap-around porch with classical details, open cornice with exposed rafter tails and single board fascia with rounded finish.



The west elevation is symmetrically aligned with a single 2-over-2 double hung wood windows on the second story which is centered between a paired set of 2-over-2 double hung wood windows. The roof is a high-pitched cross gable with the gable front offset to the left. The side-gable wing addition projects to the south. The wrap around shed roof porch spans 20'-1" across the front and returns east 11'-9" ending at the side-entry door that was added ca. 1927 according to the Sanborn maps. The porch has a shed roof, exposed rafter tails, 8" x 8" beams and is supported by 5 fluted square wood posts that are 12" at the base with minimalistic squared Doric capital. The wood balustrade has 2"x2" square spandrels with 2"x4" rails.



The south elevation is divided into 3 bays which each represent the structures accretion process. The key element on the south elevation is a boxed triple-bay window with two 2-over-1 and one 4-over-1 double hung wood windows and hood, exposed rafter tails and a bench seat on the interior. The original section of the house (recessed south elevation) is symmetrical with single two-over-two vertical double hung wood sash windows that are vertically centered. The wing addition is asymmetrical on the first floor but balanced with a symmetrical upper story. The first story includes a divided 4-light square casement wood window off set to the right by the boxed bay-window with a window hood finished with exposed rafters with rounded finished ends, asphalt shingles, and asbestos tile skirt added to the home. According to the current homeowners the boxed bay window was added sometime after

ca. 1949. The south elevation of the 1-story shed roof rear addition projects slightly to the south and visible is a 2-over-1 double hung wood window with an aluminum storm.



The north elevation is two stories with tripartite asymmetrically arranged windows that are vertically aligned. The eastern third consists of a two-over-one double hung wood window above a smaller one-over-one double hung wood sash window. The center bay consists of a single double-hung wood window on the second story that is smaller than the other windows on this elevation. The western bay is symmetrical with a pair of two-over-one double hung wood sash windows aligned vertically.

The side-entry main door opens into a vestibule ornamented with original classical wood detailing around the transverse stair and arched passageways that are embellished with engaged pillars opening into the parlor and dining room. The original wood detailing retained includes 2" tongue & groove oak floors, millwork throughout including 5 1/2" wood casings with square 'bulls-eye' corner blocks, 10" baseboards with quarter round trim, plastered walls, paneled doors and alcove detailing.

In 1961 the shed roof 1-story office addition was constructed and the asbestos siding was applied.

The secondary structure on this property is located along the southeast property line. The structure is a 1-story high-pitched side gable barn that has been converted into storage space. The rolling wood barn door on the north elevation is still operable. The small 1-over-1 window has been replaced.



3) Context Description

The August Wahl House is an example of middle-upper working class housing and vernacular architecture 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 zoned RS5, Single-Dwelling Residential District.

The nominated property is in the environs of the North Rhode Island Street Historic Residential District, National Register of Historic Places and the Shalor Eldridge Residence (945 Rhode Island), Register of Historic Kansas 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

1004 Connecticut 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 in the 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 15th 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;

(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.

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 August Wahl House located at 1004 Connecticut Street for designation as a Landmark on the Lawrence Register of Historic Places pursuant to Criteria #1, 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;*
1004 Connecticut is significant for its vernacular architecture.
- (2) *Explanation of the integrity or lack of integrity of the nominated landmark or historic district;*
This structure is a side entry stair hall house. The side entry accounts for 4.1% of the homes in East Lawrence (6th-15th Streets and New Hampshire to Oregon Streets). The home retains its original materials, mass and form.
- (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, porch and wood detailing
 - (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, 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 1004 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 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