



**TO: Neighborhoods and Planning  
Mary Beth Susman, Chair**

**FROM: Savannah Jameson, Community Planning & Development**  
**DATE: March 4, 2015**  
**RE: Proposal of three amendments to the Welton Street Cultural Historic  
District designation ordinance**

## **I. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS**

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Welton Street Cultural Historic District was designated in March 2002.

The Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) reviewed the amendments at their meeting on February 17, 2015 and voted unanimously to forward to City Council with a recommendation for approval.

The Planning Board reviewed the amendments at their meeting on February 18, 2015 and voted unanimously to forward to City Council with a recommendation for approval.

### Staff Comments:

There are three amendments proposed for the Welton Street Cultural Historic District ordinance:

1. Name change to Five Points Historic Cultural District to more accurately reflect the district and its significance.
2. Change the period of significance to prior to and including 1964.
3. Add two contributing structures; 2801-2807 Welton Street, Rice's Tap Room and Oven-Simpson Hotel-KC Lounge and 2559-2563 Welton Street, Metropolitan Investment Company- Equity Savings and Loan-Cousins Building.

It is important to establish a period of significance for all historic districts that are under the design review purview of the Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC). This period of significance identifies the time frame for which the district was established and aids in establishing a more predictable and comprehensive design review process for the applicant and for the LPC.

### Purpose:

- It defines and clarifies the time frame for which the district was established

### Results: (predictability and certainty)

- Immediately clarifies for the applicant the building status when considering potential additions and alterations
- With contributing structures the design review focuses on the actual building and the impact of the proposed work on the building's integrity and character. It is important that the original mass, form, and character defining features of the structure are protected and retained.

**CONT.**

- With non-contributing structures design review is focused primarily on retaining the character defining features of the district. Hence the Commission may approve demolition of non-contributing structures in a district – however it is subject to approval of a replacement structure that reinforces the character defining features of the district.

#### Establishing Periods of Significance for Landmark Districts

The Denver Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) is reviewing the Welton Street Cultural Historic District in order to recommend to the Denver City Council that the period of significance established by the designation ordinance be amended.

Establishing a period of significance for each district is important to the Commission. It establishes by date of construction, which buildings should be considered “contributing” to the district and helps in facilitating its design review deliberations.

The LPC considers a structure that has maintained its integrity and that was built within a historic district’s period of significance to be contributing. A contributing structure in a historic district need not be an example of work by a significant architect or have association with a person of historical importance. Rather it is a structure that was built within a historic district’s period of significance and has maintained its historic integrity and thus contributes to the integrity of the district. For example a small bungalow could be considered a contributing structure in a historic district because it contributes to an understanding of the history of the district – it “contributes” to the integrity of the district.

Welton Street Cultural Historic District is unique as a cultural district; contributing structures are ones that have cultural significance and retain their integrity. As such all the contributing buildings were built within the proposed period of significance but not all the buildings built within the period of significance are contributing. The proposed contributing buildings are essential to telling the story of the development along the Welton corridor.

Periods of significance may be amended; however alternative dates must also take into account the original intention of the district designation. Any date decided upon must recognize the structures in the district (regardless of their date of construction providing it is more than 30 years ago) that contribute to the historical or architectural qualities of the district established in the designating ordinance.

Information provided by the public will become part of the Commission files. The Commission may, based on public comment and/or other information, revise the tentative “period of significance” before making its recommendation to the City Council.

The following information was extracted from the Revised Municipal Code Chapter 30-2.

- (2) Contributing shall mean a structure in a district:
  - a. That was designated as contributing in the ordinance establishing the district;
  - b. That was not designated as either contributing or noncontributing in the ordinance establishing the district, but which adds to the historical or architectural qualities of the district, was present during the period of significance and is recognizable as having been present during the period of significance because it retains its physical integrity; or
  - c. That is so designated by the commission because no period of significance and no other means for designating contributing structures was specified in the ordinance establishing a district for preservation, and the structure adds to the historical or architectural qualities of the district, retains its physical integrity, and was built at least thirty (30) years prior to the determination by the commission that it is a contributing structure.

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- (3) District shall mean any structure or improvement and its surrounding environs or a group of structures or improvements or both and their surrounding environs.
- (4.1) Historic context (historic framework) is an organizing framework for interpreting history that clusters information about historic structures that share a common theme, common geographical area, and a common time period. The historic context is necessary to determine whether the characteristics and associations of a particular structure or district are significant.
- (4.2) Physical integrity shall mean the ability of a structure or district to convey its historic and architectural significance. To have physical integrity means that a structure or district can be recognized as belonging to its particular time and place in Denver's history. The seven qualities that, in various combinations, define integrity are:
- a. Location: The place where the historic structure was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.
  - b. Setting: The physical environment of a historic structure.
  - c. Design: The combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a structure.
  - d. Materials: The physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic structure.
  - e. Workmanship: The physical evidence of a particular culture or people's craft during any given period in history.
  - f. Feeling: A structure's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period or time.
  - g. Association: The direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic structure.
- (6) Noncontributing shall mean a structure in a district:
- a. That was designated as noncontributing in the ordinance establishing the district (but see section 30-11(1)(b)); or
  - b. That was not designated as contributing in the ordinance establishing the district, and which does not add to the historical or architectural qualities of the district, was not present during the period of significance or because of alterations or deterioration it has lost its physical integrity.
- (6.1) Period of significance shall mean the time period during which a structure or district gained its architectural, historical or geographical importance. A district's period of significance may cover a longer period of time than a structure's in order to encompass the period during which the district developed.

### **III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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Approve the proposal as submitted, forwarding to City Council with a recommendation for approval, citing as findings of fact the staff memo dated March 4, 2015 and public testimony.

**END**