
LAWRENCE HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION
ITEM NO. 4: L-14-00562
STAFF REPORT

A. SUMMARY

L-14-00562 Public hearing for consideration of placing the structure located at 900 New York Street on the Lawrence Register of Historic Places.

B. HISTORIC REGISTER STATUS

900 New York Street is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and the Register of Historic Kansas Places.

C. REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS

1) History Summary

See National Register Nomination Section 8.

2) Architectural Integrity Summary

See National Register Nomination Section 7. The structure maintains integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship to make it worthy of preservation.

3) Context Description

The structure located at 900 New York Street, Saint Luke African Methodist Episcopal Church is representative of the Gothic Revival Ecclesiastical style of architecture. St. Luke was constructed in 1910 during the Quiet University Town 1900-1945 period as defined by the Historic Resources of Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF).

The church is sited on a small residential scale lot of approximately 5850 sf. Due to the size of the lot and the size of the structure, setbacks on all four sides of the structure are minimal with the largest setback being the front or west setback of approximately 14 feet. To the south is New York Elementary School. The remaining of the surrounding area is a mix of residential and commercial uses. With the exception of the commercial uses (mainly along 9th Street), most of the lots are 50' X 117' and were platted with the Original Townsite.

4) Planning and Zoning Considerations

900 New York Street is zoned RS7, Single Dwelling Residential District. The primary purpose of the RS7 District is to accommodate predominantly single detached dwelling units on individual lots. The district is intended to create, maintain and promote housing opportunities for individual households. The district does permit nonresidential uses that are compatible with residential neighborhoods. The current use of the property is Religious Assembly-Neighborhood Institution. A neighborhood church – neighborhood institution – is an allowed use in the district if it meets the standards in the Development Code identified in 20-522.

The area surrounding 900 New York Street is a mix of zoning and uses. To the north and west is zoned CS – Commercial Strip District. Directly to the south and east is New York Elementary School which is zoned GPI - General Public and Institutional Use District. The uses in the area are residential, school, office, and commercial.

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.

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. 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. 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 Saint Luke AME Church is significant for its association with the development of African-American social patterns and cultural history.

(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;

Saint Luke AME Church retains a high degree of integrity and is an example of the Gothic Revival style of architecture. The brick structure twin towers are separated by a steep gabled roof and each tower has modest Gothic detailing.

(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 Saint Luke African Methodist Episcopal Church located at 900 New York Street for

designation as a Landmark on the Lawrence Register of Historic Places pursuant to Criteria #1 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;*

Saint Luke AME church is significant for its value as part of the development, heritage and cultural development of the community, including its association with Langston Hughes, and its Gothic Revival architecture.

- (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 windows including the stain glass windows, window surrounds including the keystones and lintels, towers including the crenellations, brick masonry, entrance details, and the limestone capped parapet with details 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 – including surrounds, roof limestone capped parapet, towers including crenellation, and brick masonry 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 900 New York Street** and

delineate how environs review will be conducted in relation to the listed property.

- (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