



To: Land Use, Transportation, and Infrastructure Committee of Denver City Council
From: Kara Hahn, Principal Planner, Community Planning & Development (CPD)
Date: June 21, 2018
RE: Landmark Designation Application for 2900 South University Boulevard, Wellshire Park Cottage

Staff Recommendation:

Based on ordinance designation criteria and on the findings of the Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) that the application meets the criteria for designation of a structure, staff recommends approval of the application.

Request to Designate a Structure:

Application: #2018L-004
Address: 2900 South University Boulevard
Zoning: S-SU-F
Council: Kendra Black, Council District 4
Blueprint Denver: Area of Stability
Owner: PPG Homes, LLC / PJ Patierno
Applicant(s): PPG Homes, LLC / PJ Patierno

Case Summary:

The owner submitted a Landmark Designation application for 2900 South University Boulevard to CPD on May 21, 2018. Staff performed an investigation and found the application to be complete and to meet Denver landmark designation criteria. As such, staff set the public hearing at the Landmark Preservation Commission for June 19, 2018.

At the Landmark Preservation Commission public hearing, the LPC voted (8-0) to recommend landmark designation based on History criterion 1a, Architecture criterion 2a, and Geography criterion 3b citing as findings of fact for this recommendation the application form, public testimony, and the staff report.

Designation Criteria and Evaluation, Chapter 30, Denver Revised Municipal Code:

To meet landmark designation criteria, in accordance with Chapter 30-4, Denver Revised Municipal Code, a structure must be more than 30 years old....and meet the following criteria:

1. Meet one designation criteria in two or more of the following categories:
 - History
 - Architecture
 - Geography
2. Maintain its physical and historical integrity
3. Consider how a structure relates to historic contexts or themes

Criteria Evaluation:

Landmark staff found that the structure application meets History criterion 1a, and Architecture criterion 2a, and Geography criterion 3b.

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1. Historical Significance

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

a) Have direct association with the historical development of the city, state, or nation;

The house at 2900 South University Boulevard was the first and only known residence to have been built in the Wellshire Park Subdivision, a residential subdivision platted by the Wellshire Park Corporation— via the ownership of George Olinger and Lloyd Fulenwider. Olinger hoped Wellshire Park would be as successful as his similar Bonnie Brae development. He hired a prominent local landscape architecture firm, McCrary, Culley & Carthart, to lay out the plat. And, he coordinated with business associates for the completion of the Wellshire Country Club and golf course (3333 S. Colorado Boulevard) on the far east side of the envisioned Wellshire Park neighborhood. Olinger intended the golf course to serve as a major attraction for the new “upscale” Wellshire Park subdivision. In order to meet his mortgage deed agreements and to jumpstart the subdivision’s development, Olinger obtained a bank loan in mid-1925 to complete his first house in the subdivision, 2900 South University Boulevard. However, by 1927, Olinger and Fullenwider divested out of the Wellshire Park Corporation and the company filed for bankruptcy in 1928, the remaining subdivision lands were sold off, sitting otherwise empty until they were eventually re-platted and redeveloped after the Great Depression and World War II.

The house survives as the one of the only tangible reminder of Olinger and Fulenwider’s original Wellshire Park subdivision, and their vision for a “garden” suburb “with the charms of rural life” on the fringes of Denver. The house is a reminder, along with the Wellshire Golf Course and Country Club, that the Wellshire neighborhood had a history long before the current post World War II subdivisions that now fill this landscape. The Wellshire Park Cottage at 2900 South University Boulevard has a direct association with the historical development of south Denver, as the only residence surviving from the original Wellshire Park Subdivision.



2900 South University Blvd
Front façade and drive

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2. Architectural Significance

To have architectural importance, the structure or district shall have design quality and integrity, and shall:

a) *Embody distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or type;*

The Wellshire Park Cottage is a French Eclectic style house, with asymmetrical French Norman farmhouse influences, a whimsical style popularized in the United States with the return of World War I veterans from Europe after 1918. Similar to English Tudor Revival style, this French Eclectic design has a rambling plan of masonry walls and steeply pitched complex roof, with a stone-arch single-door entry. The Wellshire Park Cottage is an unusual Denver example of 1920s single-family suburban home with continental European farmhouse qualities, and stone details reflecting informal domestic buildings in rural northwestern France. Notable features of the French Eclectic style found on the structure include hipped and gabled combination roofs, hipped dormers, stuccoed walls, use of stone masonry as whimsical decoration, multi-pane windows and French doors, entry doorways incorporating arches, and simple stooped entries without porches. The house plan and roof are somewhat rambling, evoking the perception of informal French farmhouses with multiple additions over time.



2900 South University Blvd, Window, door, and stone detailing

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3. Geographic Significance

To have geographic importance, the structure or district shall have design quality and integrity, and shall:

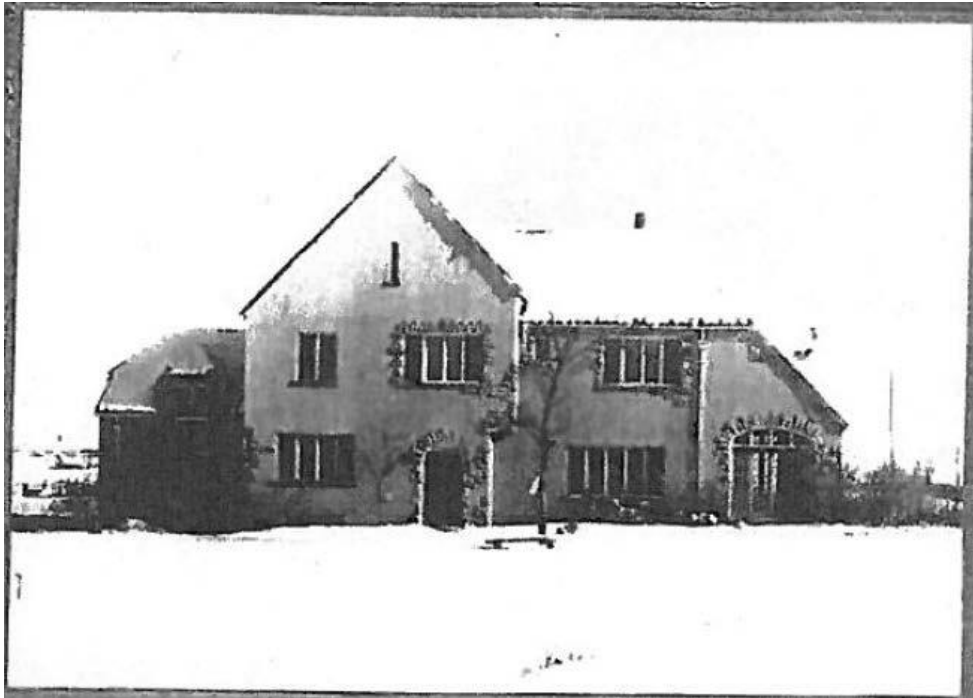
b) Promote understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of distinctive physical characteristics or rarity;

The house at 2900 South University Boulevard is the original surviving home of the Wellshire Park subdivision. Its informal asymmetrical style is relatively unusual in the United States, very uncommon in Denver, and its survival into the present makes it significant and rare. The French Eclectic house on a signature 34,000 square-foot lot, with its unusual architecture and broad footprint, contrasts dramatically with the predominantly single-story ranch and post-ranch houses and townhomes surrounding it, and their associated shared or small- to medium-sized lots. The cottage's survival evokes appreciation for the aspirations of early developers to create a rural residential enclave on the southern outskirts of urbanizing Denver. Their 1920s vision for a residential suburb—represented by this house—was eventually realized, albeit three decades later by different developers with more inward focusing post-World War II suburban layouts and filled with ranch style, rather than romantic European style homes. The Wellshire Park Cottage, the romantic French eclectic country house with its complex and unusual roof shapes and its large lot, is both rare and distinctive for Denver and the Wellshire neighborhood.

Integrity:

Chapter 30, DRMC requires that a landmark designated property maintain its historic and physical integrity, defined as “the ability of a structure or district convey its historic and architectural significance...recognized as belonging to its particular time and place in Denver’s history.” The seven qualities that define integrity are location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

The Wellshire Park Cottage retains a high degree of integrity. Although there have been substantial changes to the surrounding area due to post-war growth, the neighborhood is still residential in nature and retains its integrity setting. As noted in the application, there have been additions including the front porch and small side and rear additions; however, these changes are relatively minor, compatible in size and material, and do not impact the overall integrity. The integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship are readily apparent, and the rambling eclectic style of the building provides a strong sense of feeling and association.



2900 South University Blvd, photo circa mid-1930s



2900 South University Blvd, photo 2018

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Relate to a Historic Context/Theme and Period of Significance:

The structure was constructed in the context of expansion post-World War I, similar to other neighborhoods such as Bonnie Brae, prior to the nationwide financial collapse and the Great Depression.

The designation application calls out a period of significance of 1926-1928, reflecting the historical development of the Wellshire Park Subdivision and the architectural significance of the structure.

Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan (2000) and Blueprint Denver (2002)

The comprehensive plan envisioned Denver in 2020 as vibrant, with well-preserved and appropriately used structures representing every era of the city's history. It included strategies (1-C) that "Preserve Denver's architectural and design legacies while allowing new to evolve."

This property is located in an Area of Stability in Blueprint Denver. Within Blueprint Denver, landmark preservation is identified as a tool to reinforce areas of stability. Blueprint Denver noted that for areas of stability, it is important to respect valued development patterns and attributes of the area, including existing buildings, particularly those adding distinctive character and identity.

Boundary:

The designation application proposes to designate the legal description below:

Lot 13, Block 2, and Outlot A, Southern Hills Filing No. 1, City and County of Denver, State of Colorado

Public Review Process:

Community Planning & Development has met or exceeded all posting and notification requirements delineated in Chapter 12 (Article III, Section 12-96) and Chapter 30 of the DRMC.

Notifications:

- Owner notification letters and emails regarding both the LPC public hearing and City Council meetings
- City Council, Planning Board, and Building Inspection email notifications
- Registered Neighborhood Organization and courtesy email notifications
 - Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation
 - University Neighbors
 - Southern Hills Community Association
 - Cherry Hills Vista Community Association
 - Historic Denver, Inc
 - Colorado Preservation, Inc
 - National Trust for Historic Preservation
 - State of Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
- Posted signage for Landmark Preservation Commission Public Hearing

Public Comments:

As of the date of this staff report, CPD has not received any public comments.

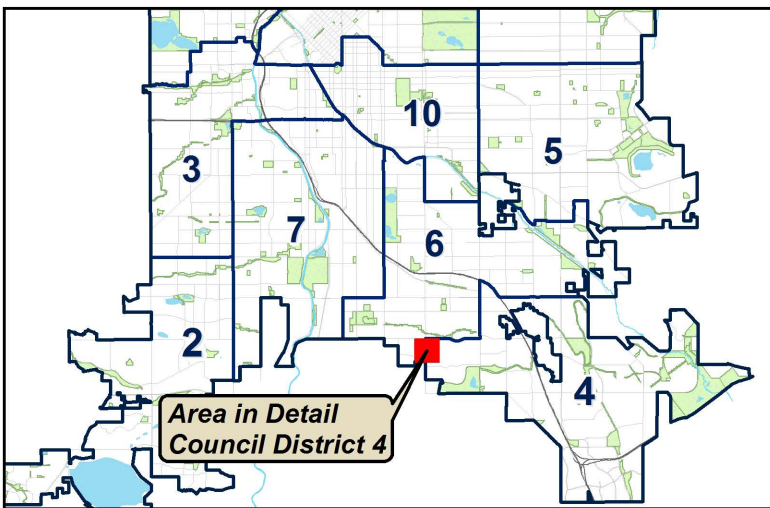


Attachments Provided by CPD:



- Map of structure proposed for preservation
- Letter from applicant/owner
- LPC Public Hearing draft meeting record
- Designation Application

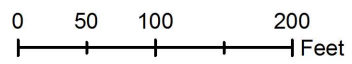
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Proposed Landmark Designation



Proposed Landmark Designation 2900 S University Boulevard

-  **Parcels**
-  **Proposed Designated Area**
*Lot 13, Block 2, and Outlot A,
Southern Hills Filing No 1,
City and County of Denver,
State of Colorado*



June 2018

To whom it may concern,

In 2014, I decided to diversify my personal investment portfolio by adding a few rental properties. I bought a 4-plex from a long-time client and friend and a 9-plex on the same day in February of 2014. Both properties are in Colorado Springs. The 9-plex was interesting because it was built in 1900 and was in disrepair. I saw the investment potential in 'turning it around'. After a lot of time, effort, supervision and a bit of money, I was able to make it a great property that stayed fully occupied and was profitable. The business part of it was what I expected and I was pleased to have achieved it. What I wasn't expecting was the immense sense of pride that I got from having turned a 'forgotten' property into one that was a source of pride and appreciated by the neighbors, tenants and city officials. The fire chief told me he was very pleased I bought it and offered his help in any ways I needed; the city inspectors were just as accommodating.

In November of 2017, I was approached with an unsolicited offer from a foreign buyer for this 9-plex. We arrived at a very fair valuation and consummated the deal. I expected to use these proceeds for another similar multi-tenant building that might need a little 'help'. Instead, I happened upon the property on 2900 S University. It spoke to me. In fact, as I walked through it initially, I told the selling agent I was the right buyer for that property. Although it is old and needs a lot of work, it is about 20 years newer than my former property and I know what I can do with it.

I plan to use this building to house my wealth management practice called Peak Planning Group, LLC. I have been in practice for 28 years this August and we have about half of our client families in CO and the rest around the country. I look forward to hosting my client meetings in the space that I hope to create at 2900 S University. I will use the other offices for business expansion or rentals to other similar financial, legal or accounting professionals.

One of my top clients and friend is an architect who specializes in historic preservation. Also, my oldest son is a 3rd year architect student at Cal Poly. I have gotten a lot of advice and ideas from them and I am hiring professionals to help me make this building, property and space great again.

The Historic Landmark has been proposed for me to have the use that I need for this building. I think the building is awesome and I have enjoyed learning the history of it. Unfortunately, I never took that step on my Colorado Springs property. I would very much appreciate the designation and any other further assistance with the permitting to make the necessary changes to bring the building back to its glory and it make it the place I need for my business and a great 'stand-out' property for the neighborhood.

I am sorry I am unable to join the committee for this discussion but I had prior plans to be out of town this week. Please work with my team to address any further questions you have regarding the history and plans for this space.

Sincerely,

PJ Patierno, CFP, ChFC



DRAFT MEETING RECORD
Landmark Preservation Commission
Tuesday, June 19th, 2018

Commissioners: Ginette Chapman, Kathy Corbett, Charles Jordy (Chair), Kelly Wemple, Amy Zimmer, Heather Vasquez, and Earen Hummel
Staff: Emily Ehr, Brittany Bryant, Jenn Cappeto, Kara Hahn, Abbey Christman, Becca Dierschow, Jessi White, Jennifer Buddenborg (CPD), and Adam Hernandez (CAO)

Public Hearing

2018L-004 2900 South University Boulevard – Wellshire Park Cottage

Description: Individual Landmark Designation
Chair Jordy opened the public hearing.
Staff report by Kara Hahn, Principal Planner.

Presentation by James Steely and Spence Wynant, on behalf of owner.

Public Speakers:

	Speaker Name and Affiliation	Summary
1	Shannon Schaefer, Historic Denver	In favor

Chair Jordy closed the public hearing. Board discussion

Motion by K. Corbett: I move to recommend approval and forward to City Council of application #2018L-004 for landmark designation of 2900 South University Boulevard, based on History criterion 1a, Architecture criterion 2a, and Geography criterion 3b, citing as findings of fact for this recommendation the application form, public testimony, and the June 12, 2018 staff report.

Second by: K. Wemple

Vote: Unanimous in favor (8-0), motion carries.