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**LAWRENCE HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION**  
**ITEM NO. 7: L-15-00048**  
**STAFF REPORT**

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**A. SUMMARY**

L-15-00048 Public hearing for consideration of placing the structure located at 809 Vermont Street [LOT 49 ON VERMONT STREET IN THE ORIGINAL TOWNSITE OF THE CITY OF LAWRENCE, DOUGLAS COUNTY, KANSAS] on the Lawrence Register of Historic Places. The nomination was submitted by the Lawrence Preservation Alliance on behalf of James Grimes, 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, at Lawrence City Hall, 6 E 6<sup>th</sup> Street, in the City Commission Room.

**B. HISTORIC REGISTER STATUS**

809 Vermont 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 809 Vermont Street, the Lucy Hobbs Taylor House, is representative of the Italianate style of architecture. The house was constructed in 1871 during the City Building Period, 1864-1873, as defined by the Historic Resources of Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF). The structure was constructed as both a residence and a dental office.

The house is sited on a lot of approximately 5,850 sf. The lot is 50' X 117' as platted in the Original Townsite of Lawrence. The existing development pattern for this area has changed significantly since the original plat. The Lucy Hobbs Taylor house is the only remaining residential type structure in this block of Vermont Street. This portion of Vermont Street did not develop as a residential neighborhood, but rather as part of the commercial downtown of Lawrence according to Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. The block continues to be commercial and is located in the Downtown Conservation Overlay District.

While the 800 block of Vermont developed as commercial, the 800 Block of Kentucky – east side-developed as residential structures on individual lots. The uses of these residential structures are both office and residential. To the east of the Lucy Hobbs Taylor House is a city owned parking lot and to the north of the house is a commercial structure. Two vacant parcels are to the south of the house.

#### **4) Planning and Zoning Considerations**

809 Vermont Street is zoned CD, Downtown Commercial District. The primary purpose of the CD District is to provide for a variety of land uses, including governmental, retail, office, public and community facilities, institutional, churches, and residential uses. The district is intended to maintain this area of Lawrence as the primary commercial center of Lawrence. The current use of the property is a hair salon. This use is allowed in the CD district. To the north, south, and east of the property is CD zoning and a variety of uses including retail, restaurant, office, hotel and parking lot. To the west is RMO – Multi Dwelling Residential Office District. The uses in this area are a combination of residential and office.

#### **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;*
- (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 Lucy Hobbs Taylor House is significant for its association with Lucy Hobbs Taylor. According to the National Register nomination, Lucy Hobbs Taylor was the first woman in the United States to graduate from a dental college as a Doctor of Dental Surgery and to be admitted to full membership in a state professional dental society.

- (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;*

The Lucy Hobbs Taylor House is a good example of the Italianate style of architecture. While the original front portion of the porch has been removed, the property continues to be significant for its architecture and an example of a structure that was designed to be both residence and office with predominately residential features.

*(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.*

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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 Lucy Hobbs Taylor House located at 809 Vermont Street for designation as a Landmark on the Lawrence Register of Historic Places pursuant to Criteria #3 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 Lucy Hobbs Taylor House is significant for its Italianate 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 fenestration pattern, widely overhanging eaves with decorative wood brackets, porch on the north side, and window sills 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 window patterns, widely overhanging eaves with decorative wood brackets, porch on the north side, and window sills 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 809 Vermont 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