
LAWRENCE HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION
ITEM NO. 4: L-17-00223
STAFF REPORT

A. SUMMARY

Public hearing for consideration of placing the structure known as the James and Mary (Smith) Means House on the property located at 2110 Harper Street on the Lawrence Register of Historic Places. Submitted by Douglas County, the property owner of record.

The public hearing for the nomination of the structure to the Lawrence Register of Historic Places will be held at 6:30 p.m., or thereafter, in the City Commission Room at Lawrence City Hall located at 6 E 6th Street.

This report includes the proposed environ definition for the structure known as the James and Mary (Smith) Means House on the property located at 2110 Harper Street.





B. HISTORIC REGISTER STATUS

The structure known as the James and Mary (Smith) Means House on the property located at 2110 Harper Street is not listed on any historic register.

C. REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS

1) History Summary

According to the nomination, the stone structure located on the map below and known as the James and Mary (Smith) Means House was constructed c. 1870.

In 1855, 160 acres of the SE1/4 Section 5 Township 13 in Douglas County was granted to the descendants of John Downs. In 1870, James and Mary W. Means of Ironton, Ohio, purchased forty acres of this property from John Jacob and Olivia Gillespie McGee. The Means built a sandstone home (the material may have been quarried from nearby sandstone bluffs). The stone portion of the home, the subject of this nomination was approximately 26' x 26'.

According to the nomination, historically the Means family members were well-known abolitionists.

In 1871 Hugh Means was born in the house. In 1875, the U.S. Census lists the below as living on

the property:

James Means – age 27
Mary Ward Means – age 27
Hugh Means – age 3
Lucy Means – age 1
Anna Lawrence – 14 – Helps in House
Charles Anderson – 25 - Hired Man (Immigrant from Sweden)
Andrew Warner – 25 – Hired Man (Immigrant from England)
Ella Moore -18-General Housework

In 1895, Hugh Means inherited the property from his parents upon the death of his father. Hugh Means became a prominent lawyer, serving as Douglas County Probate Judge for three terms and as District Judge for Douglas, Franklin, and Anderson Counties. In 1951, Hugh Means sold the house and forty acres to Douglas County for use by the Douglas County 4-H Club likely to be used as the county fairgrounds. The property and the house continue to be used as part of the Douglas County Fairgrounds.

The house is the only remaining structure on the original Means farm.

This area of Lawrence was not included in the city limits at the time of construction and is not covered in the Historic Resources of Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF).

2) Architectural Integrity Summary

The structure known as the James and Mary (Smith) Means House on the property located at 2110 Harper Street is a small, 26' X 26', sandstone structure with minimal detailing. What appear to be original openings have darker stone lintels and the stone is patterned on the corners of the structure to create faux quoins. Remnants of a limestone foundation indicate there may have been a timber section on the west end. Stone carvers' marks indicate there was a wooden porch on the east end at the home's main entry.

A rehabilitation statement by Treanor HL indicates that the structure is in need of rehabilitation. The roof has been altered and a non-compatible addition has been added to the west of the structure. While the alterations have had an impact on the architectural integrity of the structure, it continues to convey its original form, design, and fenestration patterns in its original location.

3) Historic and Current Context Description and Environs Definition

Historic character information is based on 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). Existing context is based on personal

observation, city zoning maps, and recent aerial photographs.

When the Means House was constructed, it was located outside of the Lawrence city limits on a rural farmstead. The historic uses in the area for miles were agriculturally related and there were few structures in this area of the county. The structures that did exist were typically houses and accessory structures that were associated with family farms. Structures were simple in vernacular designs and utilized local materials for construction. The land was relatively flat and the vegetation was consistent with open fields and farmland. The property boundaries were consistent with farm sizes and not limited to small properties for single structures. There was no zoning or public amenities. The views were vast due to the open landscape of the rural area.

While the historic uses of the area were agricultural with associated residential, the modern context is quite different. There is no longer an agriculture use pattern. The property was not platted until 1960. Residential subdivisions around the property were also being platted in the 1960s. The properties surrounding the house include a combination of the fairgrounds, a school, a public facility – fire station – and residential subdivisions. The natural features of the area continue to be relatively flat, but the property boundaries, vegetation types, and views are not related to the historic use and are clearly defined by modern development patterns for residential uses. The exception is the large amount of space devoted to the fairgrounds. While there continues to be some open space for this area, the openness is constantly eroding and new buildings associated with a modern fairground use have been constructed.

Environs Definition Based on the Historic and Current Context Description

The Means House is located on a large parcel owned by Douglas County that is currently used as a county fairgrounds. Because the environs have changed so significantly and because the original property associated with the house is not identifiable, staff is of the opinion the environs definition should start with the location of the Means House and extend 250' rather than starting with the entire property owned by the county.

The environs of the Means House have changed significantly and should be reviewed as two areas in the following manner:

Area 1

The area primarily consists of structures used in conjunction with the Douglas County Fairgrounds. A portion of the area to the south of the Means Stone House contains City of Lawrence property for Fire Station #2. The following should apply to this area:

The proposed alteration or construction should meet the intent of the Criteria set forth in 22-505. Design elements to consider include scale, massing, site placement, height, directional expression, percentage of building coverage to site, setback, roof shapes, rhythm of openings, and sense of entry.

All projects will be reviewed administratively by the Historic Resources Administrator. The proposed alteration or construction should meet the intent of the Criteria set forth in 22-505. The main issue in the review is the impact of the project on the Means House. If the project

does not meet the intent of the Criteria set forth in 22-505, the project will be forwarded to the Historic Resources Commission for review.

Area 2

The area consists of residential structures. The residential character of the environs is important. The area should maintain the overall residential character of the historic environs and the following should apply:

The proposed alteration or construction should meet the intent of the Criteria set forth in 22-505. Important design elements include scale, massing, site placement, height, directional expression, percentage of building coverage to site, setback, roof shapes, rhythm of openings, and sense of entry. Maintaining views to the listed property is the primary focus of review.

All projects will be reviewed administratively by the Historic Resources Administrator. The proposed alteration or construction should meet the intent of the Criteria set forth in 22-505. The main issues in the review are the continuation of the residential character of the area and whether the project will encroach upon, damage or destroy the environs of the listed property. If the project does not meet the Criteria set forth in 22-505, the project will be forwarded to the Historic Resources Commission for review.



4) Planning and Zoning Considerations

The property on which the Means House is located is zoned GPI, General Public and Institutional Use District. The GPI District is a Special Purpose Base District primarily intended to accommodate Institutional Uses occupying significant land areas. The district regulations are designed to offer the institution maximum flexibility for patterns of uses within the district while ensuring that uses and development patterns along the edges of the district are compatible with adjoining land uses.

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. Copies of this information are also on file at the Kansas Collection in Spencer Research Library on the University of Kansas main campus and at the Watkin's Community Museum. 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.

Examples of projects which would require review and approval are projects involving the exterior of a building, and 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 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;

The Means House is significant for its association with the growth of the city into the county to capture rural farmsteads for development. It is also significant for the establishment of a permanent home for the 4H now Douglas County fairgrounds rather than this suburban type of development.

(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;

The property is associated with the Means family, specifically Judge Hugh Means. Means served Douglas County and Lawrence for over 32 years in public service. He is also significant for selling the land to the 4H Club at a significantly lower than market rate to ensure the use of the area as a fairgrounds.

(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.**
- (D) In the case of a nominated historic district found to meet the criteria for designation:
 - (1) The types of significant exterior architectural features of the structures within the nominated historic district that should be protected;*
 - (2) 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.*
 - (3) A list of all key contributing, contributing and noncontributing sites, structures and objects within the historic district.**
- (E) Proposed design guidelines for applying the criteria for review of certificates of appropriateness to the nominated landmark or historic district.*

- (F) 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.*
- (G) A map showing the location of the nominated landmark or the boundaries of the nominated historic district.*

E. RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is of the opinion the James and Mary (Smith) Means House qualifies for designation as a Landmark on the Lawrence Register of Historic Places pursuant to Criterion #1 and #3, as described in Section 22-403.

Staff recommends the James and Mary (Smith) Means House located on the property known as 2110 Harper 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 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 Means House is significant for its association with the growth of the city into the county to capture rural farmsteads for development. It is also significant for the establishment of a permanent home for the 4H now Douglas County fairgrounds rather than this suburban type of development.

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

While the structure has been altered, it 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,*

Fenestration pattern and window and door openings, the historic form of the structure, sandstone, red sandstone lintels, and the faux stone quoins.

- (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.

Changes to fenestration pattern and window and door openings, the historic form of the structure, sandstone, red sandstone lintels, and the faux stone quoins should require a *Certificate of Appropriateness*.

(E) 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 has adopted an ***Environs Definition for the Means House*** to delineate how environs review will be conducted in relation to the listed property. (See above)

(F) 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.

(G) A map showing the location of the nominated landmark. (Attached)