
LAWRENCE HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION
ITEM NO. 4: L-16-00295
STAFF REPORT

A. SUMMARY

L-16-00295 Public hearing for consideration of placing the property, Parnham House, located at 1028 Rhode Island Street, on the Lawrence Register of Historic Places. Submitted by Lawrence Preservation Alliance on behalf of Bradley and Heather Eldridge, the property owners of record. Adopt Resolution 2016-12, if appropriate.

B. HISTORIC REGISTER STATUS

1028 Rhode Island Street is listed as a contributing structure to the North Rhode Island Street Historic Residential District, National Register of Historic Places and therefor meets the criteria for listing in the Lawrence Register of Historic Places.

C. REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS

1) History Summary

1028 Rhode Island Street (lot 108), the J.B. Parnham House, is currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing structure to the North Rhode Island Street Residential Historic District. The home was built between ca. 1869-1873 on a standard lot size which was included as part of the original townsite, according to the 1869 Bird's-eye-view of Lawrence, the Beers Atlas 1873, and the Douglas County property tax records. J.B. Parnham came to America in 1855 and was recorded working at the Kaw Valley Marble Works in 1857. According to the Douglas County tax records, a significant increase in property tax value occurred in 1874 when J. B. Parnham paid the taxes for that year. Other significant property tax increases that suggest early alterations or improvements were made to the property were recorded in 1908. The 1911 Lawrence City Directory lists Mrs. E.L. Homes and E.H. Sankee as residents at 1028 Rhode Island suggesting that a change in ownership was the impetus for the improvements to the property. According to the Sanborn maps, the L-shape footprint of the home has gone mostly unchanged since 1889 noting that in 1918 the L-portion became 2-stories where it had previously been 1-story. Various alterations to the 1-story rear addition were made during the early and mid-twentieth century. The existing kitchen & bathroom renovation was undertaken ca. 1950. Neither addition is considered character-defining for the historic structure. The existing enclosed porch was added ca. 1960.

2) Architectural Integrity Summary

1028 Rhode Island Street is a 2-story L-shaped National-Folk vernacular dwelling with Italianate wood detailing typical of homes built during the same period and reflected in surrounding homes. The 2-story boxed bay window on the west elevation has a hipped roof that rests under the overhanging eave of the west front gable and was installed ca. 1889. A front porch spans the wing

portion of the home. The house maintains its architectural integrity with vertical double hung wood sash windows with wood crowned lintels, lap siding, wood corner detailing that mimics rope, and its original construction processes that include balloon framing with large brick or clay tile nogging, limestone rubble foundation, central staircase, typical interior spatial arrangements, and a marble hearth in the parlor.

The structure was rehabilitated by the current owner in 2012-2013. The applicant removed the asbestos shingle siding and repaired and replaced in-kind the siding that could not be repaired. The not character defining building additions on the east elevation were causing damage to the original portion of the structure and were removed. The 1-story kitchen addition that is not visible from Rhode Island Street was constructed as part of the rehabilitation project. The addition design is compatible with the historic structure and the National Register district.

The rehabilitation project also replaced the non-original porch. The replacement porch is the same size and scale as the porch that was removed. The new porch is compatible with the historic structure and the National Register district.

3) Context Description

The North Rhode Island Street Historic Residential District illustrates typical residential land use from the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth century as building patterns in East Lawrence followed local population, social, economic, and architectural trends described in the contexts for Lawrence history.

1028 Rhode Island 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. Many of the surviving residences were gable-front subtype of the National Folk style; other types included gable front-and wings, I-houses, and hall and parlor houses.

The cohesive streetscapes of the area create a distinct sense of neighborhood and a strong residential boundary, contrasting dramatically with the commercial downtown area to the west. Asphalt paves the 1000 block of Rhode Island Street although original brick pavement is exposed in the 900 and 1200 blocks of the street. Limestone curbing also exists in the area. Grass strips with mature shade trees separate the streets from the sidewalks on both sides of the street. Sidewalks are a mixture of brick, concrete, and limestone. Houses are typically situated near the center of their lots but the early construction of many houses and the undulating terrain to the north often resulted in uneven setbacks from the street line.

4) Planning and Zoning Considerations

1028 Rhode Island Street is zoned RM12, 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. The RM12 district allows for 12 dwelling units per acre.

1028 Rhode Island Street is an original townsite lot of 5850 sf and measuring 50' X 117'. This lot does not meet the density and dimensional standards for lots in the RM12 district as it does not have the sufficient lot area or lot width.

5) Fiscal Comments

There are no monetary benefits directly associated with nomination of a structure to the Lawrence Register of Historic Places.

However, 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. It is the intent of the city to place the nomination material on the city's website in the near future.

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 analysis 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.

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 Local 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;

1028 Rhode Island Street is important for its association with the history of Lawrence, Kansas as described in the Multiple Property Documentation Form *Historic Resources of Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas* (MPDF). Located within the original townsite plat on the west side of the East Lawrence neighborhood, the house dates from the defined context period of community planning and development during the City-Building Period from 1864-1873. The house is representative of the vernacular architecture constructed during this period of development in the city.

(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;

1028 Rhode Island Street is a 2-story L-shaped National-Folk vernacular dwelling with Italianate wood detailing. The structure has an atypical design feature of wood corner detailing that mimics rope.

Vernacular architecture is important to the understanding of the growth and development of the community as a whole.

- (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 Parnham House, located at 1028 Rhode Island Street, for designation as a Landmark on the Lawrence Register of Historic Places pursuant to Criterion #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;

The Parnham House is significant for its vernacular architecture and its value as part of the development of Lawrence.

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

The structure maintains sufficient integrity of location and design 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,*

Historic form, fenestration pattern, roof shapes and associated wide eaves, decorative wood window surrounds, wood siding, wood corner detailing that mimics rope, and stone foundation.

- (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 historic fenestration pattern, historic roof shape and associated wide eaves, decorative wood window surrounds, wood siding, wood corner detailing that mimics rope, and stone foundation.

- (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 1028 Rhode Island 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; residences, 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. (Attached)*