

Denver Designation for Preservation Analysis

5115 W. 29th Avenue, Denver, Colorado

Prepared for:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

5115 Developers LLC has proposed demolishing the house at 5115 West 29th Avenue and redeveloping the 15,333 square foot parcel. The roughly 4,000 square foot two story house was built for C. E. Lambourn in 1918, designed by Denver architect Richard Phillips. As part of the planning process, an application for “Certificate of Non-Historic Status” was submitted. To this point, the house had not been identified as being historically or architecturally significant.

Subsequently, neighborhood residents filed an application for designation as a landmark. That application was based on

- Historic significance for the house’s association with Lambourn and the development of the floriculture industry in Denver
- Architectural significance as a superior example of Foursquare design and as a significant work by architect Phillips.
- Geographic significance as a prominently sited “house on the hill” visual point of reference and as an iconic unique design the neighborhood.

DCP staff then recommended designation of the house, with the Denver Landmark Preservation Commission endorsing the staff report. That staff report stated the house was:

- Architectural significance as a superior example of Foursquare design and as a significant work by architect Phillips.
- Geographic significance as a prominently sited visual point of reference and as an iconic and unique design the neighborhood.

Proponents and DCP concurred that:

- 1) The property has sufficient integrity to convey historic and architectural values.
- 2) Architecturally, the defining factors are the prominent large corner site strategically developed by architect Phillips to create a variant of the Foursquare form that represented the evolution of Foursquare design from its 1890s beginnings to this World War I era house. The most salient feature has been identified as the southeast corner entry.
- 3) Geographically, the site is imposing and sufficiently prominent as to serve as a point of visually orientation and that the 2-story house is distinctive in a neighborhood of otherwise small houses.

To understand the historic and architectural aspects of the site, the owners hired Heritage Consulting Group to research and analyze the property against the Denver Criteria for Landmark Designation. Heritage is a national firm that assists the owners and developers of older and historic buildings in understanding the relative significance of their resources. In its 31 years, Heritage has prepared over 300 National Register Nominations and has evaluated thousands of cultural resources. Most recently, Heritage Consulting Group worked with Sage Hospitality in the transformation of Union Station into a transportation/hotel/restaurant/retail hub.

Based on its in depth analysis, Heritage does not concur that the property is eligible for designation under any criteria. Specifically,

1. Heritage does not believe that the property has sufficient integrity to convey historic or architectural values. In fact there are few “original” elements that are intact. The exterior of the building has been re clad with stucco in a manner that created new belt courses and redefined the windows by eliminated the profile of cast stone sills. Other changes include window replacement, replacement of the east porch, transformation of the north porch into a window and the installation of a concrete deck at the porches.

2. As to integrity, the primary disagreement is whether the exterior recladding is historic fabric. Proponents and DCP argue that the recladding was thought to be completed while the widow of C. E. Lambourn owned the house (prior to 1945), therefore within the period of significance and therefore historic fabric. This definition of the period of significance is inaccurate. For an architecturally significant resource, which is what has been recommended forward by Landmarks, the period would be that time that the house was intact. Thus, by definition, the recladding would have been the endpoint of the period of significance. The new stucco cladding is not historic fabric but, in fact, is an egregious alteration of the original Phillips design.

3. As to architectural significance, Heritage does not concur that the house design strategically captures the prominent 15,000 square foot corner lot. Rather than a corner orientation, the house has a traditional north-south orientation and that the design treats the street facing east elevation in a utilitarian manner without the coherent organization found in a Foursquare house. Specific to the southeast corner entry, which is identified by the proponents as a defining element, a close examination of the entry shows that it attaches to the hexagonal bay on the primary elevation in an inelegant, almost clunky manner, while the organization is poorly organized with the entry porch and second floor bay out of alignment. The entry appears forced rather than designed.

The best Foursquare is blithe in design. It is beguilingly simple which belies a subtle yet strong manipulation of scale, proportion, and organization. This property has fundamental Foursquare feature (cube-massing and hipped roof), but lacks the strength of organization to be considered a superior or evolutionary example of the style.

4. Similarly, Heritage does not concur that the house design is a significant work of a master. Richard Phillips is a master architect in Denver’s Foursquare heritage. SHPO uses his design for 1866 Gaylord to illustrate a textbook example of the style. Nonetheless, as described in #3 above and in this report, the limited success of the design for 5115 W. 29th does not represent a bookend of stylistic evolution, does not represent an architect capturing the potential of a site, and is not a good representation of the skill and strong hand that Phillips demonstrated with other works.

5. Geographically, much is made of the prominent hilltop site as a visual marker. The site is terraced, but does not sit on a hill. Rather, it is a midpoint of a 200 foot rise north from Sloan Lake to 34th Avenue. More to the point, although elevated, the site is lost in the commercial streetscape clutter of 29th Avenue and Sheridan Boulevard. It is not a visual, orienting landmark. Furthermore, the site to the west, at 29th Avenue and Sheridan, is currently under development with the construction of an apartment house.

6. And finally, the neighborhood does have a great many one-story homes, but it also has a number of two story homes. The house at 5115 W. 29th does not stand out in the neighborhood as being the biggest or most prominent. It is also not the purest example of Foursquare in the neighborhood and West Highland is noted as a center of Foursquare development. While

different, it is not so different as to make a unique and special contribution to the City or to the neighborhood.

Within the context of the City's designation criteria for structures worth preserving, the site should not be considered significant. It lacks historical, architectural, and geographic significance. It is not worthy of designation for preservation.

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PROBLEM STATEMENT

5115 Developers LLC has proposed demolishing the house and garage at 5115 West 29th Avenue (Denver, CO) and redeveloping the 15,333 square foot parcel. The site is located approximately 3.6 miles west northwest of downtown Denver at the southwest boundary of the Highland neighborhood. The site is located at the northwest corner of 29th Avenue and Zenobia Street.

The subject property is roughly 4,000 square foot with two-stories plus basement sitting on a low terraced lot. The house is set more or less at the center of the approximately square, 123 by 125 foot parcel. It was built circa 1918 for C. E. Lambourn, designed by Denver architect Richard Phillips. In the 1950s, it was adapted into an apartment house with four units over the three levels.

Ownership acquired the property with the intent of demolishing the building. As part of the planning process, an application for “Certificate of Non-Historic Status” was submitted. On August 20th, Denver’s Community Planning and Development Department (CPD) issued its research report that found that the site had potential for designation under the criteria for Architecture and Geography. Specifically, the analysis referred to the house’s high style, prominent location, and comparative uniqueness in the areas. Subsequently, neighborhood residents filed an application for designation based on all three criteria, adding significance for association with Charles Lambourn for Criteria relating to History, and also under Architecture as an example of work of Richard Phillips. Both CPD and the neighborhood applicants considered the property to have sufficient integrity to convey ascribed historic values. Subsequently, the Denver Landmark Preservation Commission at its October 20th meeting, voted to recommend designation to City Council on the basis of architecture and geography.

Prior to this recommendation, the building did not have any historic or architectural designation, or had been identified in literature or public conversation as a noteworthy property.

In order to fully understand the historic and architectural aspects of the site, the owners hired Heritage Consulting Group to research the history of the building and to analyze its historic and architectural values against the Denver Criteria for Landmark Designation. Heritage has completed several projects in the Denver area; most recently, working with Sage Hospitality in the transformation of Union Station into a transportation/hotel/restaurant/retail hub.

HERITAGE CONSULTING GROUP

Heritage is a national firm that assists the owners and developers of older and historic buildings in understanding the relative significance of their resources, navigating the regulatory redevelopment processes, and securing financial opportunities from federal, state and local incentives. Our firm is staffed by seasoned historic preservation professionals who meet the Professional Qualifications Standards under the category of *Historic Architecture* and *Architectural History* in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines, *Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR Part 61*.

The firm was founded in 1982 by current President/CEO John Tess. Since that time, Heritage has established a reputation for being a strident advocate for their clients, for having a facile understanding of the rules and regulations relating to older and historic buildings, and for effectively navigating the agencies responsible for implementing preservation programs. Increasingly, Heritage has established a niche for "out-of-the-box" projects where preservation program guidelines apply, yet are not clear in their application. This is most apparent in the application of sustainable development principles to older buildings.

Heritage has completed projects across the country, totaling more than \$3 billion in construction. We routinely provide a due diligence analysis, detailing the history, integrity and historic parameters for a site. In its 31 years, Heritage has prepared over 300 National Register Nominations, arguably more than any other entity in the country. Working in the private sector, the firm has helped developers secure federal, state and local financial incentives. Heritage also handles surveys, both reconnaissance and intensive, as well as completes building documentation in anticipation of demolition; these reports are typically done to the standards of the Historic American Building Survey. Finally, the firm provides guidance for public entities in understanding and navigating relevant historic preservation laws.

Our client base is national and broad. It includes private developers, not-for-profit organizations, colleges and universities, as well as federal, state and local governments.

Our services include:

- Owner representation and agency negotiations
- Historic rehabilitation tax credit certification
- National Register nominations
- Older and historic building due diligence and strategic planning
- Strategic design feasibility and guidance
- Regulatory compliance
- Historic resource policy analysis and guidance
- Historic building documentation and HABS reports

Over the years, Heritage has been involved in a number of projects in the Denver area. Most recently, it worked with Sage Hospitality in the renovation and transformation of Union Station into a multi-modal transportation/hotel/restaurant/retail destination.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

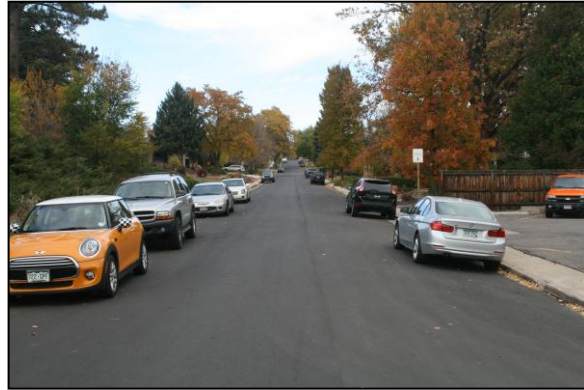
5115 W. 29th Avenue is located approximately 3.6 miles west northwest of downtown Denver, located at the southwest boundary of the Highland neighborhood. A half mile south is the north shore of Sloan Lake; a half block west is Sheridan Boulevard, a primary automobile arterial and the west boundary of Denver County.

Neighborhood: The site is located at the northwest corner of 29th Avenue and Zenobia Street. The street grid in the area is rectilinear but irregular.

The geography is defined by an upward slope south to north that begins at Sloan Lake and rises in relatively consistent rate to roughly 34th Avenue. The total rise is approximately 160 feet. Along Zenobia, the grade increases 20 feet from 28th to 29th Avenues (where 5115 W. 29th is located), and 30 feet from 29th to 30th.



Looking North on Zenobia from 26th Avenue



Looking North on Zenobia from 29th Avenue

Blocks in this area are mostly oriented north-south. Sheridan Boulevard (State Highway 29) is one-half block to the west. It is a primary north-south arterial with two lanes of traffic in each direction that connects US285 at the south to I-270 at the north. Uses are typically automobile oriented retail and fast food. West 29th Avenue is an east-west arterial that runs west from 15th Street terminating at the Crown Hill Cemetery in Wheat Ridge. Generally, it has one-lane of traffic in each direction with an additional parking lane. Historically, 29th Avenue was serviced by streetcars that turned south at Yates Street; development patterns are transitional with remnants of streetcar commercial intermixed with new commercial (both auto-oriented and urban), but also single family homes. Zenobia Street is a north-south neighborhood street with no defined auto lanes and no sidewalks, lined with mostly auto-oriented single family homes. A single lane unimproved alley runs nearly the length of the block between Sheridan and Zenobia south from 30th to the subject property.



Looking North on Sheridan from 29th Avenue



Looking West on 29th Avenue from Yates Street

The Highlands neighborhood generally developed in the early 20th century and is defined by single family homes on standard lots. Housing stock includes a large number of houses built before World War II, but also with infilled post-war homes. Today, the immediate area is best characterized as transitional with traditional single family homes giving way to modern commercial uses. Recent up zoning by the City has prompted interest in redevelopment along the primary streets and in turn has resulted in higher density infill construction both on vacant land and with demolition on low-density parcels.



2800 Zenobia Street - Typical



2930 Zenobia Street – Typical



Streetcar Commercial at 29th Avenue and Yates Street



New Apartment at 29th Avenue and Yates Street



Proposed New Apartments on vacant land at 29th Avenue and Yates Street

Properties in the immediate area are commercial. To the west, adjacent to the subject property, is an abandoned modern gas station which is being redeveloped into an apartment building. To the east, across Zenobia Street, are modern one-story office buildings. To the south, across 29th Avenue, is a park/playground associated with the Busy Bee Learning Academy and the St. Mary Magdalene Church and School.



SW Corner of 29th Avenue and Zenobia Street



5035 W. 29th Avenue



29th Avenue and Sheridan Boulevard, Looking North (left) and East (right)



Foursquare at 34th Avenue and Wolf Street

Site: The subject property is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of W. 29th Avenue and Zenobia Street. The parcel is approximately square, 123 by 125 feet. Along 29th Avenue, the street has been terraced to create a 15 foot berm. Along Zenobia, the berm diminishes as the street slope rises. At the northwest corner of the property is a single car garage facing east onto Zenobia built into the berm in the late 1920s. At the west is a modern aluminum-clad workshop.

The house is located at the center of the property with street elevations at the south and east. The setbacks are largely overgrown. At the southeast corner is a concrete stair with modern aluminum rail; the stair is dog-legged, heading north and then northwest with a mid-height landing. The stair ends at a modern concrete walkway that leads to a corner entry and south porch. There is a second angled stair at the northeast, leading to Zenobia Street and the garage.



5115 W. 29th Avenue – Site outlined in Red

Structure: The house is wood frame, two-stories in height with a full subterranean basement. The house has an approximately square footprint, of 34 feet by 34 feet. The roof is hipped with a chimney located off-center to the east. There is a single story porch on the south, a small entry porch at the southeast corner and a non-original entry porch at the east.

Materials: Exterior materials are consistent on all four elevations. The exterior is covered with a non-original stucco finish with a brick foundation. Windows are not original, generally one-over-one, wood sash in wood frame. Doors are wood with varying design by location. The porch decks are modern concrete; porch rails are modern aluminum. The roof is modern asphalt shingle.

Design: The house has been characterized as Denver Foursquare in design. A stylistic analysis is provided later. As it current exists, the house is not a pure example of the Denver Foursquare style and lacks many of the hallmarks of that style. Despite being on a corner lot, the house is oriented north south and the east street facing elevation is designed in a utilitarian fashion. The house lacks the symmetry, subtle organization and thoughtful proportion that defines the style.

South Elevation: The 29th Avenue elevation on the south may be considered the primary elevation. It is two stories in height with a slightly raised foundation and an overhanging roof. In form, it is organized into two elements: a flat plane, approximately 20 feet across, at the west and hexagonal bay at the east. In general, the elevation is symmetrically organized. The flat plane has two openings at the first floor: the primary entry to the house at the east and a pair of French doors at the west. These are access by a porch, approximately 10 feet deep, that spans across the plane. The porch deck is modern concrete supported by brick piers; it is covered with an asphalt covered hipped roof, and supported by two Doric wood columns. The porch is then framed with modern aluminum rails. The entry door is a single full glass door in wood frame flanked by partial height wood panels replacing original sidelights. The French doors are also wood, multilight. At the second floor, the rhythm of the French doors is repeated with a single full height double hung window centered in the bay. Over the entry door is a half-height window.

The hexagonal bay at the east has three equal sides each with a single double-hung window on the first and second floors.



South Elevation, Looking North from W. 29th Street



South Elevation, Looking Northeast from the Southwest Corner of the Lot



South Elevation, Porch, Looking Northwest from the Walkway



Southeast Corner, Looking Northwest from the Corner Stairs

At the southeast corner is a single door on a concrete pedestal porch with hipped roof supported by paired ionic columns. The door is a full light in wood frame. This doorway is oddly inserted into the building. It projects at a true 45 degree angle from the house, but located off centered at the hexagonal bay. The second floor window then does not align with the first floor door and the location of the porch itself attaches to the building in poorly designed manner. The element is at best inelegant and clunky. The fact that it opens directly into what would have been the parlor when the main entry off the porch is somewhat then remote suggests it could have been added later.



Southeast Corner, Looking Northwest

Regardless, much has changed on this elevation from original construction. The elevation has been clad in stucco. In the bay, this new stucco created a belt course at the sill level that eliminated the profile of the cast stone sill. As noted, the windows have been replaced. Additionally, the deck of both porches was replaced with modern concrete and the porch rails replaced.



Detail of Belt Course and Window Sill

Illustrates the elimination of the cast stone sill profile

East Elevation: This elevation facing Zenobia Street is problematic. As with the south, the elevation features a stucco finish with one-over-one windows. That said, to a significant degree, the design is incoherent with no clear bay structure. Window and door openings having neither consistency nor correlation to each other. There are five windows, each different from the other in size and each aligned along a distinct horizontal and vertical line. Given that the interior uses were parlors and bedrooms, it would have been a simple task to organize this elevation. As original plans or historic photographs do not exist, it is unknown whether this is the original design or whether the elevation has changed over time. That this elevation faces onto the street makes the treatment particularly problematic compared to the west elevation which is hidden from view.



East Elevation, Looking West from Zenobia Street

Today the elevation is comprised of the stucco finish and windows, both of which have changed. As with the south elevation, that stucco finish has made the cast stone sills of the windows flush with the building face but the execution here is poor.

The porch at the north is a replacement. Beneath the porch are two brick piers with brick matching the foundation. These piers are set approximately at the width of the door and set approximately a foot closer to the building face. Thus the porch including support piers and roof was originally smaller. As it exists, it is proportionately too large. [That the design of this element closely resembles the southeast porch reinforces the suggestion that the southeast porch is not original.]



East Elevation, North End, Replacement Porch, Looking West

North Elevation: The north elevation, although rear, is visible from Zenobia Street. Similar to the rest of the building, the elevation has a stucco finish with one-over-one windows. Again, there is an incoherency as to how the elevation is designed. There is no sense of relationship of element, no symmetry or clarity in either the horizontal or vertical lines. The first floor has four different window sizes – both height and width. The second floor windows, which are well organized, have no correlation to the first floor; being neither aligned or aesthetically off-set.



North Elevation, Looking South



North Elevation, Door turned into a window



North Elevation, Replacement Window – Typical of the House

Again, there have also been significant changes to this elevation over time. The stucco and window alterations found on the other elevations are present here. Additionally, scarring at the east window clearly indicates that this opening was originally a door with a narrow porch covering.

West Elevation: This is a side elevation not visible from the street. As with the east and south elevation, while the materials are largely consistent, the design is largely incoherent. And again, the alterations are similar. That this is rear elevation not visible, the design is less of an issue.



Interior: Built as a single family home, the building was adapted in the 1950s into apartments. The first floor was isolated from the stair hall and leased as a two bedroom unit. It was also accessible from three other ground floor doors. The second floor was accessed by the stair hall and adapted into two apartments, one on the east and one on the west, each with full bath and kitchen. The basement was also accessed from the stair hall and was a separate unit. To a large degree, this work eliminated all remnants of the original layout and finishes.

RESOURCE HISTORY

In 1914, Charles Lambourn purchased several lots at the south end of the block along 29th Avenue between Sheridan Boulevard and Zenobia Street. At the time, Lambourn was living across the street from the lots at 2921 Zenobia. Based on building permit records, construction of the house began in October, 1917 and completed in early 1918. Charles was a florist and wholesale grower; in 1923 he purchased the adjoining lots to the west and erected a greenhouse.

At the time, the surrounding area was remote from the City's core. The rise of the streetcar and then the automobile made the area accessible, while the rapid influx of new citizens in this era created demand for development.

In 1928, Lambourn died. His wife continued to live in the house until 1945.

The house was then sold to Wayne and Berniece Cory who in turn sold the property to Carl and Otilia Harder. The Harders divided the parcels and sold off portions of it. Carl and Otilia continued to reside in the house, though during their time there they subdivided the building to create multiple apartments.

The Harders owned the house until 1976. According to the assessor, Steven Roberts owned the house from 1976-1978, Eclectic Enterprises from 1978-1980, Steven Roberts from 1980-1982, Brian Story from 1982-1993, Steve Perkins from 1993-2014, 5115 Sheridan Trust in 2014, and 5115 Developers LLC from 2014 to present.

ARCHITECT: RICHARD PHILLIPS (1861-1926)

BIOGRAPHY

Richard Phillips was born in England and immigrated to the United States in 1885. In 1888, then 25-years old, he moved to Denver and over the next four decades worked alone and also with several different partners. He designed a range of buildings including residential, warehouses, and commercial buildings.

Upon arriving in Denver, Phillips worked as a draftsman under John Roberts.¹ Roberts established himself earlier in the decade; by the end of the decade, Phillips was a partner in the firm. Phillips was working in this office when the Hayden, Dickinson, and Feldman Building, also known as the Colorado Building, was constructed at 16th and California in 1890.

In 1892, Roberts and Phillips were simultaneously partners and buildings inspectors for the city.²

In 1894s, Phillips worked briefly with Harlan Thomas, Jr. Thomas was 24 years old and had been attending Colorado State College when his father died. He was forced to drop out and began working as a carpenter. In 1889 he took a job as a draftsman for a Denver architect. In 1891 Thomas returned to Colorado State College. Upon graduation, Thomas joined with Phillips for a year before going to Paris to study architecture.

Thereupon Phillips practiced on his own, quickly establishing himself as a residential architect. In 1903 alone Phillips designed from 54 buildings throughout the city. From 1904 to 1907, Phillips worked with Ault Hesse. In 1921 he again had a business partner, creating Phillips and Rosche.

Phillips was listed in the city directory as an architect until his death. Phillips died of heart disease at the age of 65 on December 6, 1928.³

¹ The 1888 date for when Phillips moved to Denver differs from the “by 1892” date given in the designation report. The 1888 report is based on the 1888 Denver City Directory.

² The designation report only cites Phillips as a building inspector, according to the 1989 National Register Nomination of the Hamburger Block/Paris Hotel, Roberts and Phillips were simultaneously partners in an architecture firm and building inspectors for the city.

³ This date was determined from the Thursday, December 9, 1926 obituary which started that Phillips died the night of Monday, December 6th.

Richard Phillips' Funeral Will Be Held Thursday

Funeral services will be held Thursday afternoon at 2 o'clock for the late Richard Phillips, well-known Denver architect, who died of heart disease Monday night at his home, 547 High street. The funeral will be held from the residence.

The deceased was a native of England. He came to Denver 40 years ago. He was 65 years old. A prominent member of St. John's Cathedral for over 30 years, he also was a member of the Masonic lodge of this city, of the Architects' association, and of the American Institute of Architects.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Nellie Dunning Phillips, and a daughter, Jane Elizabeth. A brother is living in London and a sister in Paris, France.

Interment will take place at Fairmount cemetery.

Richard Phillips' Obituary, *Rocky Mountain News*, December 9, 1926, pg 21.

BODY OF WORK AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Phillips was an architect in Denver during one of the city's largest building booms. Between 1893 and 1941, home building was heaviest in an outer ring of neighborhoods that included City Park, Washington Park, Park Hill, Hale, Cheesman Park, Congress Park, Country Club, Valverde, Barnum, West Highland, Globeville, Skyland, Berkeley, Regis, and Sloan's Lake.⁴

Because he was predominately a residential architect, the depth of his body of work may not be known. By all accounts, he was prolific. According to Noel and Norgren's *Denver: The City Beautiful and Its Architects* and the Denver's Building Permit Records, in 1903 alone Phillips designed approximately 54 building permits. An examination of his work indicates a strong hand and a superior sense of scale, proportion and organization.

Below is a summary list of his known works:

Car Barn for Denver City Railway Company (1889)

This property is one of Phillips' earliest known projects. It has since been demolished.

Hayden, Dickenson, and Feldman Building (1890)

Working with Roberts, the Hayden, Dickenson, and Feldhauser building is located at 1615 California Street. As built, it was a brick commercial structure. In 1909 it was expanded to include several new floors. In 1937 it was refaced in Terra Cotta following the Art Deco style. At this point it was also renamed the Colorado Building.

Hamburger Block/Paris Hotel (1891)

The Paris Hotel, originally the Hamburger Block, was built in 1891 and is located at 2199 Arapahoe Street. Designed for commercial and residential use, the building features a three-bay cast iron storefront, and the building is topped with a decorative cornice with dentil details. The interior has cast iron columns in the basement and first floor commercial spaces. This building was individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places on December 28, 1989.



Hamburger Block/Paris Hotel
2193 Arapahoe Street

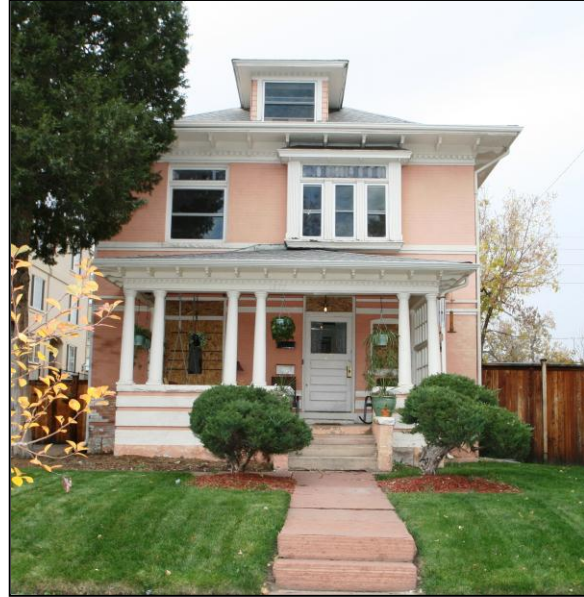
⁴ Thomas Noel and Barbara Norgren, *Denver: The City Beautiful and Its Architects, 1893-1941*, pg. 29

A. M. Ghost Residences (1897/1898)

Phillips designed two houses for Ghost, the first at 1866 Gaylord Street and the second at 1877 Gaylord Street. Both of these houses are traditional Foursquares with a large front porch supported by Doric columns. Both houses have hipped roofs and center dormer projecting eaves with decorative brackets.



1866 Gaylord Street



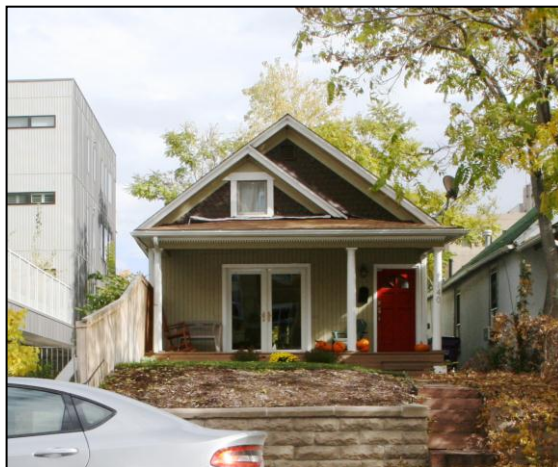
1877 Gaylord Street

4335 E. 11th Street (1899)

Referenced in the Noel and Norgren's *Denver: The City Beautiful and Its Architects*, this house has been demolished to make way for the Rose Medical Center.

2740 Clay Street and 235 Grant Street (Both 1903)

These smaller single-family houses are credited to Phillips according to 1903 building permits.



2740 Clay Street



235 Grant Street

2017 Larimer Street (1903)

This two-story commercial building was credited to Phillips according to a 1903 building permit.



2017 Larimer Street

Cones House (1906)

Located at 4633 Montview Boulevard, Homer Cones commissioned Richard Phillips and Edward Hess to construct this single family home for \$11,000. In the 1990s, the current owner constructed a rear addition which received an award in 1996 from the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Great American Home Award for 'sympathetic addition.'⁵



Cones House
4633 Montview Boulevard

⁵ Rebecca Dorward, *Denver's Park Hill Neighborhood*, p. 32.

Owen House (1911)

Located at 180 Gilpin, a single family home with hipped roof, front dormer, broad front porch.



Owen House
180 Gilpin Street

Richard Phillips had a long career, roughly 38 years from 1888 until his death in 1926. He worked on a variety of building types, though he amassed a large number of commissions during the residential building boom in Denver. Phillips is included in Thomas Noel and Barbara Norgren's book *Denver: The City Beautiful and Its Architects, 1893-1941* which has a collection of biographical sketches for sixty-seven architects known to be active in Denver prior to 1941. Based on an evaluation of known works, Phillips possessed a strong hand and a solid sense of siting, proportion, scale, massing and organization in the Beaux Arts tradition

FOURSQUARE

DESCRIPTION OF A FOURSQUARE

The Colorado Historic Society's "Field Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering," identifies Foursquare as one of the most commonly found forms of residential building built in Colorado after 1900 with the majority built in the first three decades. The style is recognized by its square plan, hipped roof and two-story height. The typical foursquare has a central dormer, minimal decoration, broad overhanging eaves with brackets or modillions, classical frieze with dentils, and a porch, usually full width with a hipped roof supported by Doric or Tuscan columns or by square posts. Occasionally, a foursquare will feature a shaped gable or will be considerably larger with more elaborate ornamentation. The exterior is typically unadorned or minimally decorated. The roof is hipped with a shaped gable and had an overhang with dentils and/or brackets. Simple in appearance, the style belies subtleties of symmetrical organization, strategic decoration and general proportion.

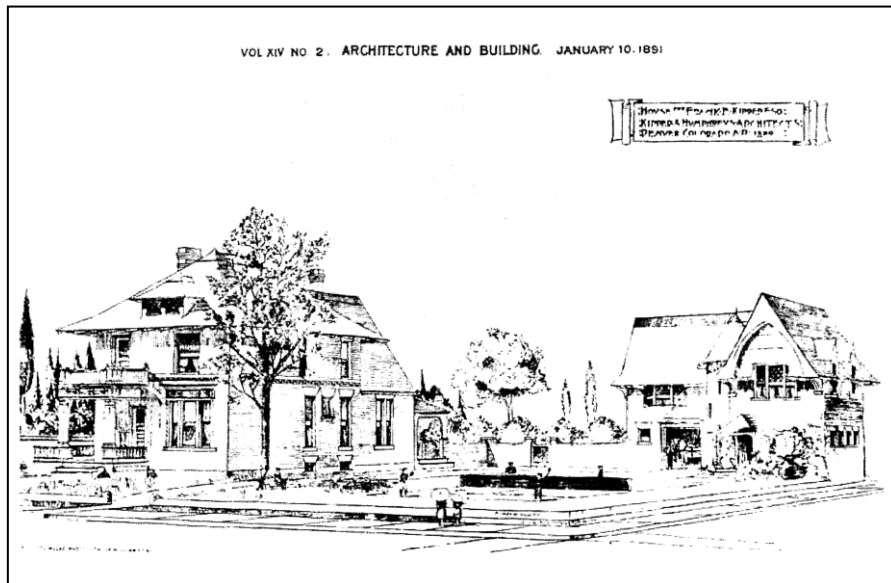


First Foursquare to Appear in a Large-Circulation Journal
A.J. Trott House (1895) by Grodavent Brothers of Denver

HISTORY

In 1986, Thomas Hanchett, a master's candidate at the University of Chicago, completed a thesis entitled, "The Four Square House in the United States."⁶ This document describes the types of four-squares and the evolution of the four-square. In the 1880s the long reign of ornate and eclectic Victorian architecture in the United States came to an end; American architects and the general public looks for a simpler form of residential architecture. Architectural historians often overlooked the foursquare as a distinctly American style of house and focused on the nation's shift to the organic, Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired designs and the other revival styles of the early twentieth century such as colonial revival. Though both of these styles turned their backs on the ornamental Victorian trend for a simpler alternative, the foursquare is not a subset of either of these styles; it stands on its own.

Exactly where the Foursquare idea originated is not known. Before 1890 a handful of cubical designs resembling in some respects the Foursquare appeared in magazines and pattern books, 'no frills' houses for people too poor to afford something stylish. Around 1891 architectural magazines and plan services published the first upper-middle class Foursquare homes. During the next few years the type spread quickly within the American architectural community. The simplicity of the Foursquare has often caused it to be dismissed as a mere building's house type. The use of the Foursquare by architects for their upper class clients paved the way for wider popularity. In the second half of the 1890s the foursquare passed into the large-circulation builders' magazines. These first widely published designed permanently defied the type's proportions and layout for the next quarter of a century. After 1900 the Foursquare type became a staple of magazines and plan books. Next, the new ready-cut housing industry picked it up, including such major catalogue firm as Montgomery Ward. This wide range of published plan sources served to spread the design to all parts of the country. Most Foursquare examples date from this period of middle-class popularity which lasted from the very late 1890s into the early 1920s.



Early Foursquare, "House for Frank Kidder, Esq." (1890) by Kidder and Humpherys of Denver. *Architecture and Building* 14 (1891) plate for Jan. 10.

⁶ Thomas Walter Hanchett, "The Four Square in the United States," Masters Diss., (University of Chicago, 1986).

In 1890, Franklin Kidder and John Humphreys built one of the earliest examples of a Foursquare in Denver. “In any case Denver seems to have had a love affair with the basic hip-roofer cube form. Literally thousands of variations line the street, at all price levels from duplex to mansion.”⁷ The 1891 drawing of Kidder’s home showed Foursquare design with a gable-roofed one story kitchen wing at the rear and a small Classically inspired front porch. Kidder took out the permit in October 1890 listing the construction cost at a healthy \$8,000.



Kidder House (today)
1310 Race Street

⁷ Thomas Walter Hanchett, “The Four Square in the United States,” Masters Diss., (University of Chicago, 1986). p. 44.

A 7-ROOM HOUSE FOR A 25-FOOT LOT



Honor Bill
The Cornell
No. P3236 "Already Cut" and Fitted
\$1,785.00

Can be built on a 25-foot lot

FIRST FLOOR
The Living Room. From the porch you enter the living room through a handsome glass door. Towards the right an open doorway leads to the dining room. A full corner built-in breakfast room and kitchen are arranged for convenience and space. Five windows supply light and air. Living room is 15 feet 11 inches wide by 12 feet 6 inches deep.

SECOND FLOOR
The Bedrooms. A service hall leads to four bedrooms and bath on second floor. The first bedroom measures 11 feet 6 inches wide by 11 feet 6 inches deep, and has clothes closet with wardrobe pole and shelf. Adjoining is another bedroom 9 feet wide by 9 feet 6 inches deep. Each rear bedroom has a clothes closet with wardrobe pole and shelf. Each bedroom is exceptionally well lighted and cross ventilated by two windows.

Options
Sheet Plaster and Plaster Finish, to take the place of wood shiplap, \$275.00 extra. See page 105.
Oversized Asphalt Shingles, guaranteed 17 years, instead of wood shingles, \$2,100 extra.
Stove Doors and Windows, \$72.00 extra.
Green Glass and Windows, substituted tops, \$47.00 extra.
Oak Doors, Trim and Flooring in living and dining room, \$145.00 extra.
Hardy Floor in kitchen and bathroom, \$105.00 extra.

For Prices of Plumbing, Heating, Wiring, Electric Fixtures and Shades, see pages 130 and 131.

For Our Easy Payment Plan See Page 144

SEARS, ROEBUCK AND CO. Page 37

1926 Sears, Roebuck and Co. Catalog

DADDY is that house Colonial, English, or just house? This was the favorite question of an architect's little daughter who always showed great interest in her father's work. Her inability to remember more styles than Colonial and English induced her to call all other houses "just house."


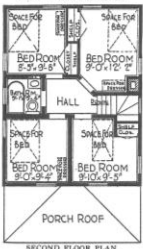
Where the space inside required it, the walls also bulge out, and the wide overhanging of the lid avoids an extra covering over these projections.

An addition in the form of a porch "decorates" the front. Although the only weight sustained by the posts is a possible snow load for a live-story building, and instead of giving stability to the entire structure, in reality they look ridiculous. Whoever might sit on the porch might just as well pose on a stage—both cases seem equally conspicuous.

The holes or windows in the box are too large in proportion, seeming to invite the public to look in, and eliminating all privacy generally associated with the sacredness of a home. A fireplace, the central feature of any real home, is entirely lacking in this box, or just house.

No wonder the owner hoped from year to year that his finances would permit a remodeling of the box. When a change in the town's planning made it necessary for him to move his house on to another lot, he was very happy over an opportunity to remodel his home! Instead of making his own changes on the building, he took the more economical course and turned over all plans to an architect.

"More economical course?" you may say. "I consider it the most expensive!" If you were obliged to wear a suit of clothes for several years, would you cut and make it yourself with the cheapest possible material? Would it not be best to employ a tailor whose long experience had taught him what styles would remain unchanged the longest, who could cut your material with the least amount of waste, who knew exactly what style suited you best? With such a man's advice and work you would feel confident that you had taken the most economical move. (Continued on page 718)

THE HOUSE BEFORE AND AFTER MOVING AND REMODELING. A NEW SERVICE WINDOW WAS ADDED AND THE HOUSE WAS PLACED ON THE NEW LOT AT RIGHT ANGLES TO ITS OLD ORIENTATION. ROWE, BILLARD & ROWE, ARCHITECTS.

ON THE PLANS, THE BEAUTIFUL INKED PORTIONS ARE THE NEW ADDITIONS, AND THOSE DRAWN IN EDITED LINES THE PARTS REMOVED.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

SECOND FLOOR PLAN

E. A. Martini, "How I Did It: From 'Just House' to Something More," *House Beautiful* 61 (1927) 686.

In Denver, thousands of Foursquare houses were built between 1894 and 1920.⁸ Many of Denver's early Foursquare houses were designed by local architects. Some local builders, such as the Fleming Brothers, used pattern books. Articles in the *American Architect and Building News* focused nation-wide attention on the Foursquare. As early as 1896, this national trade journal pictured two Foursquares designed by Denver architect William Cowe. The firm of Cowe and Harvey designed speculation houses in the early 1900s. Foursquares may be found in all of Denver's residential neighborhoods, including West Highland.⁹

After World War I the Foursquare declined in popularity. The American middle class once again unanimously craved homes in identifiable styles. The look of the Foursquare no longer fit middle class ideals. In the final years of the foursquare, designs were often decorated to recall English or Spanish stucco and timber cottages, and magazines carried articles on remodeling the 'styleless boxes' of the preceding decade.¹⁰

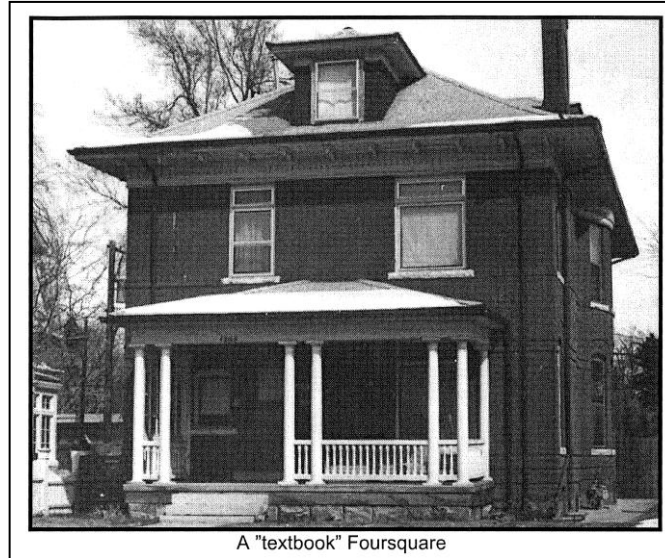
⁸ Thomas Noel and Barbara Norgren's book *Denver: The City Beautiful and Its Architects, 1893-1941* pg. 43

⁹ Thomas Noel and Barbara Norgren's book *Denver: The City Beautiful and Its Architects, 1893-1941* pg 46

¹⁰ Thomas Walter Hanchett, "The Four Square House in the United States"

EXAMPLES IN DENVER

Thomas Noel and Barbara Norgren's book *Denver: The City Beautiful and Its Architects, 1893-1941* specifically refers to the Foursquare, which the book calls a Denver Square. Though, as indicated in Hanchatt's "The Four Square House in the United States," this type of house was pervasive across the country. The Colorado Historic Society's "Field Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering" specifically shows Phillips' A.M. Ghost Residence at 1866 Gaylord Street as a "a 'textbook' foursquare" (See image below).



Phillips' 1866 Gaylord Street (1897) from the Colorado Historical Society's "Field Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering



J. S. Flowers house (1896) by William Cowe of Denver, *American Architect and Building News* 53 (1896) Plate 1031

Between 1893 and 1941, home building was heaviest in an outer ring of neighborhoods that included City Park, Washington Park, Park Hill, Hale, Cheesman Park, Congress Park, Country Club, Valverde, Barnum, West Highland, Globeville, Skyland, Berkeley, Regis, and Sloan's Lake.¹¹ "Foursquares may be found in all of Denver's older residential neighborhoods, especially Capitol Hill, Cheesman Park, and *West Highland*"¹²

Denver Squares Throughout the City



¹¹ Thomas Noel and Barbara Norgren's book *Denver: The City Beautiful and Its Architects, 1893-1941* pg. 29

¹² Noel and Norgren, *Denver: The City Beautiful*, p. 46, emphasis added

CURRENT AND PREVIOUS HISTORIC DESIGNATIONS AND IDENTIFICATIONS

The house at 5115 W. 29th Avenue does not currently have any historic designations. It is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places, nor is it a local Denver Landmark. It is not located within either a National Register or Denver historic district.

Prior to the current discussion, the building has not been identified as a historic or architectural resource in professional or general literature. For example, *The Guide to Denver Architecture* by the Denver Foundation for Architecture does not include the house among its nearly 500 buildings.¹³

Studies addressing the historic development of the City or even the Highland neighborhood have not identified the property for any reason. Similarly, although Denver Foursquare is well identified among the City's architecture, neither professional nor amateur style guides have identified this house as an example of the style.

The property is not readily identified as a work of its architect, Richard Phillips. For example, *Denver: The City Beautiful and Its Architects, 1893-1941*¹⁴, the most exhaustive publication on Denver architecture of the era recognizes Richard Phillips but does not identify this building to his body of work.

The building has not been generally identified in literature or among the general public as a visual point of orientation.

Finally, there are no known district or neighborhood planning studies or historic resource inventories that previously associated historic or architectural values with this property, and no historic preservation group previously had noted the property as notable.

Simply, prior to this review, no one has associated any historic, architectural or geographic values to this property.

¹³Mary Voelz Chandler, *Guide to Denver Architecture*, (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2013).

¹⁴ Denver City Beautiful

5115 WEST 29TH AVENUE AS A STRUCTURE WORTH PRESERVING PART 1: PHYSICAL INTEGRITY

The City of Denver's Municipal Code, Article 1, Section 30-3 provides the framework for evaluating whether a building may be designated as a structure worthy of preservation. For convenience and reference, that code is repeated here verbatim:

Sec. 30-3 Criteria for designation of structures and district for preservation

If a structure or district maintains its historic or physical integrity, it may be designated for preservation if it meets at least one (1) criterion in two (2) or more of the following three (3) categories

Thus, Sec. 30-3 has two critical components: First, the building must maintain physical integrity, second it must meet criteria associated with significance. Without integrity to convey historic or architectural values, there cannot be significance. Equally, important, integrity cannot be recreated through renovation or restoration.

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its historic or architectural significance. Section 30-2 Definitions (4.2) defines historic and physical integrity as the "ability of a structure or district to convey its historic and architectural significance. "To have historic and physical integrity means that a structure or district can be recognized as belonging to its particular time and place in Denver's history." Section 30-2(4.2) identifies seven qualities that in various combinations define integrity. These seven qualities parallel those of the National Register: Location, Setting, Design, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling and Association.

Both the proponents and DCP's report stated that the property retained not only sufficient integrity but a high degree of integrity.

Integrity is a function of significance. The relative importance of the seven aspects and the degree of required integrity varies by the type of significance and the rarity of the resource. For a property with historical associations, the standards may be lower. For resources of architectural significance, such as here, the standards are higher. Indeed to be a superior example of a common style, such as Foursquare, almost by definition a high degree of integrity is essential.

Period of Significance: The proponents state that the building is significant for its association with Charles Lambourn, as example of the Foursquare style, as an example of work by Richard Phillips, and as a landmark in the geographic sense. The proponents do not offer a period of significance, but using National Register standards, the period would start with the construction of the house (1918) and end with the death of Charles Lambourn (1928).

DCP did not concur with significance being associated with Charles Lambourn, but offered a period of significance of 1918 to 1945, when Olive Lambourn sold the property. It is on this basis that DCP argues that the stucco cladding is historic fabric.

As detailed by National Register Bulletin 16, under architecture as an example of style or the work of a master, the preferred period of significance would be the single year of completion. It is that moment when the work is most evocative. For a property important for its architecture, almost by definition, the exterior recladding and redefinition undermines the ability of the

building to convey its original design. Thus, the time that the building was re-clad was the absolute end point of its period of significance.

The appropriate period of significance for this property would be 1918.

Seven Aspects of Integrity: Contrary to the statements of the proponents and DCP, quite a lot has happened to this building and it has a very low level of integrity.

Below is an assessment of the City's seven qualities of integrity:

- **Setting.** *“Setting is the physical environment of a historic structure.”* The setting has substantially changed and continues to change. When the Lambourn house was constructed, Sheridan Boulevard was dominated by single family homes, while 29th Avenue featured both single family homes and to the east near the trolley line, streetcar commercial. Surrounding land was speckled with single family homes but also vacant lots. Today, the setting is more urban than suburban with high traffic and heavy commercial use along Sheridan. Commercial uses have replaced nearly all the residences along 29th. The vacant land has been infilled with single family homes, or in the case of the property to the south, a church/school/playground complex. Underway, the land that once held Lambourn's greenhouses is being developed as an apartment building.
- **Design.** *“The combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure and style of the structure.”* The fundamental rectangle with hipped roof remains. However, much has changed on this building, perhaps more than what has remained. The exterior has been re-clad with stucco in a manner that redefined the exterior articulation. Notably creating a belt course and eliminated the profiles of the distinctive cast stone sills. All of the windows have been replaced; though the replacements are similar, the quality is substantially less. All of the porches have been changed. In the case of the southern porches, the deck is now covered with modern concrete slab. In the case of the east porch, it is larger and more substantial than designed. Arguably, similarities between the east porch, which is clearly replacement, and that at the southeast, suggests that the southeast porch may also be a replacement. Also, the north porch was demolished and the opening turned into a window. There may have been a porch at the west doorway as well.

The building does not retain integrity of design

- **Materials.** *“The physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic structure.”* Simply put, the majority of material expressed in this building were not part of the original construction. Materials have been removed, replaced or covered over.

The building does not retain integrity of materials.

- **Workmanship.** *“The physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.”* As with design and materials, the alterations to the house, which are a majority, obliterated the potential to reflect values of workmanship.

As such, as a whole, the building does not retain integrity of workmanship.

- Feeling. *“A structure’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.”* Feeling is absent. As built, the Lambourn House was largely rural house on a 30,000 sf lot. The house today does not express that feeling. As the site exists, it fails to evoke any sense of the original building, original design or the architect’s original vision.

The building does not retain integrity of feeling.

- Association. *“The direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic structure.”* Association is non-existent. The mere fact that until this application was filed, the building was not recognized for the very qualities proponents are offering speaks to that. Even those studying Phillips had not identified this as one of his work, and as it exists today in its altered state, it is hard to make that association. Similarly, Denver has thousands of wonderful examples of the Foursquare style. This house today does not evoke the qualities of that style, let alone stand as an exceptional example.

The building does not retain integrity of association.

- Location. *“The place where the historic structure was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.”* The house is in its historic location; it has not been moved.

Fundamentally, the house lacks integrity. While it is true that it has not been moved, it does lack integrity of design, workmanship, materials, feeling, association, and setting. The fundamental point is that the majority of materials that make up the exterior of the building are not original and irreversibly so.

5115 W. 29TH AVENUE AS A STRUCTURE WORTH PRESERVING
PART 2: SIGNIFICANCE

DENVER MUNICIPAL CODE: ARTICLE 1: SECTION 30-3 CODE FOR DESIGNATING BUILDINGS WORTH PRESERVING

Provided a building has physical integrity, the City of Denver's Municipal Code, Article 1, Section 30-3 provides the framework for evaluating whether a building may be designated as a structure worthy of preservation. For convenience and reference, that code is repeated here verbatim:

Sec. 30-3 Criteria for designation of structures and district for preservation

If a structure or district maintains its historic or physical integrity, it may be designated for preservation if it meets at least one (1) criterion in two (2) or more of the following three (3) categories:

(1) History. To have historical significance, the structure or district shall be thirty (30) or more years old or have extraordinary importance to the historic development of Denver, and shall:

- a. Have direct association with the historic development of the city, state, or nation;*
- b. Be the site of a significant historic event; or*
- c. Have direct and substantial association with a person or group of persons who had influence on society.*

(2) Architecture. To have architectural significance, the structure or district shall have design quality and integrity, and shall:

- a. Embody distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or type;*
- b. Be a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder;*
- c. Contain elements of architectural design, engineering, materials, craftsmanship, or artistic merit which represents a significant or influential innovation; or*
- d. Portray the environment of a group of people or physical development of an area in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style.*

(3) Geography. To have geographical significance, the structure or district shall:

- a. Have a prominent location or be an established, familiar, and orienting visual feature of the contemporary city;*
- b. Promote understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of distinctive physical characteristics or rarity; or*
- c. Make a special contribution to Denver's distinctive character.*

In evaluating whether the criteria of history, architecture and geography are met, the landmark preservation commission ("commission") shall consider how a structure or district relates to one (1) or more historic contexts and themes.

It is entirely appropriate when a resource is to be demolished to ask that its history and evolution is understood and assessed. Yet, when a resource is suddenly “discovered” to be important when previously it was not, a critical eye must be cast – particularly here when proponents have used hyperbole in naming property the “Lambourn View House” and referencing it as the house on the hill. Important historic resources should be lost, but historic preservation should not be a tool of anti-development.

It is important to focus keenly on the facts of the issue. The Preservation Landmark Commission has recommended this property for designation under Architecture as an intact and good example of the Foursquare style and as a significant example of Richard Phillips, and under Geographic as a prominent landmark and as a physically distinctive property on a corner lot.

Heritage fundamentally disagrees with these conclusions. Our rationale is outlined in the following pages, but fundamentally, the property is not intact, and today is not a good example of Foursquare form. While designed by Phillips, it is not representative of his skills and not a significant example in his body of work. The design is not especially coherent. As such, it cannot be ascribed as “high style,” nor considered an outstanding example by an architect noted for a strong sense of organization and proportion. The house sits on a terrace lot along a two-mile slope and is not current a strong orienting visual feature. It is higher than many of the surrounding homes, but not uniquely so and not in a manner that distinguishes the building. As noted earlier in this report, at no time prior has this building been identified as architectural significant. Nor has it been characterized specifically or generally as a visually orienting element.

As described below, we do not believe that this house in its current condition, meets any of the City of Denver’s Criteria for Designation.

Specific to Denver’s Designation Code

(1) History.

To have historical significance, the structure or district shall be thirty (30) or more years old or have extraordinary importance to the historic development of Denver, and shall:

- a. Have direct association with the historic development of the city, state, or nation;*

The proponents argue that the property is noteworthy under this criterion for its association with the Lambourn family. They argue that Charles Lambourn was part of the 20th Century “Carnation Goldrush” that evolved into a major floriculture industry in Colorado. DCP staff did not think that the proponents provided sufficient documentation to demonstrate Lambourn’s specific contribution to the industry, or the industry’s influence on the city.

This criterion recognizes properties that played a significant role in the development of the city, state or nation. As with other criteria related to events, the historic development must clearly be important and the property’s specific association must be considered important as well. In this instance, the proponents contend that C. E. Lamborn played a significant role in the development of the floriculture industry by participating at the organizing meeting of the trade association and thus by extension, this property is notable. However, although this was the site of Lambourn’s

floral business, there is no evidence that this property played a unique or special role in the development of the floral industry in Denver.

As recognized by DCP staff, there is no evidence of a direct association with the development of the City, state or nation.

This criterion is NOT MET.

b. Be the site of a significant historic event.

No event noteworthy in broader or specific history of Denver has been associated with this site. Neither proponents or DCP staff contend that the property is noteworthy under this sub criterion.

This criterion is NOT MET.

c. Have direct and substantial association with a person or group of persons who had influence on society.

The proponents contend that the property is significant for its association with C. E. Lamborn, his influence on the floriculture industry, and the industry's role in society. Specifically, they cite that Lamborn attending the organizing meeting of the Colorado Flower Growers Association. That association was formed in 1928 as a state-wide trade association. Lamborn died that same year. However, as DCP staff recognizes in its staff report, the proponents did not provide sufficient information to substantiate this claim.

This criterion focuses on the physical resources associated with significant individuals who made a significant, specific and direct contribution to society – persons significant in our past. Persons “significant in our past” refers to individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a historic context.

There is no evidence in the historic record that C. E. Lamborn played a significant or influential role in the developer of Denver or more tangently in the in the creation of the floriculture's trade association and in that organization's influence on Denver.

This criterion is NOT MET.

(2) Architecture. To have architectural significance, the structure or district shall have design quality and integrity, and shall:

a. Embody distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or type;

Both the proponents and DCP staff believe that the house at 5115 W. 29th Avenue is a Classical revival house of Foursquare form. DPC states “the house is an intact and good example of a Denver Square residence with classical elements. The substantial two-story Denver Square house, with its prominent hilltop location, is an excellent example of the style as evidenced by its hipped roof, broad overhanging eaves, large rectangular double hung windows, and Doric columns. Additionally, it was designed with a unique two-story corner bay entrance and intentionally sited for a commanding view of both downtown Denver and of the Rocky Mountains.”

The Denver Foursquare house is ubiquitous. The style appeared in response to Victorian Queen Anne age at the time that Denver's population exploded from 106,000 in 1890 when the style first appeared to 290,000 in 1930 when the style waned. There are literally thousands throughout the city built over the style's three decade span of popularity. Hence, for landmark designation under this criterion, it should not simply be sufficient to be reflection of the style or type. Using that application of the criteria would result in hundreds of houses being landmarked, if not more. For the criteria to be met, a property should be a superior if not exceptional example of the style.

Yet, the house at 5115 W. 29th Street is not a good example of the Foursquare style. In the first instance, changes over time have substantially undermined the expression of the house's original design. One of the most egregious alterations is the stuccoed finish. DCP allows that this is historic fabric because it was done before Olive Lambourn sold the house and hence within the period of significance. As discussed above, this definition of the period of significance is incorrect. Particularly for a house significant for its architecture, that period would end before any substantial alterations. The very act of recladding the house would end the period of significance under this category. It is important also to note that this recladding created new beltcourses, and eliminated the profile of the decorative cast stone sills. It was not simply recladding but redefining the design. Add to the mix that the windows have been replaced, that the east porch has been replaced, the north porch replaced, and the porched redecked with concrete. The interior, which plays a critical role in the Foursquare definition, has been entirely gutted. The house indeed is marked more by change than by consistency.

Apart from the changes over time, the house also suffers fundamental design flaws. The corner entry that both proponents and DCP highlight as being an important design element is poorly integrated into the design. It does not align with the bay structure, fit within the hexagonal bay and connects to the house in a rather clunky manner. That the second floor window and entry door are not aligned is frankly quite odd for an architect as skilled as Phillips. Similarly, the proponents and DCP staff emphasize the siting and use of the corner lot as being an important element. In the first instance, the house is sited in a traditional north-south orientation and does not make use of the large corner lot in the design. Further, the east elevation facing Zenobia Street is as visible and prominent as that facing 29th Avenue. Yet, it is not treated not as street façade but in a utilitarian fashion. Rather than expressing Foursquare organization and proportion, the vertical and horizontal lines are incoherent – nothing relates to anything else on this elevation. This same lack of organization and proportion is present on the west and north elevations; while the west elevation is largely out of site, the north elevation is visible from Zenobia Street.

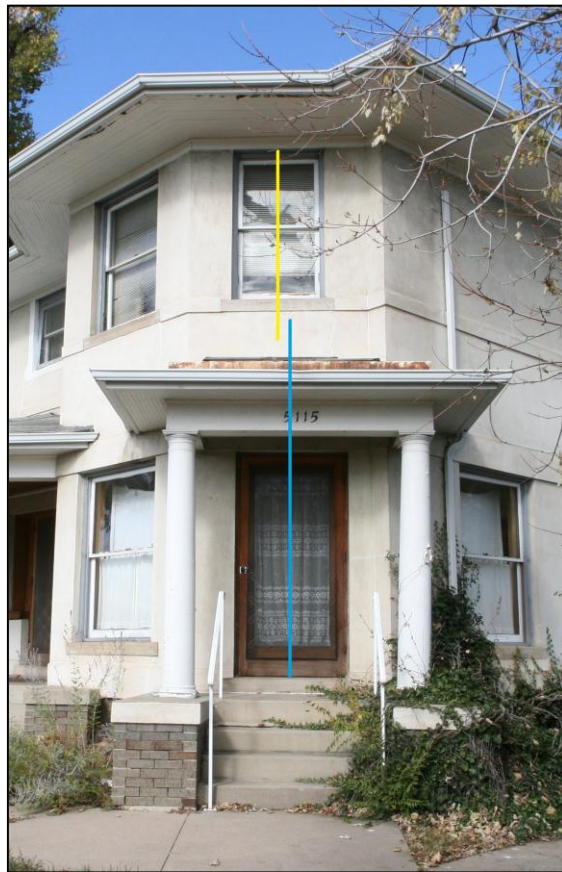
The house does capture some aspects of the Foursquare design. But, compared to most Foursquare examples in the city, it lacks the keystones and subtleties of the design. Designation under this criterion should represent superior and intact examples of the style. This building is not nearly intact. The design is not a good expression of the Foursquare.

This criterion is NOT MET.



East Elevation, Looking West from Zenobia Street

The grid (blue) illustrates how the openings needlessly do not align either on the vertical or horizontal. A good example of Foursquare design would have strong organization and proportion.



Southeast Corner, Entrance, Looking Northwest

This photograph illustrates how the porch, door and second floor window are out of alignment. The blue line is centered on the door; the yellow line is centered on the window.

b. Be a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder;

Both proponents and DCP staff recommend designation of this property as a significant example of work by Richard Phillips. DCP staff states that this house represents the evolution of Phillip's concept of the style, suggesting that this may represent a capstone to his career.

Richard Phillips was a talented and prolific architect who among other accomplishments, was known to have designs some of Denver's most classic Foursquare homes. The Office of Archaeology and Historic features his house at 1866 Gaylord Street as "a textbook" Foursquare. He matched that with an equally good house across the street. As called for in the style, these houses are marked by a subtle sense of proportion and organization. It expresses a strong sense of design.

The design of this house is attributed to Phillips based on the permit card identifying him as the architect. No architectural plans are known to exist. This house previously had not been identified as being a product of his design and indeed the staff report from August evaluating the application for certification as non-historic, did not recognized this as a Phillips design.

To be eligible under this criterion, the house must have sufficient integrity. The discussion of the many changes to the design, including recladding which redefined the house, can be found above. The house does not have sufficient integrity to convey Phillips' original design.

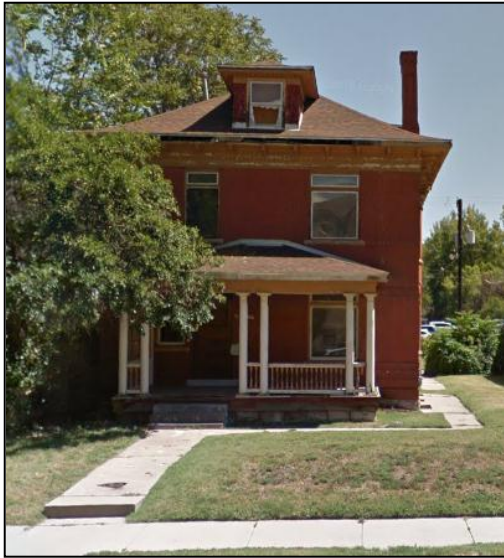
To be eligible under this criterion, a property must also be a significant example of the architect's work. This is troublesome because the design is lacks the very qualities that represent the style and is reflected in the architect's other major works – a subtle yet strong sense of organization and proportion.

This is most obvious in one of the elements both the proponents and DCP staff note as being a clear demonstration of Phillips' skill - the importance of the site, its corner location and its prominence which translate into a wonderful design opportunity. As noted earlier, as built, apart from a corner set of stairs, the design opportunity was largely lost. The house is sited on the north-south axis, not capitalizing on the large corner lot. He also designed the street-facing east elevation in a utilitarian fashion, as one would do with a rear elevation – and even here lacks the coherency anticipated from a Foursquare.

The other key element of this corner lot is the corner entry. Both proponents and DCP staff identify this as a key element of the design. But again, a close look shows that the entry is more clunky than elegant. Rather than fitting seamlessly into the elevations, rather than strengthening the design, and unifying the south and east elevations, the porch and doorway have the appearance of simply being attached as best as possible. The strongest telltale is the odd off-center attachment of the doorway to that length of the hexagonal bay, combining with the misalignment with the second floor windows. These are not the hallmarks of great architecture.

An examination of Phillips' work – whether commercial or residential – shows an exceptional hand, a solid sense of organization, a coherent sense of proportion. This house evokes none of those characteristic. Comparing this house with his other known work is like night and day. This property is nowhere as good as his classic Foursquare for A. M. Ghost in 1897 at 1866 Gaylord Street, while his grandest residential commission is probably the Cones House in 1906 at 4633 Montview Boulevard.

To be nominated under this criterion, a property needs to be a significant example of the work of a master. In the historic record, no one has identified this house as an important work by Richard Phillips. Within his body of work, there are much better examples.



A. M. Ghost House, 1866 Gaylord St. (1897)



Cones House, 4633 Montview Blvd. (1906)

This criterion is NOT MET.

c. Contain elements of architectural design, engineering, materials, craftsmanship, or artistic merit which represents a significant or influential innovation; or

The house at 5115 W. 29th Avenue is not associated with any elements of design, engineering, materials, craftsmanship or artistic merit that represents a significant or influential innovation. The house is frame construction. It has been modified over the years so original design is not expressed and original craftsmanship not apparent. Most materials have been replaced. Neither proponents nor DCP staff contends that the property is noteworthy under this sub criterion.

This criterion is NOT MET.

d. Portray the environment of a group of people or physical development of an area in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style.

The house at 5115 W. 29th Avenue was built as a single family residence in an area defined by single family homes along side streets and by commercial enterprises along 29th Avenue and Sheridan Boulevard. The house is not associated with a group of people or the physical development of an area in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style. Neither proponents nor DCP staff contends that the property is noteworthy under this sub criterion.

This criterion is NOT MET.

(3) Geography. To have geographical significance, the structure or district shall:

a. Have a prominent location or be an established, familiar, and orienting visual feature of the contemporary city;

Both proponents and DCP have stated that the property meets this criteria by virtue of its elevated location on the streetscape and that it would have been prominent to streetcar riders as the #29 line turned south at Yates Street one block to the east. Both also state that the site is significant for its commanding views. Both proponents emphasize that the site is an “imposing hilltop site.” The City staff report states that this is a “strong orienting visual feature at a busy intersection.

At its core, this criterion focuses on those properties that are landmarks in the true sense of the word. These would be features that are a point of orientation, something a resident might reference in giving direction to a visitor, so prominent that it could not be missed. The timeframe is contemporary. Whether the house was or was not visible to streetcar riders in the past is not germane. Similarly, the focus is at the resource, not from the resource. Whether there are or are not commanding views is also not germane.

The characterization of the house as being on a hilltop is inaccurate. As discussed, the grade at this location runs south to north for approximately 1 mile. The house sits on terraced land carved midpoint from the rising grade, approximately a half mile from the crest. While the site is elevated, it is not so elevated as to stand out prominently from the streetscape.



29th Avenue and Sheridan Boulevard, Looking North (left) and East (right)



29th Avenue and Yates Street, Looking West

Top right and bottom, blue arrow identifies the house at 5115 W. 29th Avenue

This house is not a familiar and orienting feature in Denver. It is not a point of reference or orientation in the streetscape. It is not located on a busy intersection and is not distinctly visible. Located just east of the high traffic Sheridan Boulevard, this house is invisible to drivers. From the east looking west along 29th Avenue, the house is visible but not prominently so. Rather is lost in the visual array of the streetscape.

This criterion is NOT MET.

b. Promote understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of distinctive physical characteristics or rarity; or

Both proponents and DCP staff believe that this house promotes an understanding and appreciation of the urban environment. Both focus on the elevated corner lot location. Both emphasize that this is stylistically distinctive in the neighborhood.

As discussed earlier, Heritage does not believe the property has sufficient integrity to convey values of design; changes over time have essentially eliminated the original design. And as discussed earlier, Heritage does not believe that this is a particularly successful design. Both proponents and DCP staff emphasize the value of the corner lot; yet, the design for the corner entry lacks competent organization and is best characterized as clunky. Similarly, the street facing east elevation lacks coherency. It may be unusual, but not in good way.

While many of the surrounding houses are one-story, the neighborhood also has a large number of larger homes of higher quality and better design. As Noel and Norgren note in discussing Foursquares in *Denver: The City Beautiful and its Architects, 1893-1941*, there are a great many examples of the style in West Highland. Arguably had this house possessed special values to the neighborhood, that contribution would have been noted in city studies and histories of the neighborhood. It has not been.



New Apartment 29th Avenue and Yates Street



2930 Zenobia Street



2800 Zenobia Street



29th Avenue and Xavier Street, Looking West
Blue arrow identifies 5115 W. 29th Avenue



Foursquare at SW Corner of 34th Avenue and Wolff Street

The house at 5115 W. 29th Avenue does not provide an understanding or appreciation of the urban environment.

This criterion is NOT MET.

c. Make a special contribution to Denver's distinctive character.

The house at 5115 W. 29th Avenue does not make a special contribution to Denver's distinctive character. Modified over time, it no longer has the integrity to convey its original architectural design. Today, the house is largely lacking coherent organization, articulation, and proportion. Prior to this application, no historic, architectural or geographic values had been ascribed to this structure. Neither proponents nor DCP staff contend that the property is noteworthy under this sub-criterion

This criterion is NOT MET.

Summary

City Code 30-3 requires that a property must have sufficient physical integrity and then may be considered worthy of preservation if it meets at least one (1) criterion in two (2) or more categories.

Integrity: Heritage does not believe that the property has sufficient integrity to convey historic or architectural values. The exterior of the building has been re clad with stucco which creates new belt courses and eliminates the profile of cast stone door and window sills. Other changes include window replacement, replacement of the east porch, transformation of the north porch into a window and the installation of a concrete deck at the porches. Proponents and Landmarks believes that the stucco re cladding of the exterior is acceptable as this was thought to be completed while the widow of C. E. Lambourn owned the house, and therefore in the period of

significance. This period of significance is inaccurate. For an architecturally significant resource, the period would be that time that the house was intact. By definition, the recladding would have been the endpoint of the period of significance. Even granting the associative values under History, the period of significance would have ended in 1928 when C. E. Lambourn died. In the proponents and Landmarks analysis, the stucco cladding is historic fabric. In Heritage's analysis this recladding is not historic fabric but rather an egregious alteration of the original design.

Category: History: The house is associated with C E. Lambourn. There is no evidence however that the site had a direct association with the historic development of the city, state, or nation; that it was associated with a significant historic event; or that Lambourn was a person who had influence on society. The house is not worthy of designation under this category.

Category: Architecture: The house was designed by Richard Phillips in the Foursquare form. Due to alterations, the house does not embody distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or type. For the same reasons, it is not a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder. The wood-framed house did not contain innovative elements of design, and finally does not portray the environment of a group of people or physical development of an area in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style. The house is not worthy of designation under this category.

Category: Geography: Largely lost in the streetscape, the house has not and does not serve as a familiar or orienting feature such as one might use for direction. Due to integrity issues, it does not promote understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of distinctive physical characteristics or rarity. And again due to integrity issues, does not make a special contribution to Denver's distinctive character. The house is not worthy of designation under this category.

Within the context of the City's designation criteria for structures worth preserving, the site should not be considered significant. It lacks historical, architectural, and geographic significance. It is not worthy of designation for preservation.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5115 Developers LLC has proposed demolishing the house at 5115 West 29th Avenue and redeveloping the 15,333 square foot parcel. The roughly 4,000 square foot, two-story house was built for C. E. Lambourn in 1918, designed by noted Denver architect Richard Phillips. As part of the planning process, an application for “Certificate of Non-Historic Status” was submitted. To this point, the house had not been identified as being historically or architecturally significant.

Subsequently, neighborhood residents filed an application for designation as a Denver Landmark. That application was based on

- Historic significance for association with C. E. Lambourn and the development of the floriculture industry in Denver
- Architectural significance as a superior example of Foursquare design and as a significant work by architect Phillips.
- Geographic significance as a prominently sited “house on the hill” visual point of reference and as an iconic and unique design the neighborhood.

DCP staff then recommended designation of the house, with the Denver Landmark Preservation Commission endorsing the staff report. That staff report stated the house was:

- Architectural significance as a superior example of Foursquare design and as a significant work by architect Phillips.
- Geographic significance as a prominently sited “house on the hill” visual point of reference and as an iconic and unique design the neighborhood.

Proponents and DCP concurred that:

- 1) The property had sufficient integrity to convey historic and architectural values.
- 2) Architecturally, the defining factors were the prominent corner large site strategically developed by architect Phillips to create a variant of the Foursquare form that represented the evolution of Foursquare design from its 1890s beginnings to this World War I era house.
- 3) Geographically, the imposing hilltop site was visually orienting landmark and the development distinctive in a neighborhood otherwise defined by small houses.

In order to fully understand the historic and architectural aspects of the site, the owners hired Heritage Consulting Group to research the history of the building and to analyze its historic and architectural values against the Denver Criteria for Landmark Designation. Heritage is a national firm that assists the owners and developers of older and historic buildings in understanding the relative significance of their resources. In its 31 years, Heritage has prepared over 300 National Register Nominations and has evaluated thousands of cultural resources. Most recently, Heritage Consulting Group worked with Sage Hospitality in the transformation of Union Station into a transportation/hotel/restaurant/retail hub.

Based on its in depth analysis, Heritage does not concur that the property is eligible for designation under any criteria. Specifically,

1. Heritage does not believe that the property has sufficient integrity to convey historic or architectural values. The exterior of the building has been reclad with stucco which creates new

belt courses and eliminates the profile of cast stone door and window sills. Other changes include window replacement, replacement of the east porch, transformation of the north porch into a window and the installation of a concrete deck at the porches.

2. Of note, a critical distinction is that the proponents and Landmarks believes that the recladding of the exterior with stucco is acceptable as this was thought to be completed while the widow of C. E. Lambourn owned the house, and therefore in the period of significance. This period of significance is inaccurate. For an architecturally significant resource, the period would be that time that the house was intact. By definition, the recladding would have been the endpoint of the period of significance. Even granting the associative values under History, the period of significance would have ended in 1928 when C. E. Lambourn died. In the proponents and Landmarks analysis, the stucco cladding is historic fabric. In Heritage's analysis this recladding is not historic fabric but rather an egregious alteration of the original design.

3. Heritage does not concur that the design of the house strategically captures the prominent corner elevation. Rather than a corner orientation, the house has a traditional north-south orientation. The very visible east elevation facing Zenobia Street is plain and utilitarian in form; in design, it lacks coherent horizontal and vertical articulation.

4. Similarly, Heritage does not concur that the design for the house representative of the work of a master. The corner entry at the southeast, which proponents consider as an expression of the strength of the design, is in fact rather inelegant, not quite fitting with the hexagonal bay and being misaligned vertically. Additionally, the design does not attempt to capitalize on the corner or to create a continuity of design across the street facing elevation. Rather, elements appear forced to fit.

5. The best Foursquare is blithe in design. It is beguilingly simple which belies a subtle yet strong manipulation of scale, proportion, and organization. This property has fundamental Foursquare feature (cube-massing and hipped roof), but lacks the strength of organization to be considered a superior or evolutionary example of the style.

6. Richard Phillips is a master architect in Denver's Foursquare heritage. Indeed, SHPO uses his design for 1866 Gaylord to illustrate a textbook example of the style. Nonetheless, the limited success of the design for 5115 W. 29th does not represent a bookend of stylistic evolution, and does not represent an architect capturing the potential of a site. He has many better works.

7. Geographically, much is made of the prominent hilltop site as a visual marker. The site is terraced, but a midpoint of a 200 foot rise north from Sloan Lake to 34th Avenue. For the most part, the house is lost in the commercial streetscape clutter of 29th Avenue and Sheridan Boulevard. It is not a visual, orienting landmark.

8. And while the house is sited on a terrace and is two stories, it is not the largest house in the neighborhood or the purest example of Foursquare. While different, it is not so different as to make a unique and special contribution to the City or to the neighborhood.

Within the context of the City's designation criteria for structures worth preserving, the site should not be considered significant. It lacks historical, architectural, and geographic significance. It is not worthy of designation for preservation.