

Analysis of Environs of 900 New York Street, Saint Luke African Methodist Episcopal Church

Step One

Historical Significance and Context

According to the application for Historic Landmark Designation, the property was constructed in 1910. The property is being nominated to the Lawrence Register of Historic Places under local criteria one and six. Local criteria one is a properties character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the community, county, state, or nation. Local criteria six is a building's embodiment of elements of design, detailing, materials, or craftsmanship that render it architecturally significant. 900 New York Street is a good example of a Gothic Revival religious building built in the Quiet University Town 1900-1945 period as identified in Historic Resources of Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas MPDF.

The importance of this structure's visual and physical characteristics influences the environs definition process. The association with the development of African-American social patterns and cultural history is on-going influences the environs definition process because of the continual use of the structure as a landmark in the neighborhood. The structure's architectural significance is important in the environs definition process because it is good example of a religious building and the Gothic Revival style of architecture. The structure maintains a significant amount of architectural integrity.

Because criterion one is based on long term development and cultural characteristics of the community and because criterion six is based on architectural elements, there is no specific period of significance for this property.

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 900 New York Street was platted into typical original townsite lots of 50 ft by 117 feet. While individual property

owners changed over time, the traditional pattern of multiple property owners within the environs has remained constant. The property to the south is platted into residential lots and the 1889 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps show residential development on these lots. New York School was located toward the north end of the east side of the 900 block. By 1927 some of the residential structures had been removed and by 1949 all of the residential structures on the east side of the 900 block of New York have been removed.

Land Use Patterns and Zoning Land use on in the surrounding area during the period of significance was primarily single family residential. Downtown Lawrence was not in the immediate environs of the property but within close proximity. As zoning ordinances were enacted, the area retained residential zoning but became designated for higher density. As commercial nodes developed along 9th Street, commercial zoning was established along this corridor –extending to residential properties adjacent to the commercial properties.

Circulation Patterns The streets in the area reflect the traditional grid pattern of the original town site. The brick-paved streets typically had stone curbs. Garages were located on the rear of the lot lines and accessed from the alley. Sidewalks were typically constructed of brick, with a few areas of stone slab paving.

Planned Vegetation Patterns The planned vegetation patterns were lawns around houses, schools and religious buildings. Street trees were common before the 1920s. Residential areas had flower beds, kitchen gardens, trees, shrubs, etc. The area also contained large open areas that may have been landscaped for recreational uses however there is little documentation on these landscape features.

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 and to adjust for grade level changes.

Primary Structures The primary structures in the environs of the property were primarily single-family residences. The majority of structures were oriented toward the state-named streets. The structures are primarily 1 ½ and 2 stories in height and constructed of wood or masonry materials. Various styles were represented in the area.

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 There were no public parks in the immediate area. A number of residences had enough land to provide outdoor activity spaces on private grounds.

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

Views The views to the listed property were typical of urban lots. Properties were visible through the small breaks between residential structures. With the removal of the residential structures in the 900 block of New York prior to 1949, the views to and from the subject property changed significantly.

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 New York Street still reflect the 50 ft by 117 ft original townsite lots under multiple ownerships. The exception is the large consolidated property for New York Elementary School.

Land Use Patterns and Zoning Land use on in the surrounding area is still predominantly residential with the exception of New York Elementary School to the north. The 9th street and 11th Street corridors have some commercial uses.

The Zoning in the area is primarily single and multi-family districts. New York Elementary School is zoned GPI- General Public and Institutional district. The larger area contains some commercial zoning in CS and CN2 districts.

Circulation Patterns The circulation patterns have not changed. Access to the properties is still primarily from the State-named street and alleyways. Some limestone curbs are still in existence. A portion of New York Street was recently restored to a brick street although many of the brick streets in the neighborhood have either been surfaced with asphalt or completely removed. The sidewalks in the area contain a mixture of brick and concrete.

Planned Vegetation Patterns The planned vegetation patterns are lawns, trees, shrubs, flower beds are common. The area includes large street trees lining the streets, foundation plantings. Landscaped areas, particularly in the rear yard, have been partially replaced with parking areas to accommodate the increased number of automobiles.

Signs and Pedestrian amenities The signs within the area are almost entirely street names and traffic control signs. Some hitching posts and stone steps are still in place on a few of the streets.

Primary Structures The primary structures south, west and east of the subject property are generally the same as were present during the period of significance. There have been a few modern residential buildings interjected into the area. The greatest change has been the evolution of New York Elementary School.

Secondary Structures Some of the secondary structures associated with the residential uses remain. The number of secondary structures has been reduced to provide for additional parking areas. Most of the front yard fences have been removed. New rear yard privacy fences have been constructed.

Outdoor Activity Spaces There is now a public park – Hobbs Park-- in the immediate area. In addition, the outdoor areas of New York Elementary School create outdoor activity spaces for the students attending school. The amount of private green outdoor activity space has been reduced. There are numerous private patios, and several decks at the rear of the residences.

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 Views to and from the subject property have changed significantly from the south. The removal of residential structures along New York and New Jersey for New York Elementary School has opened up the view of to and from the subject property and created a large open space to the north.

Time Time of the day has an impact on the perception of the subject property. 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 residential areas. There are no unusual or distinct sounds, smells, or tastes that characterize the residential area.

Imagination and Expectation The area surrounding the subject property is considered part of the East Lawrence Neighborhood and is a historic residential area between the commercial uses of downtown and some industrial uses to the east.

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 not changed. The ownership patterns in the area have changed. There is the consolidation of parcels in the 900 block for New York Elementary School. The structures are less owner-occupied than they were historically, however this trend may be reversing.

Land Use Patterns and Zoning The land uses have not significantly changed since the construction of the church. Zoning designations have changed over the years to accommodate anticipated changes in the area. The current zoning patterns are somewhat consistent with the existing uses. Some of the commercial zoning – particularly the CS district does encroach into the residential neighborhood.

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

Primary Structures The most significant change is the removal of the residential structures along east side of New York Street and on the west side of New Jersey Street in the 900 block.

The majority of the structures in the area retain many of their original features. A few modern structures have been constructed in the area which do not maintain the historic character of the residential dwellings.

Secondary Structures Overall, the number of secondary structures has been reduced. Some secondary structures have been replaced with new structures. New rear yard decks and patio areas have been constructed. The introduction of rear yard privacy fences is common in the area.

Outdoor Activity Spaces With the addition of Hobbs Park and the clearing of residential structures in the 900 block of New York/New Jersey, there is more green outdoor activity area space than was present during the historic period.

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

Views The differences in the views of the area have been caused by demolition of residential structures.

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, 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 and in the evenings would have slept on sleeping porches if they were available.

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

Imagination and Expectation The image of the area is considerably different than the historic period. Historically, the area was considered to be one of the main neighborhoods in Lawrence. Today the area is considered part of the urban core and more associated with downtown than it was historically.

Conclusion

The Environs for 900 New York Street, Saint Luke AME Church, should be reviewed in the following manner. The Environs should be divided into three areas (see attached map) and the following standards applied to each of the areas:

Area 1: (BLUE) Maintaining the residential character, existing historic structures and visual appearance of the environs is the primary focus of review. Main structure demolitions of historic structures would be approved only if documentation was provided that indicated that the structure was unsound and/or a certificate of economic hardship was approved.

Minor projects including minor additions, porch remodeling, window and door changes, demolition of outbuildings, etc., will be approved administratively by the Historic Resources Administrator. All design elements are important. The proposed alteration or construction should meet the intent of the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and the Criteria set forth in 22-505.

Major projects including all primary structure demolitions, major additions (greater than 20% of the existing footprint), new infill construction, major alterations, etc., would be reviewed by the Historic Resources Commission. All design elements are important. The proposed alteration or construction should meet the intent of the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and the Criteria set forth in 22-505.

Area 2: (Green) Because the area no longer reflects the residential character of the historic environs, the area should reflect the development pattern established for New York Elementary School. 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. Demolition of properties shall be approved if a compatible structure is proposed on the site. Maintaining views to the listed property and maintaining the rhythm and pattern in the environs are the primary focus of review.

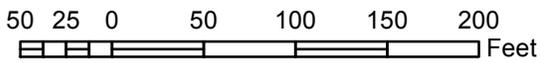
All projects except new construction, demolition and building additions will be reviewed and approved administratively by the Historic Resources Administrator if the proposed project meets the intent of the Criteria set forth in 22-505.

Major projects including demolition of main structures, new infill construction, and significant additions 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 3: (Red) This area reflects a commercial uses and zoning and should reflect the development pattern established for this commercial node. 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. Demolition of properties shall be approved if a compatible structure is proposed on the site.

All projects except new construction, demolition and building additions will be reviewed and approved administratively by the Historic Resources Administrator if the proposed project meets the intent of the Criteria set forth in 22-505.

Major projects including demolition of main structures, new infill construction, and significant additions 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.



1 inch = 104 feet

