



April 14, 2014

Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure Committee
Denver City Council
1437 Bannock Street
Denver, CO 80203

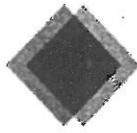
Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to express Historic Denver's support for the designation of the Beth Eden Baptist Church at 3241 Lowell Boulevard. Historic Denver believes that the preservation of Beth Eden Baptist Church will contribute to the dynamic between old and new and create interest and vibrancy in our city. The Beth Eden Church presents this opportunity as new development takes shape around it. Additionally, the former church is a beloved local landmark that clearly meets several of the designation criteria as confirmed unanimously by the Landmark Preservation Commission on April 1, 2014.

As you are all probably aware, this property has been at the center of community debate for the last couple of years. Historic Denver first became aware of the development plans for the site in 2011 when we met with the developer involved at that time. The project presented to us involved the preservation and incorporation of the historic Beth Eden Church, specifically the 1931 sanctuary, into a new multi-family complex that included a connected structure on Lowell, as well as buildings on two nearby parcels on Moncrief and Meade Streets.

In 2011 our Preservation Committee agreed that the developer had elected to do what we wish more developers would do- include a historic structure in a new project. Therefore Historic Denver did not become further involved, and we were assured of the structure's reuse by the fact that the parcel on which the 1931 sanctuary sits did not have a Certificate of Non-Historic status. However, in early 2014 we learned that plans for the 1931 structure had changed when a Certificate of Non-Historic status was posted on the building.

Because it has been the consistent position of Historic Denver that the church building should remain, we engaged in the designation process. However, we very rarely take such action without strong community support, and in this case there are 8 co-applicants from the neighborhood, including those involved in Friends of West Highland Landmarks. Additionally, we hosted a petition and 394 Denver residents, including 280 who live within 1 mile of the church, have signed on to date.



West 20th Avenue
Sheridan Blvd.
West Highland Neighborhood
Association
Foothill Blvd.
West 20th Avenue

Denver, Colorado
www.westhighlandneighborhood.org
info@westhighlandneighborhood.org
303-620-6450

April 15, 2014

Members of the Land Use, Transportation, and Infrastructure Committee:

On April 1, 2014, the members of the West Highland Neighborhood Association voted, by a large majority, to support the decision by the Landmark Preservation Commission to recommend the Beth Eden Church for landmark designation.

Members of the community directly adjacent to the structure contend that the Beth Eden Church is a notable community landmark, due to its size and siting, and its intimate historic connection with the founding, development, and success of the West Highland community.

The Association asks that you support the recommendation made by the Landmark Preservation Commission and grant the Beth Eden Church its historic designation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kevin Neimond
President, West Highland Neighborhood Association

3249 W. Fairview Place, #106
Denver, CO 80211

April 14, 2014

Denver Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure Committee
City and County Building
1435 Bannock Street
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Committee Members:

Friends of West Highland Landmarks is a group of residents who want to see the historic character of West Highland retained. While we accept the inevitable change throughout our neighborhood, we formed about three years ago with the purpose of balancing that progress with preservation of significant landmarks.

One of our first efforts was to prepare an historic designation application for the entire Beth Eden property, as we believed that the now-demolished portions were also significant. We filed that application in February 2012 because we felt the Landmark Preservation Commission's files contained incomplete information about the property. Since our application included parcels for which a Certificate of Non-Historic status (CNH) had been issued, the application and filing fee were returned without review.

A CNH was not issued for the Beth Eden sanctuary when the landowner applied for one in 2008 because LPC staff determined that it had potential for historic designation. Like Historic Denver, the other co-applicants and I understood that despite loss of the other portions of Beth Eden Church, the sanctuary would remain as part of a new development. We were surprised to learn that was no longer the case when notice was posted in February this year.

We believe this property should be preserved because of its architectural, historic, and geographic merit. It is a recognized landmark in the community, the tallest structure at the 32nd and Lowell nexus and a reminder of the longevity, and intentions, of the founders of Highland. The fact that a building of this stature was constructed during the Great Depression is a tribute to its significance to the community. To make affordable the construction of a church of this size, the original design was simplified somewhat, and thousands of volunteer hours were contributed to its construction.

We know the historic structures in our neighborhood are a large part of its popularity, and are concerned that the loss of this structure would be much like killing the goose that laid the golden egg. We believe the old and new can, and should, co-exist, and that destruction of solid historic structures such as Beth Eden is environmentally wasteful and unsustainable.

We circulated a petition to gauge neighborhood support for preservation of Beth Eden Church, and so far approximately 400 people have signed the petition.

We trust that you will give our petition and application your every consideration.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Quinn
on behalf of
Friends of West Highland Landmarks

April 15th 2014

Dear Sir, dear Madam,

I'm writing, as a neighbor and community member, to express support for the historic designation of the Beth Eden church, on 3241 Lowell Blvd.

The Church is a notable community landmark, based on its size, situation and prominent location - visible from practically anywhere along the commercial district known as Highland Square. It is also a key part of what gives this neighborhood its uniqueness and charm, which adds value and draws visitors to the area.

The church building and the congregation it housed are unique, and intimately linked to the development and success of West Highland. It is the only Tudor revival church in Denver, designed by prominent architect WN Bowman and has been the gathering point for many important community activities (such as the founding of Denver's Little League) and numerous family milestones. The building itself speaks to the "stern" wishes for a "purer" life of the founders of The Highlands, and it is a testimony to its resilience of the community that the current structure was built during the challenging 1930s.

The Landmark Preservation Commission agrees this building is worthy of preservation. They unanimously supported the application for designation, commenting that the building possibly meets all three, not just two needed criteria.

While the landowner may have taken steps to give the building an appearance of being derelict, this is not the case. The building was in regular use up until the demolition of surrounding additions. A previous developer for the site had a viable plan for including the building, through adaptive reuse, into a commercial development.

It is a strong fit with Denver's values to care about sustainability. Adaptive reuse is the most sustainable use of this building; far superior to hauling its bricks and other materials off to landfill.

In the last month or so, 394 Denver residents, including 280 who live within 1 mile of the church, have signed Historic Denver's petition to preserve the church.

Thank you for your time and service. We appreciate your consideration.

Marie Benedix
3284 Osceola St
Denver, CO 80212

Bartleson, Debra - City Council

From: Betty Luce [betty.luce@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 8:26 AM
To: Bartleson, Debra - City Council
Subject: Beth Eden Church

Debra,

I am writing in support of the Landmarks Preservation Commission's vote to award landmark status to the Beth Eden church in Highlands Square.

As noted in the Commission's remarks, the church was established at the site before Highlands was a part of Denver. With a large and influential membership, the church was the impetus for routing a streetcar line down 32nd Ave. The business district grew up around the streetcar stop.

For many years now the building has been an integral element in the context of the neighborhood, and needs to be preserved for the enjoyment and aesthetic appreciation of future generations. Highlands is one of the oldest communities in Denver, and the scale and charm of the neighborhood has made it one of the most popular. It does not make sense to destroy the essential fabric of the neighborhood in the service of increased density.

The petition to preserve the church was signed by nearly 400 neighbors, the majority living within a mile of the church. The authenticity of the architecture has been confirmed by the LPC, and their vote was unanimous to send a recommendation for preservation to the City Council.

I would add my vote to that of the LPC and sincerely hope that their recommendation will be approved by the City Council.

Thank you,

Betty Luce
Broker Associate
Nostalgic Homes

Sent from my iPad