



DENVER LANDMARK PRESERVATION COMMISSION INDIVIDUAL STRUCTURE LANDMARK DESIGNATION APPLICATION

This form is for use in nominating individual structures and districts in the City and County of Denver. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." Questions about the application or designation process can be directed to Denver Landmark Preservation staff at landmark@denvergov.org or (303) 865-2709.

Property Address: 910 Galapago Street, Denver, CO 80204

The following are required for the application to be considered complete:

- Property Information
- Applicant Information and Signatures
- Criteria for Significance
- Statement of Significance
- Period of Significance
- Property Description
- Statement of Integrity
- Historic Context
- Bibliography
- Photographs
- Boundary Map
- Application Fee



1. Property Information

Name of Property

Historic Name: Smith's Chapel

Other or Current Name: Smith's Chapel

Location

Address: 910 Galapago Street, Denver, CO 80204

Legal Description: L17 to 20 INC BLK 9 SMITH ADD

Number of resources:

<u># Contributing</u>	<u># Non-Contributing</u>	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>Primary Structures</u>
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>Accessory Structures</u>
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>Features</u>

Contributing and Noncontributing Features or Resources

The property consists of a single structure built in several phases. Construction was completed in 1882. Major Additions/Alterations - north wall expanded between 1897 and 1903, three-story addition on east side (1923), porch added on south (1926), ADA accessibility entrance and egress added to north between 1980 and 1986.

Maps show a parsonage and outer building existed on the northern portion of the lot through part of the 20th century, but these structures were gone by the 1960s.

General Property Data

Date of construction: 1882

Architect (if known): Unknown

Builder (if known): Unknown (local craftspeople; see applicant's note on page 28)

Original Use: Evangelist United Brethren Church

Current Use: Vacant

Source(s) of information for above:

Smith's Chapel Historic Structure Assessment, 2004; Colorado Cultural Resource Survey (5DV.27), Colorado Historical Society, 1980; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: 1890-1962; Robinson's Atlas of 1887 and 1962.

Previous documentation

List previous historic survey and/or if property is listed or eligible for listing in the State or National Register of Historic Places.

Colorado Cultural Resource Survey, 1980; Listed on the Colorado State Register, 2004 (5DV.27)



2. Owner/Applicant Information

An application for designation may be submitted by:

- Owner(s) of the property or properties, or
- Member(s) of city council, or
- Manager of Community Planning and Development, or
- Three residents of Denver, if they are not owners of the property or properties

Owner Information

Name: Galapago Commercial LLC., Matt Slaby

Address: 61 Newton St., Denver, CO 80218

Phone: 303-877-0273

Email: Matt@mattslaby.com

Primary Applicant (if not owner)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Prepared by

Name: Leslie Krupa

Address: 125 N. College St., Schenectady, NY 12305

Phone: 303-941-0971

Email: lkrupa@gmail.com

Applicant's Advisors: Historic Denver, Annie Levinsky (alevinsky@historicdenver.org) & Shannon Stage ([sstage@historicdenver.org](mailto:ssstage@historicdenver.org))



Owner Applicant:

I / We, the undersigned, acting as owner(s) of the property described in this application for landmark designation do, hereby, give my consent to the designation of this structure as a structure for preservation.

I understand that this designation transfers with the title of the property should the property be sold, or if legal or beneficial title is otherwise transferred.

Owner(s): Matt Slaby Date: 10/8/2020
(please print)

Owner(s) Signature: _____

For individual designations, if the owner does not support the designation, the applicants must conduct outreach to the owner. Describe below the efforts to contact the owner to discuss designation and other possible preservation alternatives. Please provide dates and details of any communications or meetings with the property owner, or the property owner's representatives.

N/A because applicant is owner

Other Applicant(s):

Applicant Name: _____ Date: _____
(please print)

Applicant Signature: _____

Applicant Address: _____

Applicant Name: _____ Date: _____
(please print)

Applicant Signature: _____

Applicant Address: _____

Applicant Name: _____ Date: _____
(please print)

Applicant Signature: _____

Applicant Address: _____

3. Significance

Criteria for Significance

To qualify as a Landmark, a property must meet at least three significance criteria. Check the applicable criteria from the following list.

- A. It has a direct association with a significant historic event or with the historical development of the city, state, or nation;**
- B. It has direct and substantial association with a recognized person or group of persons who had influence on society;
- C. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type;**
- D. It is a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder;
- E. It contains elements of design, engineering, materials, craftsmanship, or artistic merit which represent a significant innovation or technical achievement;
- F. It represents an established and familiar feature of the neighborhood, community or contemporary city, due to its prominent location or physical characteristics;
- G. It promotes understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of distinctive physical characteristics or rarity;
- H. It represents an era of culture or heritage that allows an understanding of how the site was used by past generations;
- I. It is a physical attribute of a neighborhood, community, or the city that is a source of pride or cultural understanding;
- J. It is associated with social movements, institutions, or patterns of growth or change that contributed significantly to the culture of the neighborhood, community, city, state, or nation.**

Statement of Significance

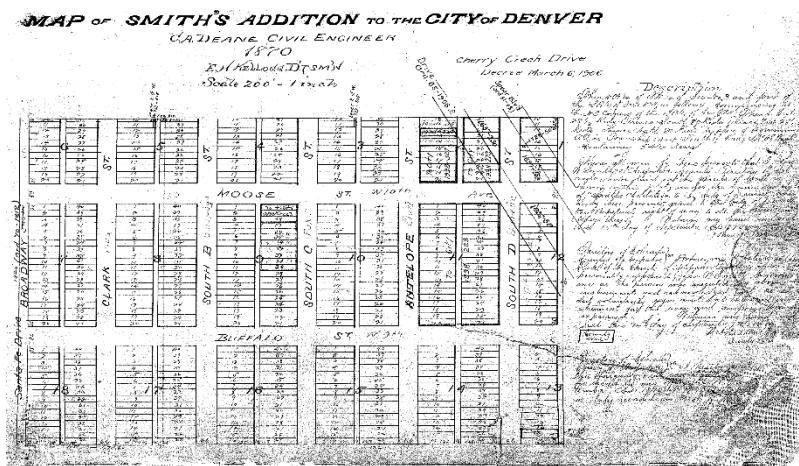
Category A: It has a direct association with a significant historic event or with the historical development of the city, state, or nation;

Smith's Chapel is directly tied to the development of Denver's Westside, particularly La Alma Lincoln Park (LALP), one of Denver's oldest surviving residential neighborhood.¹ Beginning in the 1870s the area developed as a residential enclave, initially for wealthy land speculators, but soon it attracted laborers who worked for the emerging railroad and mining markets. The need for labor was particularly increased in the 1870s after Alexander Cameron Hunt deeded nearby

¹ Historic Denver, Inc. with Fairhill & Co., "La Alma Lincoln Park." Historic Context."

land to the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad for Burnham Yards, and both commercial and residential buildings followed.²

When Smith's Chapel was completed in 1882, it was "situated on the outskirts of the city," but the Rocky Mountain News noted that it was "of a size that will accommodate the rapid growth of that section."³ At least seven other churches were constructed in the area between 1882 and 1893, clearly reflecting that there was enough residential growth there to support them.⁴ Beyond their religious significance, churches historically demonstrate that a community is well-established and stable, and as such, speculators could use a church's presence as a form of advertisement for potential investors. By the 1890s the neighborhood was well on its way to becoming a dense neighborhood, with still room to grow, but at the time there were enough residents to justify essential neighborhood needs including commercial buildings and churches.



In 1881, notable Denver Businessman John W. Smith gifted four nearby lots plus \$10,000 in design and construction costs for a chapel to the Church for the Evangelical United Brethren. A shrewd investor, it is likely Smith saw the church as a way to attract both parishioners and other potential residents to this side of the neighborhood. Smith was a prominent investor who

"Subdivision Plats in Denver," City and County of Denver (see footnote 5)

arrived in Denver in 1860. Along with H.C. Brown, Smith was one of the men "primarily responsible for the development of Capitol Hill", platting a subdivision in that area in 1868, called J.W. Smith's Addition. Then two years later, in 1870, Smith platted a separate subdivision in the Westside, called Smith's Addition, most likely because he saw this area of town as a potential for extreme growth after A.C. Hunt deeded some of his homestead in the Westside to Denver & Rio Grande Railroad.⁵ Smith's Chapel was built twelve years later at the northeast corner of Water and Buffalo Streets, now W. 9th Ave. and Galapago Street. Smith was also well-known for constructing Denver's first water supply, a thirty-mile ditch which now bears his name and is a Denver Landmark (5DV.1813).⁶ The project was begun in 1864 and used water from the South Platte River to initially irrigate Capitol Hill, attracting Denver's wealthiest investors with the

² Ibid., 13.

³ Rocky Mountain News, April 10, 1882.

⁴ HDI La Alma Lincoln Park Historic Context, p. 14

⁵ "Subdivision Plats in Denver," City and County of Denver, accessed October 7, 2020, <https://www.denvergov.org/subdivisionsurveys/Result?SubId=0&SubName=smiths&Quarter=&Section=&Township=&Range=>

⁶ R. Laurie and Thomas Simmons, *Discover Denver (HDI) Historic Context: The Instant City – The Gold Rush and Early Settlement, 1858-1892* (Denver: Historic Denver, Inc.), 8.

promise of lush lawns and beautiful gardens.⁷ A railroad president, hotel proprietor, contractor, real estate investor, flour and woolen mill entrepreneur, and one of only two Denver men reported to “reach six figures” in the 1870s⁸, Smith’s connection to both the neighborhood and the chapel that bears his name reflects how much the chapel was tied to the growth of Denver in its earliest decades.

Category C: It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type;

Smith’s Chapel was completed in 1882 in the Victorian Gothic/Gothic Revival style of architecture, which was typical for the period. Smith’s Chapel is listed on the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties under Criteria C: *Property has distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction or artisan*, and in the area of significance for Architecture.⁹ The character defining features of the Gothic Revival style that can be seen at Smith’s Chapel include its steeply pitched front-gabled roof, use of rhyolite stonework with distinct patterns produced by a contrasting blonde sandstone detailing atop the engaged buttresses and along the water table and belt courses, tall pointed arched windows on the main façade clustered in a group of three, as well as pointed arched windows and doors found throughout the 1882 building.¹⁰ Unfortunately, there is no record of the architect or builder. Many buildings in the Westside were constructed by craftspeople or amateur builders in the early days of Denver’s development, but were never recorded for a variety of reasons. While it is not recorded, it is important to note the numerous craftspeople that laid the foundation of Denver’s development through the decades (see applicant’s note on page 28). It is most notable for its extensive use of Castle Rock-quarried rhyolite tuff, or simply rhyolite. It is also significant as the oldest church still standing in Denver’s Westside neighborhood (aka La Alma Lincoln Park).¹¹

Denver architects and builders used volcanic rhyolite both as a primary structural stone and for foundation and architectural accents during the late 19th century, but the use of this native stone with simple gothic detailing is particularly well executed at Smith’s Chapel. Rhyolite constituted an important building stone in Denver due to the local quarry in Castle Rock, and several of Denver’s historically designated buildings are made of it.

As the Colorado State Register nomination points out, “Smith’s Chapel is also a good local example of Gothic Revival style ecclesiastical architecture in Denver. The Chapel and property retain good overall integrity, and the original exterior design remains visible in its plan, masonry construction, and pointed arch window and door openings.”¹² A 2 ½ story addition from 1923 on the east side of the original chapel building, doubled the size of the overall building. While the addition is of its own era constructed of red-brick in a square footprint, it also accomplished compatibility with the original chapel by including pointed arch windows on the upper floor and

⁷ Leigh A. Grinstead, *Molly Brown’s Capitol Hill Neighborhood* (Denver: Historic Denver, Inc., 1997), 6.

⁸ Denver Times, September 7, 1872.

⁹ “Colorado Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form: Smith’s Chapel.” (Site # 5DV.27), 8, Dec 2004. Available at <https://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2018/5dv27.pdf>.

¹⁰ McAlester, Virginia & Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984, pg.197.

¹¹ “Colorado Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form: Smith’s Chapel.” (Site # 5DV.27), 8, Dec 2004. Available at <https://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2018/5dv27.pdf>

¹² Ibid.

half-height engaged buttresses capped in contrasting masonry on the south façade from the ground to the top of the second floor. Following the demise of the United Brethren Church as a congregation, they voted to disband. Montview Boulevard Church began a study of churches and the evolution of people moving to the suburbs creating a spiritual vacuum in the city. They brought their findings to the Denver Area Council of Churches, who agreed to start a new type of inner-city parish with interdenominational support in Denver.¹³ In 1961 a parish was incorporated and decided to be located in La Alma Lincoln Park. The board of directors decided Smith's Chapel was an ideal location to set up this local community non-sectarian human services non-profit. It is unclear if the building was deeded to the Inner City Parish or if the Denver Area Council of Churches bought the property from the United Brethren Church. Over the years the building of Smith's Chapel evolved to meet the needs of the Inner City Parish and the neighborhood use. However, the changes made to the building in the latter half of the twentieth century were either restoration and maintenance or interior changes to adapt to the functional needs of the building.

Category J: It is associated with social movements, institutions, or patterns of growth or change that contributed significantly to the culture of the neighborhood, community, city, state, or nation.

La Alma Lincoln Park, where Smith's Chapel is located, is Denver's oldest surviving residential neighborhood and embodies history of the beginnings of Colorado, early Denver and a century later, important moments of the Chicano Movement.¹⁴ As briefly described under *Category A*, Smith's Chapel was built during a pivotal time in Denver's history when industries were expanding and neighborhoods like La Alma Lincoln Park were springing up to support them. But over 100 years, the Westside became the soul of Denver's Hispanos, Mexican American, and Mexican community.¹⁵ Throughout the early twentieth century the United Brethren Church congregation continued in the neighborhood as Westside residents suffered from the effects of the Great Depression and subsequent discriminatory housing, urban planning, and financing policies.

The United Brethren Church dismantled its dwindling congregation at a time when neighborhood community organizations were arising in response to the systematic discrimination that had affected Westsiders for decades. In the early 1960s the United Brethren either deeded or sold Smith's Chapel to the Denver Inner City Parish (DICP), an organization that would contribute significantly to the Chicano Movement in the city. Smith's Chapel provided a home to the DICP, which quickly became a "meaningful institution at the heart of the community."¹⁶ The Chicano Movement was seeding an explosion of neighborhood and community organizations, among them the Denver Inner City Parish. In its first decade, DICP served as a place of worship, a social agency, a food bank, a school, a meeting center, and its leaders lobbied for welfare, student, and farm workers' rights – issues that directly impacted many residents of the area.

¹³ Ibid. pg. 15.

¹⁴ HDI, "La Alma Lincoln Park," 1.

¹⁵ Ibid. pg. 30.

¹⁶ Ibid., page 31.

The important role of the Denver Inner City Parish and Smith's Chapel is perhaps most evident during the West High School blowouts of 1969. After years of unequal treatment, Westsiders responded to rising tensions among the backdrop of the national Civil Rights Movement and opposition to Vietnam. Spurred in part by ill-treatment by a teacher whose insults about Chicano culture went unabated, students at West High School walked out on March 20, 1969. More than 300 students and community members converged in protest, and the police responded with tear gas, billy clubs, and arrests. Smith's Chapel/DICP provided a physical refuge to many protesters during the turmoil and was a rallying point for *Crusade for Justice* leader Rudolfo "Corky" Gonzales. This event became the catalyst that spawned more walkouts among hundreds of students from other Denver middle and high schools.¹⁷ In the following decades, the Denver Inner City Parish became even more vital to the community, expanding programs run by local leaders such as Gerry Garcia. Other notable former directors that were involved with the development of DICP and its programming include: Gloria Leyba (who went on to serve as one of the first Latinas to serve in the Colorado House of Representatives), Clark Vestal (who went on to serve for several decades as a Presbyterian Pastor in a neighborhood church in the Baker neighborhood), Tom Friesen, did lots of international NGO work and then worked as regional director for HUD), Steve Johnson (who spearheaded and developed most of DICP's more visionary programs including Young Father's Program, La Academia, Community RE-entry for the Formerly Incarcerated). Through the 1960s, 70s, and 80s Smith's Chapel provided a place for the Chicano community to meet, socialize, and solidify their attempts for equality and democracy.

Period of Significance

Period of Significance: 1882- 1986

Provide justification for the period of significance.

At its time of construction in 1882, Smith's chapel reflected the growth of one of Denver's earliest neighborhoods and was defined by John Smith's role in financing and constructing it. The period of significance also begins at the time of construction due to the chapel's ecclesiastic gothic architecture use of local materials. In the 1960s the chapel then became the home of the Denver Inner City Parish, an organization directly associated with important moments and leaders of the Chicano Movement in Denver. The Parish's involvement in the community reached an apex when it became a refuge for protestors during the West High School blowouts in 1969 and continued to run important community and education programs from the chapel through the late 20th century. In 1986 DICP made significant changes to the interior of the building to accommodate and support their social and educational programs, continuing to serve the Chicano community. While this period of significance is broad it incorporates the historical significance of the chapel and its architecture, the evolution of Denver in the early 20th century, and the cultural significance of the Chicano Movement and neighborhood involvement of the 1960s - 1980s at Smith's Chapel.

¹⁷ HDI, "La Alma Lincoln Park," p.38

4. Property Description

Attach a sheet that describes the current physical appearance of the property, providing a statement for each of the following:

a. Summary Paragraph - *Briefly describe the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, materials, setting, size, and significant features.*

Smith's Chapel is prominently located, Gothic Revival structure, on the northeast corner of Galapago Street and E. 9th Avenue, just west of West High School and Sunken Gardens Park. It sits on Lots 17 to 20 of Block 9 of Smith's Addition in the La Alma Lincoln Park neighborhood in the City and County of Denver, Colorado. The total lot is 12,450 square feet, with flat terrain. There is a paved alley on the east and northern boundary of the property. Parking for West High School is in an adjacent lot to the east.

The original chapel has a steep cross-gable shingled roof and was approximately 40 feet by 50 feet, expanded approximately 13 feet to the north before 1900. The worship space was one large square room, unlike the typical cruciform church plan with a nave transepts and choir. This portion is made of rhyolite tuff, a native volcanic rock usually quarried at Castle Rock, Colorado. Tan-colored mortar joints are set in horizontal ashlar masonry, with sandstone detailing atop the engaged buttresses and along the water table and belt courses.

The 1923 brick addition measures 50x50 ft. and is 2 ½ stories tall. There is a large stairway addition on the north (rear) portion, added in the 1980s. Several of the windows on the north façade have been bricked in.

The most prominent feature of the building is the 70-foot-high bell tower located on in the southwest corner of the building that also serves as the chapel entrance. It is constructed of rhyolite tuff, incorporates the original 8-sided metal shingle steeple, and houses the original bell. Arched and pointed lancet windows and wood-louvered openings are found in the tower, as well as on the south and west elevations of the chapel. There are small oculus windows in the tower and on the west elevation.

b. Architectural Description – *Describe the architectural features of the structure(s) (i.e. building) in a logical sequence, from the ground up or façade by façade. Identify the key visual aspects or character-defining features of the structure.*

West Façade

This elevation encompasses the original chapel and part of the northwest corner of the pre-1900 addition (described further below), both clad in rhyolite. At the northwest corner there is a concrete stairway leading to a door situated on the north façade. A sash wood window with stone sill sits just below the eaves on the left side, this portion of the elevation is slightly recessed, and the roof is side gabled here. The primary portion of the west façade is the large front-gabled chapel wall with tripartite lancet window in the center. These windows were likely

originally stained glass but have been replaced and are wood sash windows. The window surround and water table immediately below are sandstone. Each end of this gabled section there are buttresses halfway up the wall, capped in the same sandstone. Centered between the windows and the gable is a round fixed window. There is a row of stone laid parallel to, and just underneath, the gable. On the right side the bell tower is recessed (described separately).



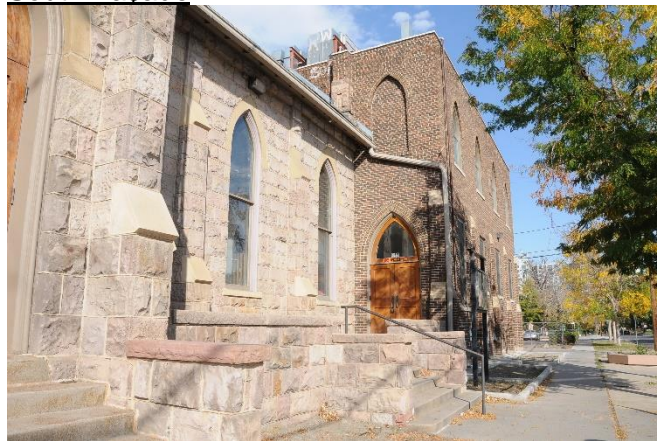
Bell tower steeple, southeast corner. Photo by Shannon Stage

Bell Tower

The bell tower is in the southwest corner of the building and serves as the primary entrance. It is 70-feet tall, square, and made of rhyolite. The west-facing side of the tower has a lancet stained-glass window just above the water table, which is clad in sandstone just like other elevations. Each side of the steeple has buttresses part of the way, clad in sandstone capping. The upper portion of the tower below the steeple is a large lancet window with louvred wood shutters. Both windows have sandstone surrounds at their points. There is a small round fixed oculus window between the louvred lancet window and the steeple. The south-facing side of the steeple is the entrance, and as such it has a high stoop enclosed by a low stone wall with stone capping. The entrance has large solid wooden historic doors with a lancet arch with the same kind of wood used on the doors. This arch has sandstone surround and a sandstone belt course above it.

Between the entrance and the steeple There is a large lancet window with wooden louvres identical to the one on the west side. There is also an identical round oculus window below the steeple, also identical to the other. The east-facing side of the tower has another set of double wooden doors with a lancet arch. Unlike the main entrance, this arch serves as a transom window with fixed glass. There is a round and louvred window identical placement and size to the other sides. The eight-sided steeple is made of metal shingles in a diamond pattern. The steeple eaves are boxed and straight around each corner but raised in a flat arch above each oculus window, creating dimension on each side of the tower.

South Façade



South facade porch connector from the 1882 chapel to the 1923 addition. Photo by Shannon Stage

The south façade is most defined by the bell tower in the southwest corner. The entire elevation consists of the original rhyolite chapel building and the adjoining 1923 brick addition to the east. The chapel portion of the façade has a side gable with minimal overhang. There are three large evenly spaced lancet windows, double hung and operable, likely originally stained glass but replaced with glass. The windows have stone sills. There is an extending uncovered porch from the bell tower to the brick addition. A low stone wall encloses the porch, and there is a wide open stoop to the porch at its midpoint. There are buttresses between each lancet window,

and like the others on the building they are capped with sandstone. The doors on the east side of the tower that exit onto the porch have been locked in place to allow for interior flow, but these inoperable doors can be reversed and brought back to an operational standing.

The 1923 addition encompasses the eastern portion of the southern façade and is a flat-roofed, square, brick building. It is two full stories with half a story at basement level. The façade is divided by buttresses into four vertical sections. These buttresses have the same design as the chapel and are capped with blonde brick to mimic sandstone. The basement/garden level has three egressed sash wood windows with stone sills at sidewalk height. The window on the far left is slightly more egressed than the other two. The ground floor has a single metal door in the second section of the wall. There is a narrow vertical sidelight to the left of the door. There are four sash wood windows on the second floor, one per section. The third floor has four sash



Southeast facade of 1923 addition. Photo by Shannon Stage

wood windows identical to those below them, except that these have pointed arches with decorative brick surrounds to give homage to the gothic design of the chapel. All the windows on the façade have stone sills. In the center of the wall on the second and third floors there are rectangular sections of patterned brick, possibly to fill in historic fenestrations.

East Façade

The east façade consists entirely of the 1923 brick addition. The garden level has six sash windows with stone sills at the street/alley level. The two floors above

have identical sash windows placed immediately above the ones below. It does appear that some of the windows on the second and third floor to the northern side of the elevation have sills placed a bit higher, due to the windows being slightly smaller because of the increased slope toward the north.

North Façade

The north façade is the only part of the building where all three historic sections of the structure are visible. On the left/east is the 1923 brick addition. This 50 ft section is partially covered by an enclosed brick walkway accessed by a single door, and an adjacent brick stairway added in the 1980s. The stairway leads to a partially glazed metal door on the third floor with a filled-in transom. The garden level is not visible here as it has been covered by the walkway. The second floor includes two sash wood windows and a single door near the center. There is at least one window on this floor that has been filled in. The third floor bears the marks of three windows that have also been bricked in. To the left of the stairway door are two sash wood

windows. The side of the building intersects with the gable of the original chapel. To the right of this section is a brick projection from the original chapel. This part of the elevation is a front gable made primarily of brick with no fenestrations, although it appears several windows were bricked in on this section. To the right of this section is a slightly recessed rhyolite wall (part of the pre-1900 addition to the altar/stage area), and part of the gable extends over it. The rhyolite



North facade where you can see all 3 historic sections of the structure. Photo by applicant

portion has a single door accessed by the concrete steps leading to the west/Galapago street side.

c. Major Alterations - Describe changes or alterations to the exterior of the structure and dates of major alterations, if known.

No plans to alter the exterior of the building exist at the time of this application. Previous alternations are as follows:

The first addition to the church was likely the expansion of the altar/stage area at the north wall, toward the western corner. This one-story addition was built of matching stone on the west elevation, brick on the north side, created a cross-gable roof that intersects with the main roof of the church. Ghosted window outlines in the brick on the north elevation suggest the earlier window locations that were bricked in. This addition was built sometime between the 1890 (updated to 1897) Sanborn Insurance Map when there is no addition and the 1903 (updated to 1925) Sanborn Insurance Map when the addition does exist.¹⁸

The most significant addition was an administrative/educational section built in 1923. This 2 ½ story flat-roofed addition was built of rough-faced, dark red brick adjoining the east wall of Smith's Chapel. Although the materials and roofline are in sharp contrast to those of the chapel, the detailing of the second floor windows with pointed arches and similar engaged brick buttresses along the south elevation make an attempt to blend with the existing architecture of the chapel. Early maps from 1887 and 1890 show a projection on the east wall of the chapel labeled 'vestry', this section would have been absorbed or demolished at the time of the 1923 addition. During the construction of the addition, a projecting stone porch was added to the south façade connecting the chapel entrance and administrative building. The porch is uncovered and has low stone walls that match the chapel rhyolite.

The third group of alterations took place between 1967 and 1986 with changes in use for the Denver Inner City Parish community and education programing. During this time, the exterior remained maintained, while the interior of the chapel was altered including the original interior furnishings and details of the 1882 worship space were removed including the original pews, historic stained glass windows (replaced with clear glass), and then installation of non-historic

¹⁸ Map of Smith's Addition to the City of Denver, Book 06, Page 055

<https://www.denvergov.org/subdivisionsurveys/Result?SubId=0&SubName=smith&Quarter=&Section=&Township=&Range=>



heating, ventilation and air conditioning ducts and electrical systems. In 1980-86 renovations to the 1923 brick addition included a handicapped ramp and secondary means of egress for all levels were built of brick and concrete on the north façade. At this time, the original windows on the 1923 building were replaced with aluminum steel windows, and some of the doors on this building were also replaced with steel doors. The layout of the 1923 building rooms was reconfigured to accommodate the school, La Academia and the staff of the parish, as well as redesigning the basement to contain a kitchen, a room for day care, which transitioned into a cafeteria/ gymnasium for the school. In 1981, DICP undertook restoring the stone and brick through a combination of fundraising and grants. During a 2003 grant partnership with the local preservation non-profit Historic Denver, and History Colorado's State Historical Fund, DICP was awarded grants to restore the original 1882 wood window sash and frames by replacing them with in-kind wood sash windows. Subsequently in 2012, DICP was again awarded State Historical Funds to replace the non-historic windows in the 1923 addition with wood sash windows matching the 1882 building. As a part of this grant project, there were metal framed screens inserted into each wood window frame on the 1923 building, which are installed on the exterior and they are reversible. This grant also included replacing the non-historic doors on the north façade of the 1923 building with historically compatible replacements.

5. Integrity

Describe the structure's integrity, using the seven qualities that define integrity: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Smith's Chapel retains overall good integrity. It is still situated on its original location at 9th and Galapago and maintains excellent integrity of location. The minimal changes to the surrounding neighborhood support the integrity of the setting. There are multiple historic additions to the property, but because they were added within the period of significance the integrity of design has been maintained. In addition, the rhyolite on sandstone detailing and brick cladding are in a good state of preservation. The window fenestrations visible from the street maintain their original pattern. Windows were replaced at an earlier date, but were restored to their original wood sash frame design (on both the 1882 chapel and 1923 addition), through a partnership with History Colorado's State Historical Fund and Historic Denver, as described in c. Major alterations above. The property retains good integrity of workmanship and materials, neither the stone nor brick have been painted or altered. The continued use of the chapel as a place of worship and social gathering through 2017 has helped the chapel retain feeling and association.

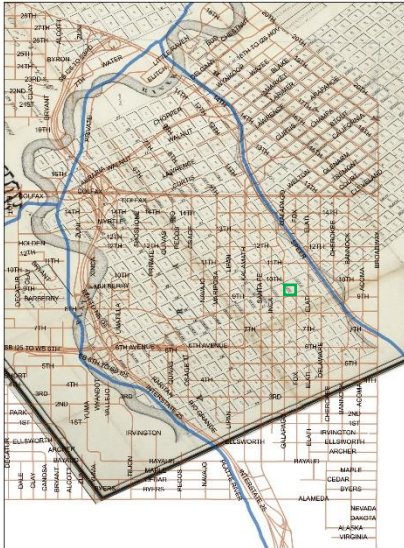
6. Historic Context

Attach a sheet that describes the history of the structure, including events, activities and associations that relate the structure to its historic, architectural, geographic, or cultural significance. Examine how patterns, themes, or trends in history affected the property and how it relates to the surrounding community, neighborhood, city, and/or nation.

Smith's Chapel is remarkable because of its continued relevance to over a century of Denver's history, particularly in the evolution of the Westside. The building was initially associated with who commissioned the building and namesake, John W. Smith and the Evangelical United Brethren Church. In later years it became home to the Denver Inner City Parish (DICP), where it served as a safe haven and community gathering spot for local Chicano Movement leaders and organizers, particularly during the 1960s and 70s. In addition, Smith's Chapel remains a good

example of ecclesiastical Gothic architecture in Denver, particularly through the use of local stone and fine craftsmanship detailing.

Early Growth of the Westside



Graphic above is an overlay of The Auraria Town Company 1859 map by Fosdick & Tappan atop a 21st Century Denver street map. The green outline square is the location of 910 Galapago St. Map overlay courtesy of William Doyle, 2020.

The western portion of Denver always held significance to Denver and was tied to its growth. Prior to the 1850s the land where Smith’s Chapel sits was the site for seasonal encampments of Apache, Utes, Cheyennes, Comanches and Arapahoes. Due to its location between the Cherry Creek and South Platte River, the area was a crossroads for transportation. Along with the Indigenous people, fur trappers traversed the land, which was swarmed by gold seekers after 1857 when gold was discovered along the South Platte. Old Indigenous trails that became trapper trails soon became burgeoning commercial districts, including what is now Kalamath Street. Town companies sprouted up, including the Auraria Town Company in 1858. A year later, the Auraria Town Company was already selling land in the area that is now La Alma Lincoln Park, establishing the neighborhood as one of the first in Denver.¹⁹

Early speculators were often wildly successful entrepreneurs who served as politicians, mediators, rivals, and investors. The first to invest heavily in the

Westside was Alexander Cameron Hunt (popularly referred to as A. C. Hunt or Governor Hunt), who arrived in Auraria in June 1859. Hunt was among the most prominent of Auraria’s earliest permanent settlers and built his home here. By the end of 1859 Hunt and his business partner John M. Clark had purchased 78 lots, now part of “Hunt’s Addition” in present-day La Alma Lincoln Park.²⁰ While Hunt is not directly associated with the history of Smith’s Chapel, he did pave the way for its patron, John W. Smith, to follow his lead investing in the area, and his story illustrates the appeal that this area held for developers since the city’s inception.

Hunt became the 4th Territorial Governor of Colorado in 1867 and over his tenure played a key role in bringing the railroad to Denver. As historians Stephen Leonard and Thomas J. Noel characterized the dilemma: “If Rocky Mountain pay dirt were to pay off, Colorado needed cheap, fast, and efficient transportation.”²¹ As one of the incorporators of the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad, Hunt granted the company some of his land on the Westside in the early 1870s, which became Burnham Shops and Yards. These tracks defined the western boundary of La Alma Lincoln Park, and more importantly, it became the principal employer for many generations of Westsiders.

¹⁹ HDI, “La Alma Lincoln Park, 4.

²⁰ HDI, “La Alma Lincoln Park, 4.

²¹ Stephen J. Leonard and Thomas J. Noel, *Denver: Mining Camp to Metropolis* (Niwot, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 1990), 6.

Although the 1873 recession impacted the growth of the neighborhood temporarily, by 1879 the neighborhood was poised to grow as a convenient haven for working-class laborers, census records from 1880 show two hundred and twenty-five residents living on either Kalamath, Lipan, or Mariposa streets with another several hundred residing south of West 10th Avenue. In December 1880, the *Rocky Mountain News* reported that many improvements could be seen in the area. Close to the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad's (DxRG) shops, employees were building "neat little cottages convenient to the shops. Another summer will see the entire elevated plateau a half mile on each side of the great works covered with happy little homes."²²

John W. Smith

John W. Smith was one of the most influential pioneers in the first decades of Denver's history. His economic and infrastructure contributions to Colorado in its territorial days laid the groundwork for the city and state's future and bolstered his personal fortune sufficient to fund the construction of Smith's Chapel. In a history from 1880 W.B. Vickers says Smith was born in Pennsylvania on September 24, 1815 and moved with his family to Kansas in 1858. He arrived in Colorado in the summer of 1860.²³ Little is known if he arrived with money or was largely self-made through the myriad opportunities that Denver offered some early settlers. City historians from his lifetime tended to lean toward the latter, lauding him for nearly always being at the right place at the right time. In 1915, Alice Polk Hill described Smith's early success as nearly divine, stating,

"About the last of October, 1859, two heads of wheat were accidentally discovered in a garden in Denver. The grain was large and fine, which convinced the pioneers that a very superior quality of wheat could be grown in this country. The gateway of opportunity swung wide. And John W. Smith was the first to drive into it...[his] flour mill was a small, portable burh gristmill, and, with it, he ground the first wheat and made the first flour ever made in what is now Colorado."²⁴

John W. Smith became the earliest developer of Capitol Hill along with H.C. Brown. In 1862, Congress passed the Homestead Act, which gave ownership of up to 160 acres of public land to individuals who resided on and cultivated it for five years after their initial claim. Brown used the act to lay claim to the area bounded by what is now 11th and 20th Avenues, and the half block west of Broadway to the alley between Grant and Logan Streets. But Capitol Hill was dusty and seen as virtually useless land until John W. Smith brought water to the area. Smith homesteaded from Colfax to 13th and from the Grant/Logan alley east to Clarkson Street. In 1864, he was hired to construct a 25-mile ditch that would take water from the Platte River up to Capitol Hill. The project, which became known as the "big ditch," was the largest factor in the residential and agricultural growth on the Hill. Throughout the nineteenth century, the ditch was changed and adapted to bring water to the expanding population. The ditch was completed in 1867, and by the 1870s the first mansions began to appear on Capitol Hill.²⁵ Now known as

²² Rocky Mountain News, Dec. 5, 1880

²³ W.B. Vickers, *History of the City of Denver* (Arapahoe County, Colorado: O.L. Baskin & Company, 1880), 589.

²⁴ Alice Polk Hill, *From Colorado Pioneers in Picture and Story* (Denver: Brock-Haffner Press, 1915), 166.

²⁵ Leigh A. Grinstead, *Molly Brown's Capitol Hill Neighborhood* (Denver: Historic Denver Inc., 1997), 6.

“Smith’s Ditch”, it was Denver’s first water supply, and is a historically designated landmark (5DV.1813).²⁶

Smith’s fortune grew as he engaged in other industries, particularly mills that depended on the waterways that he had been engaged to construct. Smith’s most notable business in the La Alma Lincoln Park area was a wool mill that still stands under the current-day 8th Avenue viaduct. Smith also turned his attention toward platting the land he had just made valuable. Smith’s Addition was chartered in January of that year. City records from 1890 show a revision to Smith’s Addition that includes the area surrounding W. 9th Avenue and Galapago, where Smith’s Chapel resides today. Thus, at the time of the chapel’s construction, Smith was already well-entrenched in the La Alma Lincoln Park neighborhood and would have been keenly aware of the potential it held. A railroad president, hotel proprietor, contractor, real estate investor, flour and woolen mill entrepreneur, and one of only two Denver men reported to “reach six figures” in the 1870s²⁷, Smith’s connection to the neighborhoods, the water supply, and the chapel that bears his name reflects how much he was invested in the growth of Denver in its earliest decades. Like Hunt before him, he was motivated to attract investors to La Alma Lincoln Park and likely understood that by strategically offering land for desirable institutions he could draw working and middle-class residents to the area.

In 1881, John W. Smith gave the Church for the Evangelical United Brethren four nearby lots plus \$10,000 in design and construction costs for a chapel on the northeast corner of Water and Buffalo Streets, now W. 9th Ave. and Galapago Street.²⁸ Although no evidence can be found to link Smith to the United Brethren as a parishioner, newspapers noted that he was an intimate friend of the first pastor, Reverend George W. Rose, who had previously opened another church of the same denomination on West 10th Avenue. The United Brethren were similar to Methodists and were a denomination of Christianity founded in Pennsylvania during the Great Awakening spiritual movement of the late eighteenth century.²⁹ Prior to the Chapel being built, the Brethren Rev. Rose is credited as naming the Chapel after John W. Smith at the time of its dedication in honor of the structure’s financier.

The *Rocky Mountain News* reported in October that year that “The boom West Denver enjoys has also included the churches. Three new churches have been erected this summer and fall.”³⁰ As historians Thomas and Laurie Simmons note about this period, “Churches became important facilitators of social interaction by sponsoring both religious and secular activities among their congregants.”³¹ As the center of social life in the nineteenth century, it was imperative that parishioners live within a short commute or better yet, walking distance, to their places of worship. Thus, churches also demonstrated that communities were established, healthy, and stable. Smith’s Chapel was built at a time when this was most true – the neighborhood was still

²⁶ Simmons, *Discover Denver (HDI) Historic Context 1858 to 1892: The Instant City*, 8.

²⁷ Denver Times, September 7, 1872.

²⁸ “Colorado Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form: Smith’s Chapel,” 10.

²⁹ “History,” Church of United Brethren, www.ub.org.

³⁰ “Colorado Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form: Smith’s Chapel”, p. 9.

³¹ Simmons, *Discover Denver (HDI) Historic Context, Instant City*, p. 14.

sparsely developed (only four other structures were on the 900 block of Galapago in 1887³²) but had the employment and social institutions to support a burgeoning population. At least seven other churches were constructed in the area between 1882 and 1893, clearly reflecting that there was enough residential growth there to support them.³³ By 1890 Sanborn maps from the area show that while some blocks were still sparsely developed, others had structures on nearly every lot. And by 1905 the Baist Atlas illustrates that the area was fully developed with both commercial and residential buildings.

Smith's Chapel and Architectural Significance

The 1882 Smith's Chapel is listed on the Colorado State Register under Criterion C in the area of *architecture*. Smith's chapel is significant for its Gothic Revival architecture and for its extensive use of Castle Rock-quarried rhyolite. Denver architects and builders used rhyolite both as a primary structural stone and for foundation and architectural accents during the late nineteenth century. Smith's chapel is an early example of the volcanic stone used as a primary structural material with sandstone detailing and is also a good local example of Gothic Revival style ecclesiastical architecture in Denver. The common characteristics found in Gothic Revival style buildings that are found in the chapel include, steeply pitched roof, pointed-arch or lancet windows with window surrounds, ashlar stone construction with polychromed linear patterns created by the light sandstone details, and buttresses. The prominent tower or steeple is a defining feature of the ecclesiastical architecture within the Gothic Revival style. The original interior worship space was one large square room unlike the typical cruciform church plan with a nave transepts and choir. This modest accommodation may account for its designation as a chapel rather than a church.

A *Rocky Mountain News* article on July 3, 1882 provided a description of the plans underway for Smith's Chapel that included actual built conditions as well as details that appear never to have been constructed. The article states that John W. Smith commissioned, "an audience room 40x50 feet, a lecture room 16x24 feet, and a vestibule 10x10 feet, the tower or cupola to be eighty feet high... the structure will cost between \$3,000 and \$5,000. The church will occupy two lots. This will be on condition that a parsonage to cost not less than \$1,500 is built on the adjoining lot donated by [Smith.]"³⁴

³² Robinson's Atlas, 1887

³³ HDI, "La Alma Lincoln Park, 14.

³⁴ Rocky Mountain New, July 3, 1881.



Southwest corner of Smith's Chapel. Photo by Shannon Stage

Contrary to the *News* article, Smith's Chapel was built of Castle Rock rhyolite stone, not brick, and the steeple is noted as seventy feet high (not eighty) on the Sanborn Insurance Map dated 1903-1925. The chapel was built on three lots and a parsonage built on an adjoining lot to the north (the current property boundary is four lots). The parsonage is now gone. The 1887 and 1890-1897 maps do show the church as one large, one-story (nearly square) rectangular structure with a one-story projection on the east side labeled "vestry", which is likely the lecture room described in the newspaper article. There is a small projection on the south, being the existing vestibule entry through the steeple.

The Gothic architectural style remains largely intact, although there were window and door replacements in the mid-twentieth century, these were restored in 2003 and 2012 to the windows' original material, intent and design, as described above in 4c. The overall style remains intact even with a major addition in 1923, that retained the overall style and integrity of masonry construction and pointed arch window and door openings similar to the 1882 gothic chapel. These changes to the overall building site were within the period of significance and relate to the changing use of the building for expanded community services.

Rhyolite constituted an important building stone in Denver due to the easy access to a major quarry south of Denver in Castle Rock, Colorado. Geologist Jack Murphy describes the stone as volcanic rock that is a result of scorching hot, thick, airborne ash that traveled across the Lake Eocene erosion surface from the Sawatch Mountains to the east of Castle Rock. The hot ash settled and fused to form a hard compact layer, called welded tuff. The 30-foot thick layer caps buttes in the Castle Rock area, where the high quality rhyolite has been quarried for more than 135 years. Railroads transported large quantities of the attractive volcanic rock to Denver. Castle Rock rhyolite was one of the area's most widely used building stones. Its geological name is Wall Mountain Tuff, and it has an attractive tan to gray color. Because of its light color and fine grained texture, it can be mistaken for limestone. It is a very durable, high silica material that is commonly laid with an irregular rock or quarry face, as on Smith's Chapel. The hardness of the stone made it an ideal choice for foundations or exposed details subject to erosion by water.

Several of Denver's historically designated commercial and educational buildings were constructed of rhyolite, including the 1881 wings of Denver's Union Station (NR and DL, located at 17th and Wynkoop), the 1891 Kittridge Building (NR and DL, at 511 16th), and residences such as the Zang House (NR and DL, at 1532 Emerson), Castle Marne (NR and DL, at 1572 Race), and the Margaret Brown House (NR and DL, at 1340 Pennsylvania). Several ecclesiastical designs from this time used rhyolite as well, examples include 1887 Trinity United Methodist Church (NR and DL, at E. 18th Ave and Broadway), 1876 Emmanuel Sherith Israel Chapel (NR, at 1201 10th), and 1890 Asbury Methodist (DL, at 2215 W. 30th Ave).³⁵ Like Trinity

³⁵ "Colorado Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form: Smith's Chapel", 10.

United Methodist Church, rhyolite is employed as the major structural material, but it also includes sandstone applied as a window and door trim. Small in size, simpler in design, and built five years earlier than Trinity, Smith's Chapel is none the less a good early example of the use of rhyolite in an ecclesiastical building in Denver.

Many churches in the city were designed in the Gothic Revival style. In fact, Gothic Revival and Romanesque Revival constituted the two most prevalent styles in ecclesiastical architecture during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Gothic Revival was popular from the 1870s through the 1890s. Variations of the style range from simple, one-story rectangular plan buildings without towers or steeples, exemplified by the Emmanuel Sherith Israel Chapel, to basilica forms of English Gothic Revival, such as Saint John's Episcopal Cathedral. Smith's Chapel is representative of the small and simple masonry Gothic Revival style church buildings found in many of Denver's residential neighborhoods. Its massing and detailing are compatible with the modest scale of its surrounding residential neighborhood, and it retains good integrity of craftsmanship and design.

United Brethren Church and La Alma Lincoln Park in the Twentieth Century

Of the 122-year old history of Smith's Chapel, seventy-eight (78) of those years comprises the history of the United Brethren Church in this location. Four of the pastors at Smith's Chapel are known to have included: The Rev. George W. Rose (a friend of the original donor, John W. Smith), 1882; The Rev. H.W. Trueblood, D.D. (1899);³⁶ The Rev. E.M. Baber (1936);³⁷ and The Rev. Orvis K. Schlesselman (1957).³⁸ Well into the twentieth century the church seems to have enjoyed a thriving community and congregation, a 1932 *Rocky Mountain News* article states, "today the church maintains facilities for community interests of all sorts, in addition to its religious activities. Special classes are conducted in dramatic art, manual training, domestic science, art and athletic pursuits. The education program alone requires the services of 25 teachers and total enrollment in classes in approximately 300."³⁹

The neighborhood saw rapid changes with the Great Depression and after WWII. As the Great Depression swept across America, communities shifted as families sought better economic opportunities. Federal government attention to public housing issues reached a turning point due to the extreme unemployment and other related pressures. La Alma Lincoln Park was no different. The 1930s saw new lines drawn on the neighborhood map that redefined and reallocated the land. The Great Depression prompted federal, state, and local governments to address perceived substandard housing and to encourage homeownership via new public housing legislation. In 1933, the Home Owners' Loan Corporation Act (HOLC) was established to refinance home mortgages that were in default as a result of bank failures during the Depression, with the hope of preventing home foreclosures. Color-coded maps were drawn to indicate the level of potential risk of offering credit.⁴⁰

³⁶ Denver Times, March 18, 1899.

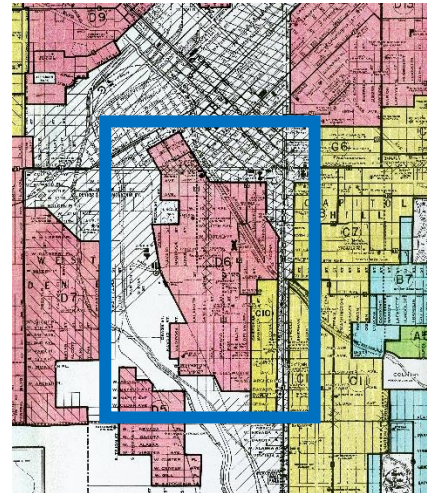
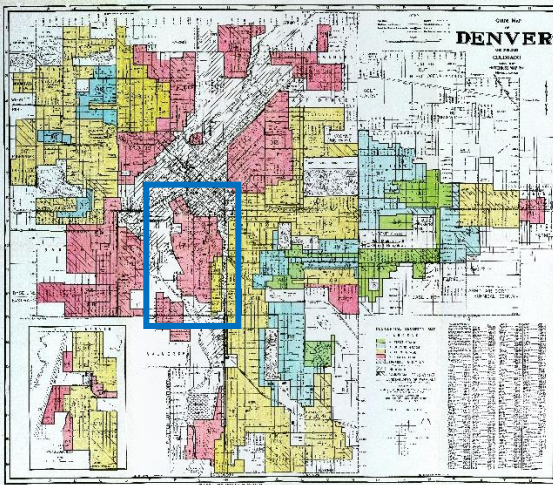
³⁷ The Rocky Mountain News, March , 1932.

³⁸ Empire Magazine, October 18, 1964

³⁹ The Rocky Mountain News, March 24, 1932

⁴⁰ HDI, "La Alma Lincoln Park, 24.

Discriminatory maps created by HOLC resulted in inequitable housing and financial policies that were both punishing and manipulative in low-income “redlined” neighborhoods for decades to come. Although the HOLC program ended in 1951, recent analysis by economists at the Federal Reserve bank of Chicago shows that negative consequences from the use of these maps has lasted for decades.⁴¹ A 1941 WPA study provided data that showed that nearly half the homes in La Alma Lincoln Park were reported to be “substandard.” This data was ultimately used to support policies that restricted capital access to residents and justified large scale redevelopment and displacement.⁴²



Left image: Redlining map of 1938, Source: Denver Public Library

Right image: Zoomed in section of the map; La Alma Lincoln Park neighborhood is outlined in blue

The onset of World War II made housing needs surge and labor shortages rise. It was at this time the federal government implemented the Bracero Program (1942-1964) to attract Mexicans as guest workers in the U.S. with the promise of free housing. Most people moving to Denver to participate in the Bracero Program were Hispanos and Mexican Americans migrating from Southern Colorado, Texas, and New Mexico as well as Mexicans migrating from northern and central Mexico. The 1945 City Directory conveys the Program’s local impact with a noticeable increase in Hispanos, Mexican Americans and Mexicans living in the La Alma Lincoln Park neighborhood. By the late 1940s, Denver Housing Authority removed occupancy restrictions at the affordable housing project, Lincoln Park Homes. Over the next three decades, Hispanos and Mexican Americans made up 80% of census responders identifying as “Persons of Spanish language or surname” in the 1970 census for La Alma Lincoln Park neighborhood.⁴³

The demographic changes to La Alma Lincoln Park during and after WWII reflected wider shifts in urban areas throughout the country. In the 1950s, long-term city residents moved to far-flung suburbs, now accessible due to roads and the dominance of automobiles in daily life. The influx of Hispanos, Mexican American, and Mexican residents into La Alma Lincoln Park changed the demographics and needs of the neighborhood, and congregations like the United Brethren found themselves with dwindling attendance. The Rev. Orvis K. Schlesselman was described as

⁴¹ New York Times, Emily Badger, Aug. 24, 2017

⁴² HDI, “La Alma Lincoln Park, 25.

⁴³ Ibid, page 27

having accepted the pastorate in 1957 in hopes of revitalizing the congregation. At that time, the church was known as Central Evangelical United Brethren Church. By 1960, however, the United Brethren congregation voted to disband.

Smith's Chapel, The Denver Inner City Parish, and the Chicano Movement

Upon folding, Smith's Chapel stood vacant until the Denver Inner City Parish (DICP) was formed. DICP was conceived by a group of laymen from Montview Boulevard Presbyterian Church who began a study of churches to make their new home. They noted a spiritual vacuum created in cities, as churches moved into the suburbs. They also noted the changing nature of the inner-city community. Taking their findings to a committee of the Denver Area Council of Churches, they recommended a new venture with interdenominational support. Other cities had successfully set up inner-city parishes as interdenominational churches supported by other individual churches. These organizations had no direct responsibility to any one denomination or to any upper-level church organization.⁴⁴ A board of directors was formed which was comprised of representatives from several denominations in the Denver area. In 1961 the parish incorporated, and they purchased (or were deeded) Smith's chapel as their home base for their ministry and programs.⁴⁵ As Genevieve Ray described in *Empire Magazine* in 1964, "these laymen...suggested a less orthodox and formalized approach to the situation – a sort of 'play-it-by-ear' grass-roots ministry." The Rev. Russell Williams, the director of the Denver Inner City Parish from 1961-1966, is quoted in the same *Empire Magazine* article, describing the work of the new Denver Inner City Parish as "functioning much like a social agency...building two kinds of trusting relationships. *The first is between ourselves and the people of the parish. The second is among the people themselves.*"⁴⁶

Smith's Chapel immediately provided an adequate home to the DICP, which quickly became a "meaningful institution at the heart of the community."⁴⁷ The DICP was founded at a time when the Westside had become the soul of Denver's Hispanos, Mexican American and Mexican community. It is important to note that many Hispanos and Mexican Americans during this time did not self-identify as Chicanos until the mid-1960s, when the Chicano Movement grew in strength. Even then, some did not embrace this term, it was primarily younger activists who identified with the term Chicanos. Many Hispanos and Mexican Americans during the Chicano Movement and today recognize themselves with different identifiers important to their specific cultural heritage. As Historic Denver's La Alma Lincoln Park historic context points out, "The people who have been so intrinsic to the history of this neighborhood self-identify as Raza, Mestizos, Aztecas, Mexican Americans, Mexicanos, Latinos, Latinx and Chicanos; and like their predecessors, they are Westsiders, loyal to the neighborhood and one another, grounded in a specific sense of place."⁴⁸ Mutualistas (mutual aid societies) were important to Hispanos and Mexicanos in lower income communities for generations, exemplified by voluntary associations such as La Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos (established in the San Luis Valley in 1900), and the American GI Forum. In Denver, volunteer organizations spoke to the

⁴⁴ "Colorado Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form: Smith's Chapel," Section IV, p. 10.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ray, Genevieve Ray, "Church in the Shadows: Where God's not Mad Anymore," *Empire Magazine* (Oct. 18, 1964).

⁴⁷ HDI, "La Alma Lincoln Park," 31.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pg. 30

historical tradition of Hispanos and Mexican Americans for organizing and civic participation, a predecessor to the Chicano Movement which seeded an explosion of neighborhood and community organizations like the Denver Inner City Parish.

Steve Johnson became the Pastor at the DICP in 1965, when he was attending the University of Denver. He started programs such as The Young Fathers Program, La Academia de la Gente, a school that ran for 53 years, a senior program and a food bank. By 1966-1968 the DICP was active in a campaign which led to the opening of the Westside Health Center; they demonstrated and lobbied for welfare rights, student rights, farm workers issues, and to create non-violent police relations with the community. The parish also opened the first Westside Recreation Center in Smith's Chapel. All of these programs actively met the needs of the neighborhood and engaged the community in ways that were both supportive and aligned with the value that residents held toward energetic public participation.

The 1960s were marked by tumult and opportunity as Chicanos forcefully articulated their cultural identity and demanded social justice. Specific progressive policies and initiatives created growth in civil society and stimulated economic development. Westside was a bustling hub in the middle of the fray. An influx of resources provided in part by War on Poverty programs provided Westsiders with new tools to fortify their efficacy, which was needed as an unforgiving local political environment, the tumult of the Civil Rights Era and the war in Vietnam began to affect the neighborhood. This Act of 1964 brought an influx of federal dollars to the neighborhood, allocated through what was called "*Denver Opportunity*." La Alma Lincoln Park residents used the initiative to attack localized inequities with a network of positive, varied, and coordinated programs.

Leaders emerged in the Westside who confronted ongoing discrimination. These included Anita Alire, Cecelia Garcia, Celina Benevidez, Rudolfo "Corky" Gonzales, Waldo Benavidez, and DCIP's young director, Gerry Garcia. By 1968, tensions across the country were exploding, and the Chicano Movement on the Westside was solidifying into a movement that integrated political activism with a Cultural renaissance in education, arts, music, theater, graphic arts, and literature.⁴⁹

The Chicano Movement was spurred by a convergence of independent issues: land rights, labor rights, opposition to the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, cultural identity, little political representation, and a lack of equity in education. The latter was the final catalyst for the West High School walkouts, "the central event in Denver for what was later called the Chicano Movement."⁵⁰ Students at West High had voiced their protest of the ill-treatment by a teacher whose insults about Chicano culture went unabated. After no resolution, on March 20, 1969 the students walked out. A crowd of 50 was anticipated but, more than 300 students, family and friends converged. The police were called who arrived wearing gas masks and carrying billy clubs. Gerry Garcia provided refuge to many students at the Denver Inner City Parish.

⁴⁹ Ibid. p 36

⁵⁰ James Meijia, "West High School Walkout of 1969," *La Voz Vilingue*, (Oct 14, 2015).



South façade looking east to West High School. Photo by Shannon Stage

The DICP 1923 addition is in the left-hand portion of the image to the left. The West High School tower is on the right-hand portion of this image (green arrow). The proximity of these two buildings are vital to DICP's role in the West High School blowouts and the Chicano Movement.



Screen shot from the film, "West High School March 1969 Blow Out!" Produced by City of Denver Commission on Community Relations, c. 1969-1970. This shows the student protestors from the March 20-21, 1969 West High School walk outs in front of Smith's Chapel, when police began violent attacks. (Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJqByLcDBLg>)

Located immediately adjacent to West High School, film footage and file photographs show Smith's Chapel as a prominent backdrop to skirmishes with police during the walk outs (as seen to the left, a still image from a documentary).⁵¹ Photographs also show Corky Gonzales, charismatic leader of the *Crusade for Justice*, addressing a crowd from the steps the Chapel (as seen in a Getty Image⁵²). Eventually known as the "blowouts" the demonstration became the catalyst that spawned more walkouts among hundreds of students

from other Denver middle and high schools, and eventually led to the replacement of school leadership in La Alma Lincoln Park schools. The events of 1969 instigated the beginning of systemic changes for Hispanos, Mexican Americans and Chicanos, including integration through busing and successful boycotting of Coors for unfair labor practices.

Furthermore, the Chicano Movement and events of the West High blowouts inspired activism among other groups striving for equality. Members from the Students for a Democratic Society and the Black Panthers joined the protests, and the West High blowouts drew nearly 1,500 young Chicanos from across the country to the Crusade for Justice's First Annual National

⁵¹ "West High School March 1969 Blow Out!" documentary film produced by City of Denver Commission on Community Relations, c. 1969-1970. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJqByLcDBLg>.

⁵² MAR 28 1968, MAR 22 1969; Gonzales, Rodolfo (Corky) - Ind. - Activist; Rodolfo (Corky) Gonzales Talk; *Denver Post*. Object name: DPL0701409 ; located at Getty Images, <https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/gonzales-rodolfo-ind-activist-rodolfo-gonzales-talks-to-news-photo/161997385>



Youth Liberation Conference. National Chicano youth groups formed in response, with additional walkouts throughout California and the Southwest.⁵³

After the events of 1969 the DICP expanded their programs even further, and leadership became more representative of the neighborhood. Rev. Ramiro Cruz-Ahedo took the reins for four years, from 1970 until 1974. During that time the first of twenty youth field trips to Mexico took place in 1970 and the full-time school, La Academia de la Gente, was founded. By 1975, the activities of the Denver Inner City Parish had grown to such an extent that a program director's position was created, appropriately filled by Gerry Garcia, who grew up in the neighborhood and provided refuge for protestors during the blowouts at DICP. The DICP continued its mission to “work among the low income peoples of West Denver seeking to encourage healing and wholeness for individuals and groups,” including human services programs such as a Summer Day Camp, Young Fathers, Parish Seniors, and a Community Food Bank; and educational services include La Academia, GED Adult Night School, and Parish Pals. Other notable former directors that were involved with the development of DICP and its programming include Gloria Leyba, Clark Vestal, and Tom Friesen.

Recent History

From 1961 to 2004 the Denver Inner City Parish was headquartered at Smith’s Chapel, 910 Galapago. Due to expanding community program needs, in 2004 they relocated most of their services to 1212 Mariposa Street, continuing educational programs (including La Academia de la Gente) at Smith’s Chapel until 2017.⁵⁴ After 13 years holding their educational programs in Smith’s Chapel, their need for additional space declined and in 2017 they moved all programs to the 1212 Mariposa location, preparing to put Smith’s Chapel up for sale. DICP sold Smith’s Chapel, 910 Galapago Street, in July of 2019 to Galapago Commercial LLC. The current owner is the applicant of this Designation. It is currently unoccupied pending designation.

⁵³ Hayley Sanchez, “Chicano Progress Today Owes Much to the Denver West High Blowouts of 50 Years Ago,” *Colorado Public Radio* (March 18, 2019).

⁵⁴ Email communication with Larry Martinez, current Executive Director of DICP. lmartinez@dicp.org. October 2020.



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Map of Smith's Addition to the City of Denver, Book 06, Page 055
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Applicant's Note:

My earliest memories of my father are of how his hands looked at the end of the day, covered in the remnants of the adhesives and materials that he used in his work as a carpenter. His labor helped build Denver including area hospitals, schools, civic buildings, and residences. His name, like the names of the men and women who he worked alongside, are not included in any official historical record of those structures. They are an amalgam of a unitary class that is rarely cited in any meaningful mention or legacy. This application references the names of people who are credited with constructing Smith's eponymous Chapel though no historical record could be found that mentions the names of the laborers whose care and craft laid the heavy stones that have remained square, level, plumb, and true for more than a century. This is lamentable and also noteworthy. Cities are built with the labor, blood, sweat, and lives of people for whom there is often no monument or designation. Some of those nameless people should be read into the space between the lines of this application and into any consequent designation of the Chapel itself.

Photographs

Attach at least four digital photographs showing the views of the property from the public right of way and any important features or details. If available, include historic photographs of the structure.

See below

Application Fee

Find the correct fee from the below table. (Make check payable to Denver Manager of Finance).

Application for designation of a structure for preservation (owner applicant)	\$250
Application for designation of a structure for preservation (non-owner applicant)	\$875

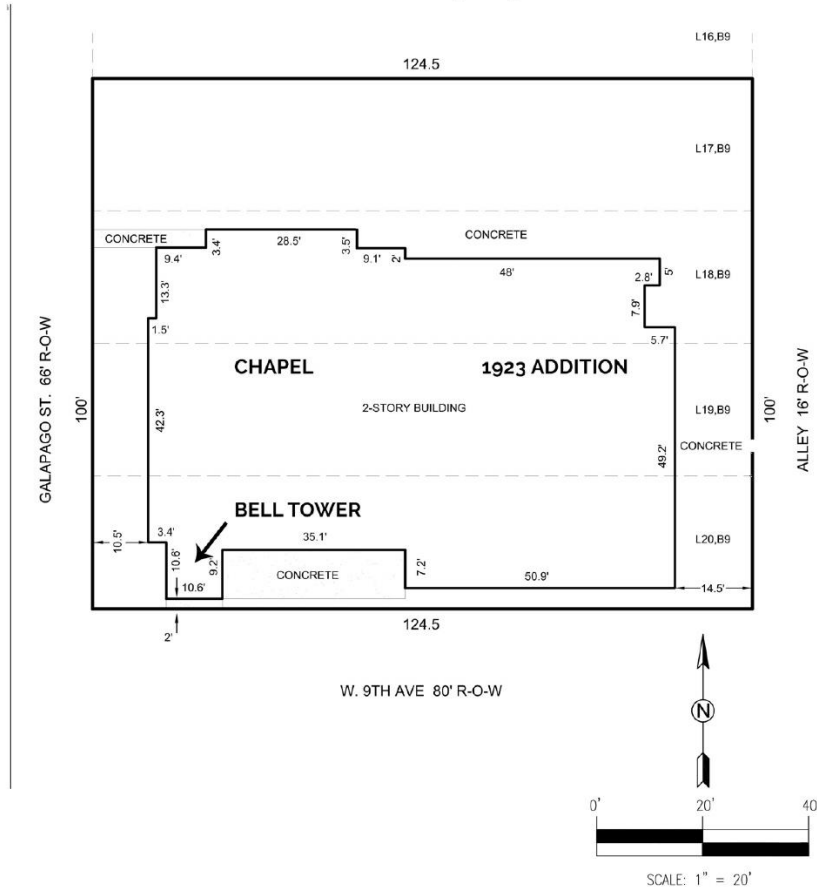
Boundary Map

Attach a map that graphically depicts the structure, the location of other significant features, and the boundaries of the designation.

SMITH'S CHAPEL

910 Galapago Street

Boundary Map



Google Street view

Photographs



910 Galapago Street, Smith's Chapel, Southwest corner. Photo by Shannon Schaefer Stage, Oct. 2020



West façade of Smith's Chapel. Photo by Shannon Schaefer Stage, Oct. 2020



Northwest corner of Smith's Chapel. Photo by Shannon Schaefer Stage, Oct. 2020



North façade of Smith's Chapel. Photo by Shannon Schaefer Stage, Oct. 2020

SMITH'S CHAPEL

910 Galapago Street



North elevation of the 1923 addition as it is incorporated into the 1882 chapel. A smaller, earlier addition is also visible in this frame to the right of the stairwell showing where a stage was added to the chapel. The rear of the stage addition is red brick; the Galapago street-facing portion utilizes rhyolite stone block and seamlessly integrates with the 1882 chapel. Note ghosted windows and doors.

Provided by Applicant



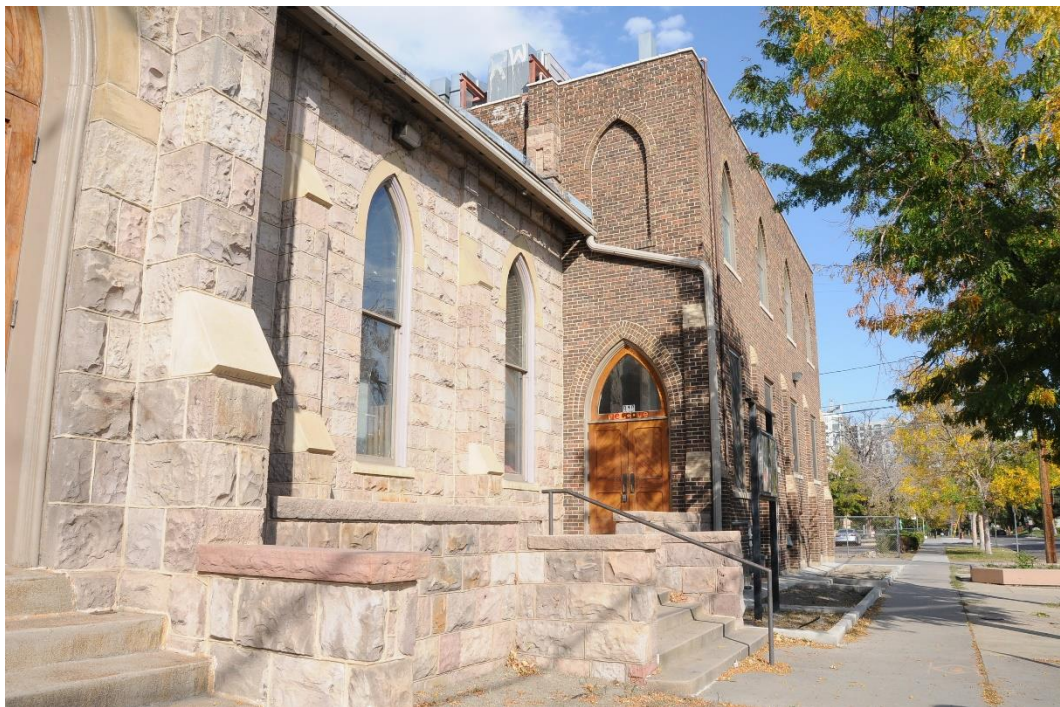
Northeast façade of Smith's Chapel including the 1923 addition. Photo by Shannon Schaefer Stage, Oct. 2020



East façade of Smith's Chapel, 1923 addition. Photo by Shannon Schaefer Stage, Oct. 2020



Southeast façade of Smith's Chapel and 1923 addition. Photo by Shannon Schaefer Stage, Oct. 2020



South façade of Smith's Chapel, porch connector to the 1923 addition. Photo by Shannon Schaefer Stage, Oct. 2020

SMITH'S CHAPEL

910 Galapago Street

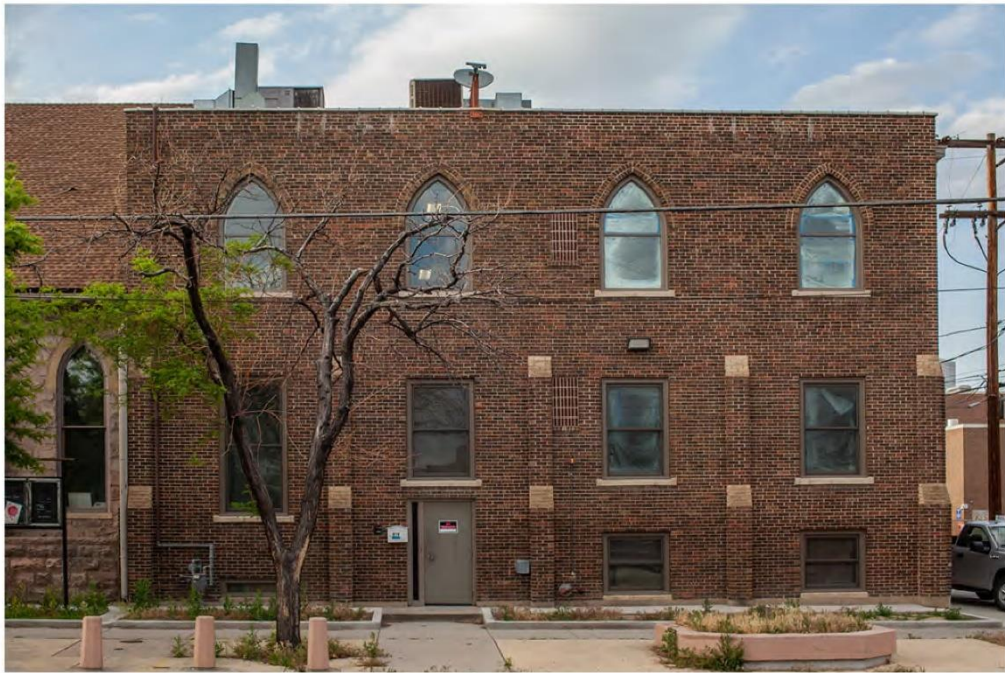


South elevation of original chapel showing the bell tower, lancet windows and doors, stonework, and original metal shingling.

Provided by Applicant

SMITH'S CHAPEL

910 Galapago Street



South elevation of the 1923 addition showing lancet windows immitating the style of the 1882 chapel on the top floor. Note ghosted windows along the midline from long-ago relocated restrooms.

Provided by Applicant

SMITH'S CHAPEL

910 Galapago Street



West elevation of Smith's Chapel showing lancet windows, replica stain glass (behind the black sign under the bell tower), and original stonework. The 1923 addition is visible to the right of the bell tower in red brick.

Provided by Applicant

SMITH'S CHAPEL

910 Galapago Street



Detail of east elevation of the bell tower showing original metal shingling and pitched steeple that rises 70 feet above street-level. It is the most prominent visual landmark in the area.

Provided by Applicant