

1 **BY AUTHORITY**

2 ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
3 SERIES OF 2020

COUNCIL BILL NO. CB20-1399  
COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE:  
4 Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure

5 **ABILL**

6 **For an ordinance designating 910 Galapago Street as a structure for**  
7 **preservation.**

8 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to Section 30-4, Denver Revised Municipal Code, the Landmark  
9 Preservation Commission has transmitted to the Council a proposed designation of a structure for  
10 preservation; and

11 **WHEREAS**, based upon evidence received by the Landmark Preservation Commission at a  
12 hearing on November 17, 2020, the staff report, and evidence received at the hearing before City  
13 Council on December 21, 2020, the structure at 910 Galapago Street meets the criteria for designation  
14 as a structure for preservation as set out in Section 30-3, Denver Revised Municipal Code, as amended,  
15 by maintaining its integrity, being more than 30 years old, and meeting the criteria in the following three  
16 categories from Section 30-3(3):

17 *a. Having direct association with a significant historical event or with the historical*  
18 *development of the city, state, or nation;*

19 The building at 910 Galapago Street, also known as Smith’s Chapel, is directly tied to the  
20 development of Denver’s Westside, particularly La Alma Lincoln Park, one of Denver’s oldest surviving  
21 residential neighborhoods. Alexander Cameron Hunt, an early resident and developer, deeded land to  
22 the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad for Burnham Yards, spurring both commercial and residential  
23 building. Beginning in the 1870s the area developed as a residential neighborhood for laborers and  
24 immigrants who worked for the emerging railroad, mining, and other industries. The chapel was  
25 constructed early in the next decade through a donation by Denver land developer John W. Smith.

26 The chapel at 910 Galapago Street represents the early growth of the La Alma Lincoln  
27 neighborhood. When Smith’s Chapel was completed in 1882, it was “situated on the outskirts of the  
28 city.” However, at least seven other churches were constructed in the area between 1882 and 1893,  
29 clearly reflecting that there was enough residential growth there to support them. Beyond their religious  
30 significance, churches historically demonstrate that a community is well-established and stable, and as  
31 such, speculators could use a church’s presence as a form of advertisement for potential investors. In  
32 1881, notable Denver businessman John W. Smith gifted four lots plus \$10,000 in design and  
33 construction costs for a chapel to the Church for the Evangelical United Brethren. A shrewd investor, it  
34 is likely Smith saw the church as a way to attract both parishioners and other potential residents to this

1 side of the neighborhood. By the 1890s, the area was a dense and thriving neighborhood, with  
2 additional room to grow, but at the time there were enough residents to justify essential neighborhood  
3 services including commercial buildings and churches. The chapel at 910 Galapago Street is the oldest  
4 extant church extant in Denver's Westside neighborhood.

5 *c. Embodying distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type;*

6 The structure at 910 Galapago Street was completed in 1882 in the Gothic Revival style of  
7 architecture, which was typical for the period. Smith's Chapel is listed on the Colorado State Register  
8 of Historic Properties under Criteria C, for its architectural style. The character defining features of  
9 the Gothic Revival style that can be seen in the chapel include its steeply pitched front-gabled roof,  
10 use of ashlar masonry (rhyolite stone), distinct patterns produced by a contrasting blonde sandstone  
11 detailing atop the engaged buttresses and along the water table and belt courses, tall pointed arched  
12 windows on the main façade clustered in a group of three, as well as pointed arched windows and  
13 doors found throughout the 1882 building, and the prominent steeple.

14 As the Colorado State Register nomination points out, "Smith's Chapel is also a good local  
15 example of Gothic Revival style ecclesiastical architecture in Denver. The Chapel and property retain  
16 good overall integrity, and the original exterior design remains visible in its plan, masonry  
17 construction, and pointed arch window and door openings." A 2 ½ story addition from 1923 on the  
18 east side of the original chapel building, doubled the size of the overall building. While the addition  
19 is clearly of its own era, constructed of red-brick in a square footprint, it is compatible with the original  
20 chapel. By including pointed arch windows on the upper floor and half-height engaged buttresses  
21 capped in contrasting masonry on the south façade from the ground to the top of the second floor, it  
22 references the gothic revival design.

23 *i. Being a physical attribute of a neighborhood, community, or the city that is a source*  
24 *of pride or cultural understanding;*

25 La Alma Lincoln Park, where the structure at 910 Galapago Street is located, is one of  
26 Denver's oldest surviving residential neighborhood that it embodies the history of the early Denver,  
27 and is significant a century later for its central role in the Chicano Movement. Over the years, the  
28 Westside became the soul of Denver's Hispanos, Mexican American, and Mexican community.  
29 Throughout the early twentieth century the United Brethren Church congregation continued in the  
30 neighborhood as Westside residents suffered from the Great Depression and subsequent  
31 discriminatory housing, urban planning, and financing policies.

1 The United Brethren Church congregation was dwindling at a time when neighborhood community  
2 organizations were arising in response to the systematic discrimination that had affected West  
3 Denver residents for decades. In the early 1960s the United Brethren either deeded or sold Smith's  
4 Chapel to the Denver Inner City Parish (DICP), an organization that would contribute significantly to  
5 the Chicano Movement in the city. Smith's Chapel provided a home to the DICP, which quickly  
6 became a "meaningful institution at the heart of the community." The Chicano Movement was  
7 seeding an explosion of neighborhood and community organizations, among them the Denver Inner  
8 City Parish. In its first decade, DICP served as a place of worship, a social agency, a food bank, a  
9 school, a meeting center, and its leaders lobbied for welfare, student, and farm workers' rights –  
10 issues that directly impacted many residents of the area.

11 The important role of the Denver Inner City Parish at 910 Galapago Street is perhaps most  
12 evident during the West High School blowouts of 1969. After years of unequal treatment, West  
13 Denver residents responded to rising tensions among the backdrop of the national Civil Rights  
14 Movement and opposition to Vietnam. Spurred in part by ill-treatment by a teacher whose insults  
15 about Chicano culture went unabated, students at West High School walked out on March 20, 1969.  
16 More than 300 students and community members converged in protest, and the police responded  
17 with tear gas, billy clubs, and arrests. DICP provided a physical refuge to many protesters during the  
18 turmoil and was a rallying point for Crusade for Justice leader Rudolfo "Corky" Gonzales. This event  
19 became the catalyst that spawned more walkouts among hundreds of students from other Denver  
20 junior high and high schools.

21 In the following decades, the Denver Inner City Parish became even more vital to the  
22 community, expanding programs run by local leaders such as Gerry Garcia. Other notable former  
23 directors that were involved with the development of DICP and its programming include: Gloria Leyba  
24 (who went on to serve as one of the first Latinas to serve in the Colorado House of Representatives),  
25 Clark Vestal (who went on to serve for several decades as a Presbyterian Pastor in a neighborhood  
26 church in the Baker neighborhood), Tom Friesen (who worked with international NGOs and then  
27 worked as regional director for HUD), Steve Johnson (who spearheaded and developed most of  
28 DICP's more visionary programs including Young Father's Program, La Academia, Community RE-  
29 entry for the Formerly Incarcerated). Through the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, Smith's Chapel provided  
30 a place for the Chicano community to meet, socialize, and solidify their attempts for equality and  
31 democracy.

32 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF**  
33 **DENVER:**

1           **Section 1.**   That based upon the analysis referenced above, and the evidence received at the  
2 public hearings, certain property at 910 Galapago Street, and legally described as follows, together with  
3 all improvements situated and located thereon, be and the same is hereby designated as a structure  
4 for preservation:

5           Lots 17, 18, 19 and 20, Block 9,  
6           Smith's Addition to the City of Denver,  
7           City and County of Denver,  
8           State of Colorado.

9           **Section 2.**   The effect of this designation may enhance the value of the property and of the  
10 structure, but may delay or require denial of building permits found unacceptable by the Landmark  
11 Preservation Commission under the criteria contained in the Design Guidelines for Historic Structures  
12 and Districts and Section 30-6 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code.

13           **Section 3.**   This ordinance shall be recorded among the records of the Clerk and Recorder of  
14 the City and County of Denver.

15                           **[THE REMAINDER OF THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK]**

1 COMMITTEE APPROVAL DATE: December 8, 2020  
2 MAYOR-COUNCIL DATE: December 8, 2020 by Consent  
3 PASSED BY THE COUNCIL: December 21, 2020  
4 *Steve Filmer* - PRESIDENT  
5 APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_ - MAYOR \_\_\_\_\_  
6 ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_ - CLERK AND RECORDER,  
7 EX-OFFICIO CLERK OF THE  
8 CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER  
9 NOTICE PUBLISHED IN THE DAILY JOURNAL: \_\_\_\_\_;  
10 PREPARED BY: Adam C. Hernandez, Assistant City Attorney DATE: December 10, 2020  
11 Pursuant to section 13-12, D.R.M.C., this proposed ordinance has been reviewed by the office of  
12 the City Attorney. We find no irregularity as to form, and have no legal objection to the proposed  
13 ordinance. The proposed ordinance is not submitted to the City Council for approval pursuant to  
14 §3.2.6 of the Charter.  
15 Kristin M. Bronson, Denver City Attorney  
16 BY: *Jonathan Griffin*, Assistant City Attorney DATE: Dec 10, 2020