

**DESIGNATION APPLICATION FORM**

**1. District Identification**

**Historic Name of District:** N/A

**Proposed Name of District:** Vassar School Bungalows Historic District

**Historic Uses:** Residential

**Legal Description:** The district includes Plots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the Vassar Resubdivision of part of Block 2 Broadway Highlands, located in the SW 1/4 of the SW 1/4 of Section 27, Township 4 South, Range 68 West of the 6th P.M., City and County of Denver, State of Colorado.

**Boundaries of District:** The boundary of the Vassar School Bungalows Historic District is as follows (also depicted in accompanying district map): beginning at the southwest corner of the district at the intersection of the centerline of South Lincoln Street and East Vassar Avenue; thence north along the centerline of South Lincoln Street to its intersection with the centerline of the alley between Vassar Resubdivision of part of Block 2 Broadway Highlands and Block 2 Broadway Highlands; thence east along the centerline of the alley to its intersection with the centerline of South Sherman Street; thence south along the centerline of South Sherman Street to its intersection with the centerline of East Vassar Avenue; thence west along the centerline of East Vassar Avenue to its intersection with the centerline of South Lincoln Street. In addition, thereto those portions of all abutting public rights-of-way, but only to the centerline thereof, which are immediately adjacent to the aforesaid specifically described area.

**Boundary Explanation:** The boundary includes the earliest intact area of the residential development on the lots originally developed as the Vassar Elementary School in the Broadway Highlands Subdivision. Each of the similarly designed residential properties were constructed using materials originally associated with the school and form a cohesive appearance that is distinctive from surrounding residential and commercial development.

**2. Applicant(s) and Preparer Information**

**Name:** Councilman Paul Kashmann, District 6

**Address:** 1427 Bannock St., #451, Denver, CO 80202

**Email:** [Paul.kashmann@denvergov.org](mailto:Paul.kashmann@denvergov.org)

**Phone:** (720) 337-6666

**Affiliation (indicate one or more of the following:**  Property owner in district,  Other property owner in Denver,  Denver residence,  Place of business in Denver)

**Signature:** 

**Date:** 6.11.18

**Application prepared by (if not listed above):**

**Name:** Kristi H. Miniello, Miniello Consulting

**Address:** 1340 Rosemary Street, Denver, CO 80220

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CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
2018 JUN 21 AM 11:42

LANDMARK DISTRICT APPLICATION: VASSAR SCHOOL BUNGALOWS HISTORIC DISTRICT

If the applicant(s) does not own all properties in the district, the application must be signed by at least three persons who are residents or owners of property in the City and County of Denver or have a place of business in the City and County of Denver. Ideally, the three applicants would be property owners within the district. Please expand this field as needed. Alternately, the applicant can be a member of City Council or the Manager of Community Planning and Development department.

NOTE: Applicants have certain responsibilities and obligations under the designation process. Citizens, in addition to the required applicants, may want to support the designation, but not assume applicant responsibilities. The Landmark Preservation Commission recommends that these citizens show support through signing a petition, rather than signing on as an applicant. Refer to Section 11 of the application form.

**Co-Applicant(s)**

Name: Jennifer Kremer  
Address: 119 E. Vassar Ave., Denver, CO 80210  
Email: tarble@msn.com Phone: 303-861-9708

Affiliation (indicate one or more of the following:  Property owner in district,  
 Other property owner in Denver,  Denver residence,  Place of business in Denver)

Signature: Jennifer Kremer Date: 6/6/18

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Name: Patrick Dichter  
Address: 127 E Vassar Ave Denver, CO 80210  
Email: Patrick.dichter@gmail.com Phone: 303-589-7868

Affiliation (indicate one or more of the following:  Property owner in district,  
 Other property owner in Denver,  Denver residence,  Place of business in Denver)

Signature: [Signature] Date: 6/6/18

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Name: Scott Nelson  
Address: 105 E. Vassar Ave  
Email: snelsonco@gmail.com Phone: 303-518-8856

Affiliation (indicate one or more of the following:  Property owner in district,  
 Other property owner in Denver,  Denver residence,  Place of business in Denver)

Signature: [Signature] Date: 6/6/18

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### 3. Statement of Significance

#### Category 1: History

- a. Have direct association with the historical development of the city, state, or nation; or,
- b. Be the site of a significant historic event; or,
- c. Have direct and substantial association with a person or group of persons who had influence on society.

Vassar School Bungalows Historic District exhibits a high level of physical integrity that expresses its association with its period of significance (1925-1926). Additionally, the resources and materials utilized in the construction of the houses and the landscaping serve as a physical tie to the school building formerly located on the land. Situated one block east of South Broadway in the Rosedale Neighborhood, it was influenced by the overall trends occurring along that historic transportation route and the City and County of Denver.

The district is directly tied to Vassar School, which occupied the six parcels upon which the houses are now located from 1892 to 1924. A new school, Rosedale, was built in 1924 to accommodate the growing enrollment at Vassar and Milton Schools. The larger and more modern facility was located nearby at the southeast corner of East Iliff Avenue and South Sherman Street. In December 1924, the property was purchased from the school district by Albert L. Franz, an Ohio native whose occupation at the time, and for a brief period according to Denver City Directories, was a contractor.<sup>1</sup> It is not known if Franz was involved in the development or construction of additional properties in Denver. Franz applied for a permit to demolish the school on February 16, 1925. Ten days later, on February 26, Franz filed six identical building permits for one-story brick bungalows with full basements measuring 29 feet six inches by 34 feet and garages measuring 12 feet by 18 feet. Franz worked with the existing topography and used on-site materials from the former school in the creation of the Spanish Revival houses and their lots, notably the incorporation of sandstone in the foundations and the low sandstone wall that surrounds the west, south, and east sides of the district.

Over the past 92 years, the houses have been occupied by numerous owners and tenants, with many of them being either single men or married couples. The majority of the working-class men were employed as electrical engineers, clerks, salesmen, bank tellers, cashiers, and department managers and supervisors. Additional residents included a city detective, lather, and barber. While South Broadway offered employment and entertainment opportunities, residents could relax in the open space of Rosedale Park/City of Kunming Park, located immediately northeast/east of the district. The larger areas such as Washington Park, Smith Lake, and Overland Park were within short driving distance.

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<sup>1</sup> Denver Householders' Directories, 1926-1956 (Denver: Stephen H. Hart Library and Research Center, History Colorado); Denver City Directories, 1926-1956 (Denver: Stephen H. Hart Library and Research Center, History Colorado).

**Category 2: Architecture**

- a. **Embody distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or type; or,**
- b. **Be a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder; or,**
- c. **Contain elements of architectural design, engineering, materials, craftsmanship, or artistic merit which represent a significant or influential innovation; or,**
- d. **Portray the environment of a group of people or physical development of an area in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style.**

Vassar School Bungalow Historic District exhibits a high level of physical integrity that successfully conveys the distinguishing characteristics of the Spanish Revival architectural style. The six residential buildings are contributing to the district and were constructed during the period of significance (1925-1926).

There are minor differences between the houses, but the Spanish Revival elements are easily recognizable. The properties present a uniform, cohesive appearance. Such features include stucco-over-brick construction, parapets with brick coping, small shed roofs over windows and entryways, red clay barrel tiles, arches beneath porch roofs, and decorative downspouts. Each of the houses and original garages have flat roofs, a feature found in only around 10 percent of this style in the country overall. Additionally, evidence of vigas is visible in some areas of certain houses and one property owner stated that they removed their vigas due to rot.<sup>2</sup>

The buildings were not designed by a master architect, but a significant degree of thought and resourcefulness was implemented into the design of the district. The houses are located on the lots that were previously occupied by the Vassar School. In an innovative move, materials from the school were incorporated into the properties. Landscape features, such as the sandstone wall and flagstone sidewalk that run along the west, south, and east property lines were left intact and tie in with the design of the lots, giving the district a cohesive appearance. Additionally, the sandstone and other masonry materials are present in the foundations of the houses (visible in the basements).

The land slopes from east to west, and although the homes were designed with similar layouts, each building is adapted to the specific slope on which its lot is situated. From Vassar Avenue, the slope is apparent, but the height of the buildings appears to be uniform. Although small, the Vassar School Bungalows Historic District is distinctive in that no other properties in the surrounding area resemble it or exhibit a uniform grouping of Spanish Revival style architecture, constructed by the same builder. The occasional house built before 1920 is scattered around, and two closer examples are a two-story brick Cottage and a two-story brick Foursquare. The majority of nearby residential properties are Craftsman-style bungalows built during the 1920s, modest Minimal Traditional houses built after World War II, or newly constructed houses that are noticeably larger in scale and do not exhibit any specific style.

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<sup>2</sup> Jennifer Kremer, conversation with Kristi Miniello, 12 February 2018.

**Category 3: Geography**

- a. Have a prominent location or be an established, familiar, and orienting visual feature of the contemporary city; or,
- b. Promote understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of distinctive physical characteristics or rarity; or,
- c. Make a special contribution to Denver's distinctive character.

The Vassar School Bungalows Historic District is distinctive in that no other properties in the surrounding area have such a unique and direct association with the school that occupied the land from 1892-1924. Overall, the orientation of the school informed the plan and layout of the houses that occupied the property after it was demolished. Like the school that was once centrally located on the property, the six south-facing houses present a uniform, symmetrical appearance. Rather than divide the property into west- and east-facing parcels like the rest of the surrounding blocks, the developer embraced the unique challenge presented by the remnants of the school and its setting.

Upon evaluating the three westernmost properties, the size of each plot, the location of the house on each plot, and the spacing between them, one notices that the elements are a mirror image of the three easternmost properties. When facing the two central properties from the public right-of-way, it is easy to envision the entrance to the school being in the space between.

Materials from the former school were incorporated into the construction of the houses, notably the reuse of the sandstone. A low sandstone wall that surrounds the west, south, and east sides of the district likely denoted the school property, and the sunken backyard of the property at 141 E. Vassar Ave. was reportedly the location of the playground. A simple metal railing is attached to the top of the wall, and a series of Roman numerals are etched into the horizontal sections. Additionally, the original flagstone sidewalk remains around most of the properties.

In addition to the influence of Vassar School, the Vassar School Bungalows Historic District is distinctive in that no other properties in the surrounding area resemble it or exhibit such a noticeable and uniform grouping of Spanish Revival style architecture. Generally, nearby residential properties lack cohesiveness in their dates of construction, architectural styles, scale, and materials. One-story Craftsman-style bungalows built in the 1920s retain their brick exteriors or have been clad in stucco; a number of one-story Minimal Traditional homes built after World War II exhibit a mix of materials, such as brick, aluminum, or vinyl siding; and a handful of split-level duplexes built around the late 1960s can also be found. However, where similarly-scaled modest properties would have lined one or both sides of a street, they are commonly interrupted by newer construction that is significantly larger in scale and noticeably different in materials and roof pitch.

## **4. Architectural and Physical Description**

### **A. Location and Setting**

Vassar School Bungalows Historic District is located in the Rosedale Neighborhood, approximately 4.80 miles from downtown Denver. The proposed designation area is northeast of the intersection of East Vassar Avenue and South Lincoln Street. It extends north from E. Vassar Ave. to the alley that runs west-east between the Vassar Resubdivision of part of Block 2 Broadway Highlands and Block 2 of the Broadway Highlands Subdivision and east from S. Lincoln St. to S. Sherman Street.

The district includes the entirety of the Vassar Resubdivision of part of Block 2 Broadway Highlands, which encompasses six residential properties consisting of single family houses that are contributing. The closest local residential historic districts are more than two and a half miles away and include the Grant Street Historic District and the Baker Neighborhood Historic District. A small number of local landmarks are scattered nearby.

The surrounding streets are laid out in a west-east, north-south grid pattern. South Broadway, a major commercial area, is located one block to the west. Immediately to the northeast/east is Rosedale Park/City of Kunming Park, and residential properties that are mostly single family in nature are found to the north and south of the district. The Vassar School, a two-story masonry building with a north-south orientation, was once centrally located on the plots upon which the district properties are located, and some building materials, such as a distinctive sandstone wall and sandstone foundations in basements, remain throughout the district.

### **B. Architectural Description**

Generally, topography in the area slopes from east to west. Within the district, the slope is noticeable with the design of each property's buildings and setting features. A sandstone wall, thought to be associated with the former Vassar School that once occupied the properties, runs along the majority of the front yards on the south portion of the district, with segments along the west sides of the properties at 105 and 127 E. Vassar Ave. The wall forms the east boundary for the sunken backyard of 141 E. Vassar Ave., while the rest of the backyard and those of the other five properties are contained by individual wood or chain link fences.

The south-facing houses are uniform in their approximate 35 feet setback from the north curb of E. Vassar Ave., allowing a line of site from west to east through the porches. Additionally, there is a spatial rhythm between the three westernmost properties that is mirrored in the three easternmost properties. One story garages are located on the rear of each property and, with the exception of the two-car garage associated with 105 E. Vassar Ave., they are all one car garages. The garages at 105 and 115 E. Vassar Ave. are modern, with the remaining four being original to the properties. The original garages have stucco exteriors, flat roofs, and parapets, features that carry over from the primary buildings.

Each of the six houses were built between 1925 and 1926 in the Spanish Revival style, which was popular in the United States from 1915 to 1940. Although there are some differences between them, the houses are generally uniform in appearance.<sup>3</sup> They all exhibit distinctive elements of the style, including stucco-over-brick construction, flat roofs (which comprise only

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<sup>3</sup> Virginia McAlister and Lee McAlister, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), 418; Rachel Carley, *The Visual Dictionary of American Domestic Architecture* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994), 196-99.

10 percent of this style in the country overall), parapets with brick coping, small shed roofs over windows and entryways, red clay barrel tiles, arches beneath porch roofs, decorative downspouts, and evidence of vigas.

### **C. Method Used to Determine Contributing/Non-contributing Status**

The district overall must possess a significant concentration, linkage or continuity of buildings and structures united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development. In order for a property to be determined Contributing to the district, it must have been present in the district at its current location during the period of significance (1925-1926) and substantially convey those physical attributes which determine its character and style. If a structure has been significantly altered with regard to form, function, and/or materials resulting in its inability to convey those characteristics and style that are distinctive to the district or is a secondary structure to a property, such as a garage, it was determined to be Non-contributing. Evaluation of each property's status was based on physical site visits, City of Denver building permits, City of Denver Assessor's records, historic maps and aerial imagery, and information provided by owners.

### **D. General Description of Neighborhood Physical Alterations or Changes**

Common changes that have occurred to the majority of the properties in the district include window replacement, alterations to front porches, garage replacement, and small rear additions. With the exception of 141 E. Vassar Ave., all of the houses have replacement windows within their original square or rectangular openings. The house at 141 E. Vassar Ave. retains its original 8-light wood windows for the most part, with notable exceptions being an arched window to the east of the main entrance and a pair of glass block windows at the south end of the east elevation.

The properties at 119 and 127 E. Vassar Ave. have experienced substantial porch alterations, with that of 119 being enclosed and the roofline altered and 127 being removed and replaced with a shed roof supported by heavy wood brackets. Partially visible over the rear wood privacy fence is a small, enclosed, one-story rear addition on 105 E. Vassar Ave. A patio with a shed roof was added to the rear of the house at 127 E. Vassar Ave., but it is not visible from the public right-of-way. Similarly, a patio with a shed roof was added to cover the rear entrance to 141 E. Vassar Ave.

### **E. Historic Physical Integrity**

The properties that comprise the Vassar School Bungalows Historic District retain a high level of physical integrity related to the district's period of significance (1925-1926). They are recognizable as belonging to a specific period of time and place in Denver's history and easily convey a sense of history and place with their cohesive appearance. Overall, the properties retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Each of the properties retains its original residential dwelling in the location where it was constructed, and all six continue to serve in a residential capacity. The setting remains much as it was in 1925-1926 with the surrounding area comprised of primarily residential properties, commercial properties along South Broadway, and the open space of Rosedale and Harvard Gulch Park just to the northeast. Many of the surrounding residential properties were either built in the 1920s, in the decade after the end of World War II, or within the past 10 years. The form, plan, space, structure and style of each property is largely unchanged. When combined with

original key exterior materials, such as the parapets with brick coping, stucco, and flat roofs, the district conveys the direct association with its period of significance.

## **5. History of the District and Its Associations**

Vassar School Bungalows Historic District exhibits a high level of physical integrity that expresses its association with Denver's pre-Great Depression period (1925-1926). Additionally, the resources and materials utilized in the construction of the houses serve as a physical tie to the school building that was located on the parcels from 1892 to 1924. The district is situated one block east of South Broadway in the Rosedale Neighborhood, the boundaries of which are defined by Broadway to the west, Evans Avenue to the north, Downing Street to the east, and Yale Avenue to the south.

### **The Neighborhood**

Broadway, the paved and busy thoroughfare that travels north and south through Denver, had its beginnings in 1864 as a bumpy wagon road that farmers from surrounding agricultural lands used in order to haul produce to the market in the city. Thomas Skerritt, with the help of his four sons, built the first rough path.<sup>4</sup> The route's popularity as a major transportation corridor with easy access to downtown Denver grew, and the area south of Denver's main commercial and social center was occupied by the Town of South Denver. Its boundaries were the South Platte River on the west, Alameda Avenue on the north, Colorado Boulevard on the east, and Yale Avenue on the south.

The community filed for incorporation papers on August 14, 1886 and made it clear early on that they were not interested in the vices and bad influences they deemed to be so prevalent in Denver and surrounding towns. Newspaper articles and histories from the time discuss early battles against alcohol and the fines imposed on proprietors of taverns, with the town pressing stiff costs associated with any such license. Attempts to tighten regulations occurred on a frequent basis in a crusade against alcohol and its unwanted side effect, intoxication.

Although there was some form of public transit along South Broadway, it was limited in operations and was referred to as the "little brown horse car."<sup>5</sup> In December 1888, the first streetcar in Denver began service along the thoroughfare, with the tracks looping between Alaska and Dakota Streets for the return trip.<sup>6</sup> At its height, the Denver Tramway System operated 31 lines that traveled along 260 miles of track.<sup>7</sup> Although a popular means of transportation for several years, the streetcar eventually lost out to the automobile. The last trolleys were run in the summer of 1950 and replaced with buses.

By 1888, administrators in the Town of South Denver began an initiative to improve the quality of water for the approximately 1,500 residents who were dependent on artisan wells. They voted to approve \$160,000 in financing for the construction of a stone pump house that provided water to the town by the following summer.<sup>8</sup> With its new water system, public transportation, and two schools, South Denver succeeded in attracting citizens away from the grime of the denser areas of the city to its pleasant, rural atmosphere.

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<sup>4</sup> Millie Van Wyke, *The Town of South Denver: Its People, Neighborhoods and Events Since 1858* (Boulder, CO: Pruett Publishing Company, 1991), 16.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>7</sup> William C. Jones, *Mile-High Trolleys: A Nostalgic Look at Denver in the Era of the Streetcars*, 2d ed. (Boulder: Pruett Publishing, 1975).

<sup>8</sup> Van Wyke, 56.

Northeast of the district was a stately stone home built in 1893 by Denver pioneer and entrepreneur Thomas M. Field.<sup>9</sup> The Rosedale subdivision, which was platted in 1887, was named in honor of Field's wife, Amanda, supposedly because of the abundance of yellow roses she grew around their first home once located on the current site of Rosedale Park.<sup>10</sup> The following year,<sup>11</sup> after observing the growth and opportunity for development, Avery Gallup platted a 30-acre section of land to the east of Broadway. Located immediately adjacent to Rosedale, he named it Broadway Highlands. The 288 lots available ranged in price from \$75 to \$350 each.<sup>12</sup>

Just eight years after incorporation, South Denver encountered a significant infrastructure hurdle with their need to discharge increased sewage. After a discussion of running their lines to Riverside Cemetery, which is nearly five and a half miles to the north, they realized it would bankrupt their town. Another option was to tie into Denver's existing system, making annexation the viable solution. The voters opted for the annexation of South Denver by Denver, and the town was formally dissolved in February 1894.<sup>13</sup> Later, in 1902, South Denver's school districts were absorbed by the Denver Public School system.<sup>14</sup> That same year, Field's home was turned into the State Home for Dependent Children. The facility was located on 58 acres of land, with 33 of them dedicated to farming and farm yards.<sup>15</sup> The City and County of Denver purchased the property in the late 1960s or early 1970s and turned it into the public recreation space now known as Harvard Gulch Park.

### Vassar School

In 1892, School District 7 purchased 11 lots on East Vassar Avenue between South Lincoln and South Sherman Streets with the intent of building a school to serve the Rosedale and Overland neighborhoods. The Vassar School was constructed that same year for a cost of \$12,000, which also included the purchase of the land.<sup>16</sup> The two-story building was situated in the center of the lots, with its main entrance oriented to the south. Each floor had two rooms, for a total of four, which were heated with coal stoves.<sup>17</sup> The school was one of three in the district with a kindergarten, the other two being at Fleming and Milton schools.<sup>18</sup>

The educational programs at Vassar School were varied and enriched the lives of the students, enrolled from kindergarten through eighth grade, who lived in the neighborhood. According to the school district's annual report from 1918-1919, "The children are practical minded, coming, to a large extent, from thrifty families who own their own homes." Students were provided access to a victrola and piano, and they were introduced to gardening, sewing, cooking, manual work, debates, and argument.<sup>19</sup> Ms. Hattie E. Richardson, the school's principal stated that, "The children feel that Vassar School is a pleasant place where friends meet and work together

<sup>9</sup> Shift Research Lab, "Community Facts: Rosedale Neighborhood," (available from <http://denvermetrodata.org/neighborhood/rosedale>), accessed 19 February 2018.

<sup>10</sup> Van Wyke, 48.

<sup>11</sup> City and County of Denver, "Real Property Maps," (available from <https://www.denvergov.org/maps/map/subdivisions#q=39.66968125914003,-104.98541962525766>), accessed 22 February 2018.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 57-58.

<sup>13</sup> Van Wyke, 90

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>15</sup> Colorado Public Expenditure Council, *The Colorado State Home for Dependent and Neglected Children* (available from: <https://archive.org/details/coloradostatehom00colo>), accessed 20 February 2018.

<sup>16</sup> Jerome C. Smiley, ed., *History of Denver* (Denver: The Times-Sun Publishing Company, 1901), 757.

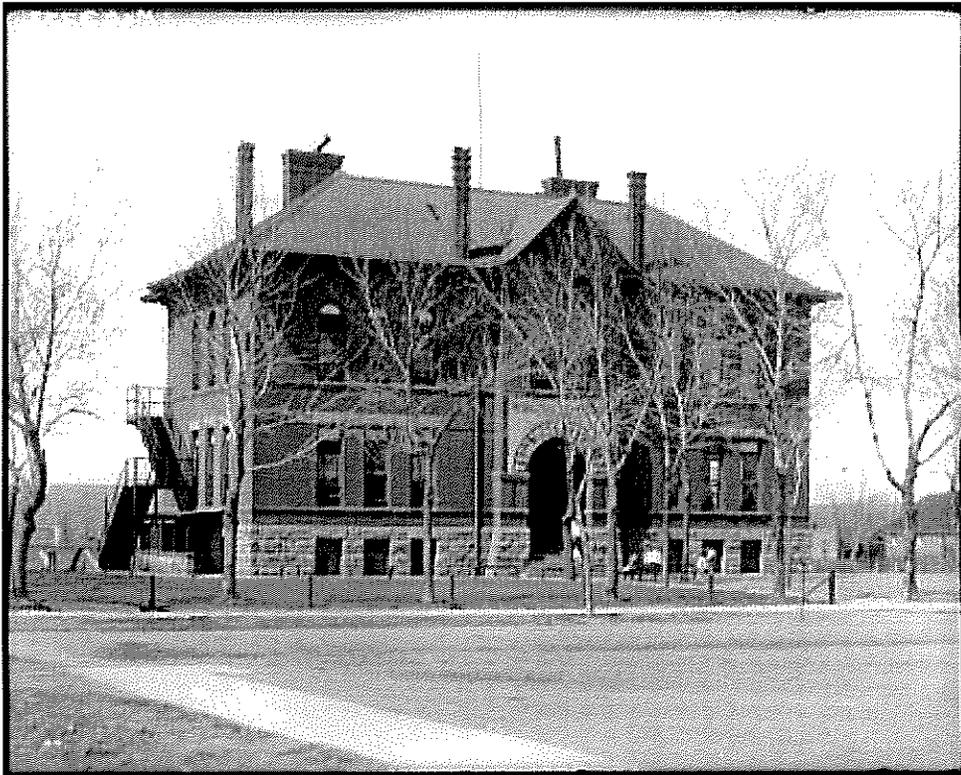
<sup>17</sup> Van Wyke, 74-75; Sanborn-Perris Map Co., *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*, (Denver Vol. 5, 1929-Nov), Sheet 562.

<sup>18</sup> Smiley, 757.

<sup>19</sup> Board of Education and School District Number One, *Sixteenth Annual Report* (Denver: merchants Publishing, 1919), 174-75.

to accomplish something worthwhile.”<sup>20</sup> In 1924, the district closed the school and sold the building and land to Albert L. Franz.<sup>21</sup> Students were transferred to the new Rosedale School nearby on South Sherman Street.

Although no photographs of Vassar School have been located, the description of its layout and appearance on Baist’s 1905 map were nearly identical to that of nearby Milton School, which was built in 1894 and by the same school district. Photographs of Milton School survive, and the sandstone foundation in the images is quite similar to the materials that appear in the bungalows of the Vassar School Bungalows Historic District. Given this information, Vassar and Milton may have been quite similar in appearance.



**Milton School between 1900-30 (Source: Denver Public Library, Genealogy, African American & Western History Resources)**

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 175.

<sup>21</sup> City and County of Denver Assessors Lot Indexes 1860-1917, *Broadway Highlands Addition* (Denver Public Library, Genealogy, African American & Western History Resources), text-fiche.

LANDMARK DISTRICT APPLICATION: VASSAR SCHOOL BUNGALOWS HISTORIC DISTRICT

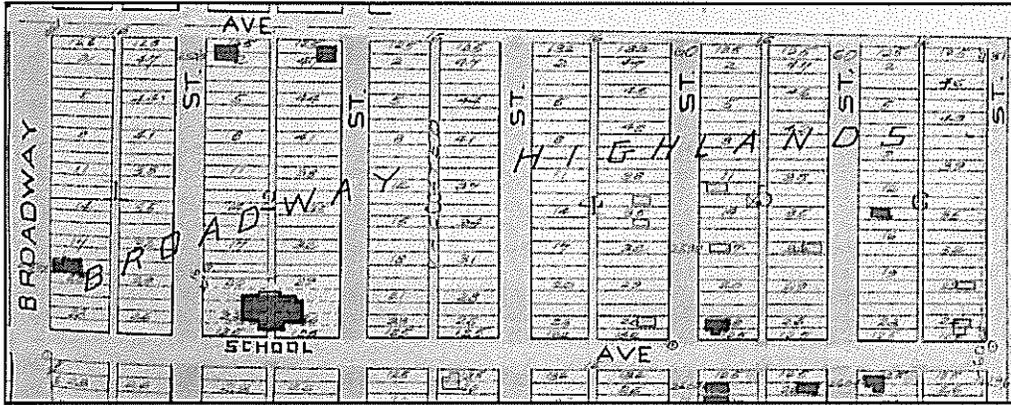


Plate 23 of Baist's 1905 map showing Vassar School in the lower left (Source: Baist, G. Wm. *Baist's Real Estate Atlas of Surveys of Denver, Colorado*. Philadelphia: G. Wm. Baist, 1905.)

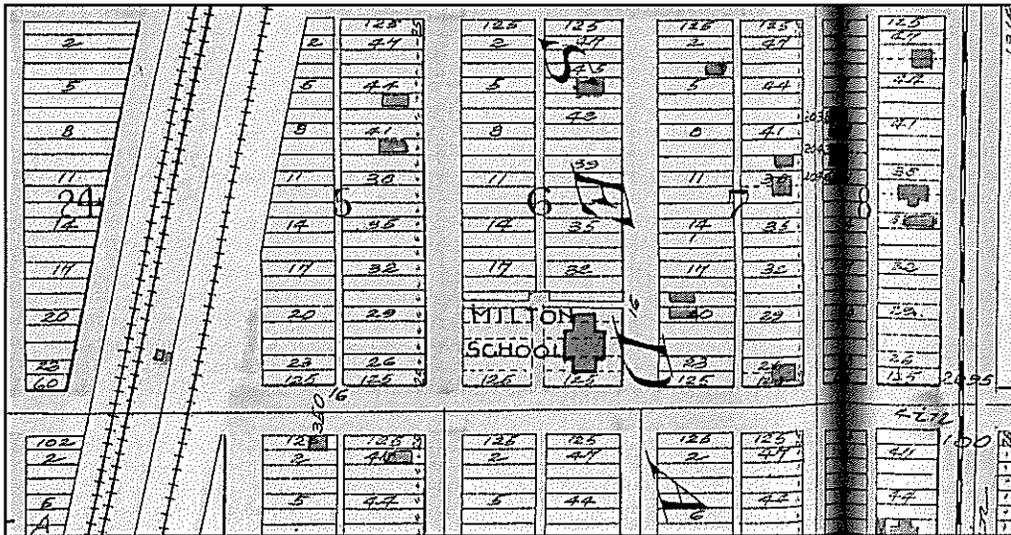


Plate 22 of Baist's 1905 map showing Milton School at the intersection of present-day South Bannock Street and West Evans Avenue (Source: Baist, G. Wm. *Baist's Real Estate Atlas of Surveys of Denver, Colorado*. Philadelphia: G. Wm. Baist, 1905.)

## The Bungalows



Albert L. Franz, date unknown (Source: [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com), accessed 15 May 2018)

Albert Luke Franz, an Ohio native and the youngest of nine children, moved to Saguache County, Colorado to farm in the 1910s at the age of 25, relocated to Hastings, Nebraska by 1920 as a traveling salesman,<sup>22</sup> then moved to Denver before purchasing the school and the 10 lots on which it sat in December 1924. At the time, Albert assumed the occupation of a contractor. Later that month, Albert sold a portion of the properties that would constitute the present alley to Walter Ickes. Two months later, Ickes sold the same portions to J.H. Peterson.<sup>23</sup> There is no record of "J.H." Peterson in Denver at the time, but there was an individual by the name of Harry J. Peterson who was involved in the real estate business and ran Peterson Realty Investment Company.<sup>24</sup> Beyond the sale of the lot sections, there is no further indication of any association with the district between the men.

On February 16, 1925, Albert applied for a permit for "wrecking old Vassar School." The permit issued to Albert notes under the remarks section that demolition of the school was complete by November 16, 1925.<sup>25</sup> Albert platted the properties in their current north-south configuration of six "plots" as Vassar Resubdivision of part of Block 2 Broadway Highlands.

Albert was listed as owner on four of the six building permits (115, 119, 127, and 135 E. Vassar Ave.) for the single-family houses and accompanying single car garages. The owner of the property at 105 E. Vassar Ave. was recorded as A.L. Young (most likely a typo on the permit given the consistency of the other five properties and Franz's involvement), while the property at 141 E. Vassar Ave. was J.A. Franz (Albert's father, John Albert). Dated February 26, 1925, each identical permit was for a one story "Brick bungalow, full basement and garage 12x18" with the size noted as "29'6"x34."<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Ancestry.com, "U.S. Census Records, 1910" and "U.S. Census Records, 1920," (available from [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)), accessed 15 May 2018.

<sup>23</sup> Assessors Lot Indexes 1860-1917, *Broadway Highlands Addition*.

<sup>24</sup> Denver City Directory, 1924.

<sup>25</sup> *City and County of Denver Building Permits 1915-1955* (Denver Public Library, Genealogy, African American & Western History Resources) text-fiche.

<sup>26</sup> *City and County of Denver Building Permits 1915-1955*.

Overall, the layout of the school informed the plan and layout of the houses that occupied the property after it was demolished. Like the school, they were built facing the south in a symmetrical fashion. Upon evaluating the three westernmost properties, the size of each plot, the location of the house on each plot, and the spacing between them, one notices those elements are a mirror image of the three easternmost properties. When observing the two central properties, it is easy to envision the entrance to the school being in the space between.



Symmetry of the six plots that comprise the district (Source: Google Earth Pro, 2018)

The properties were not immediately sold by Albert after their completion in 1926, and it is not clear if the intent was for them to generate income. A series of tenants and vacancies appear in city and householder directories for the first several years. Albert and his wife at the time, Florence A., moved into the house at 141 E. Vassar Ave. after construction but sold it to a pharmacist and his wife by 1927.<sup>27</sup> Albert's occupation as a contractor was relatively short-lived, and he returned once more to his previous livelihood as a salesman. The 1930 U.S. Census recorded him as a "Commercial Salesman Lithographic Supplies," this time in Cheyenne, Wyoming.<sup>28</sup> In 1937, Albert and Florence divorced, and he was remarried soon after to Bernice Hatton. By 1940, Albert had returned to his Ohio roots, and he died in Columbus in 1944.<sup>29</sup>

In the decade following the construction of the bungalows, a number of white owners and tenants, both married and single, resided in the houses. Predominantly working class, they had occupations such as electrical engineer, city detective, clerk, salesman, bank teller, cashier, lather, barber, department manager, and operation supervisor.<sup>30</sup> The mid- to late-1940s saw significantly less turnover, and the homes were mostly owner-occupied by the same residents

<sup>27</sup> Denver Householders' Directories, 1926-1956 (Denver: Stephen H. Hart Library and Research Center, History Colorado); Denver City Directories, 1926-1956 (Denver: Stephen H. Hart Library and Research Center, History Colorado).

<sup>28</sup> Family Search, "U.S. Census Records, 1930," (available from <https://www.familysearch.org>), accessed 19 February 2018.

<sup>29</sup> Ancestry.com, Search results for Albert L. Franz (available from [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)), accessed 15 May 2018.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

for at least 10 years or longer. One such property, 141 E. Vassar Ave., was purchased by the Bradburys in 1947 and remains in the family (now Schmidt) to this day.



Bradbury/Schmidt family in the backyard of 141 E. Vassar Ave. in 1956 (Source: Kimball Schmidt, property owner and baby in the image)

## Work and Entertainment

For residents of the bungalows, there were ample opportunities for employment and recreation within close proximity. Several businesses and major companies were in operation along Broadway by the time the houses were built, offering a number of goods and services. Charles and Hazel Gates purchased the Colorado Leather and Tire Company at 1025 South Broadway for \$3,500 in 1911.<sup>31</sup> Through mail order, the company sold leather tire covers meant to extend the life of existing, worn tires on automobiles. Gates expanded its operations in the mid-1910s and constructed several new buildings on property along South Broadway to keep up with demand for existing products and to manufacture new ones.<sup>32</sup> As the size of the company and number of employees increased, Gates incorporated industrial welfare programs to ensure safety, happiness, fair wages, and productivity. Guaranteeing that the workers it valued would remain employed, the company was able to adapt its products and remain profitable through major world events of the first part of the 20th century.

Also, in the mid-1910s, Ford Motor Company built a four-story regional assembly plant across the street from Gates' complex. Plant operations were impacted by World War I, when it focused on manufacturing materials for military contracts, and again by the Great Depression when it nearly shut down. Following World War II, the plant was no longer viable and was sold

<sup>31</sup> Anne Green, "Leather Tire Covers and Halters Predate Rubber," *This Week*, 2 June 1986.

<sup>32</sup> *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*.

to Gates.<sup>33</sup> Another major manufacturer attracted to South Broadway, Montgomery Ward, built its eighth combination catalog-retail store at 555 South Broadway. It operated in that location for over 50 years before closing its doors in 1983.

In addition to commercial and employment opportunities, there were several nearby venues for the residents to entertain themselves and relax. On February 1, 1910 Overland Park was the sight of the first airplane flight in Colorado when Louis Paulhan flew during an Air Meet, which was essentially an exhibition to prove to the public that man could fly.<sup>34</sup> The park was popular with vacationers who were allowed to camp for free, and there was also a motorcycle race track. The amenities were replaced by a city golf course in the early 1930s.

Smith Lake in Washington Park opened its north shore as Denver's first bathing beach in 1911. Men and women had separate swimming areas, designated by a rope, but only white citizens were free to use the lake.<sup>35</sup> Also nearby was Merchants Park, at Broadway and Center Avenue, which was built in 1922 by the Denver Baseball Company. The venue served as a place for all-stars, such as Babe Ruth and Satchel Page, to make extra money following the end of the season.<sup>36</sup>

## Conclusion

Vassar School Bungalows Historic District was completed within the span of a year, between 1925 and 1926, and few significant changes have occurred within its boundaries over the past 92 years. All of the buildings exhibit trademark elements of the Spanish Revival style and rely heavily on the former Vassar School for their unique property orientation and setting materials. Numerous residents have been drawn to the bungalows and called them home over the years. Kimball Schmidt, whose family has owned the bungalow at 141 E. Vassar Ave. since 1947, grew up in the neighborhood and has a deeper connection to the district than most. His parents were married in the living room of that house, and his grandfather passed away in the backyard. When asked to explain what makes the district so special, Mr. Schmidt replied that the combination of all the unique elements such as, "...the alley, the wall, the flagstone..." it feels like "...a secret little place."<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Van Wyke, 113-14.

<sup>34</sup> Antique Airplane Association and Airpower Museum, "1910 Air Meets and Exhibition Flyers Prove Man Can Fly," (available from [http://www.antiqueairfield.com/features/1910\\_air\\_meet.html](http://www.antiqueairfield.com/features/1910_air_meet.html)), accessed 19 February 2018.

<sup>35</sup> Denver Public Library, Genealogy, African American & Western History Resources, "Washington Park Neighborhood," (available from <https://history.denverlibrary.org/washington-park-neighborhood>), accessed 19 February 2018.

<sup>36</sup> Denver Public Library, Genealogy, African American & Western History Resources, "Denver Baseball," (available from <https://history.denverlibrary.org/news/denver-baseball>), accessed 19 February 2018.

<sup>37</sup> Kimball Schmidt, telephone conversation with Kristi Miniello, 2 March 2018.

## 6. Resources

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## 7. District Property Maps

The following pages include aerial images depicting the district's location and the contributing/non-contributing status of the buildings.



Aerial image depicting the district's location (note the difference in orientation/layout of surrounding parcels)

*PLACEHOLDER FOR DISTRICT SITE MAP - per Kara Hahn's guidance, a Google aerial is provided with this application for Landmarks to develop the official map*

## **8. Overview Photographs**

Eleven high-resolution photographs of the district, streetscape, and important landscape features are attached to this application. Please see the inventory forms for photographs of each property, including images of the garages determined to be Contributing buildings.

## **9. Inventory Forms**

A total of six inventory forms (one for each property within the district) are attached to this application.

## **10. Character Defining Features**

*Per Ms. Hahn's guidance (12/7/2017) - not required to complete this portion*

## **11. Public Outreach**

**February 2016** – Jennifer Kremer (property owner within the district) sent an email to Mona Ferrugia, a friend of hers and an acquaintance of Annie Levinsky, the director of Historic Denver. Ms. Ferrugia forwarded the email to Annie Levinsky, asking how best to preserve the Vassar bungalows. Ms. Levinsky responded back to Ms. Kremer via email, stating that she'd be happy to meet and talk about the historic district process. Ms. Kremer and Ms. Levinsky met to discuss the historic district process and evaluate the bungalows' architectural integrity while walking the block.

**July 4, 2016** – Ms. Kremer received an email from Jon Stevenson, owner of the bungalow at 137 E. Vassar Ave., connecting her to Kimball Schmidt, the owner of the bungalow at 141 E. Vassar Ave., who had been researching the bungalows and the Vassar School for years. Mr. Schmidt had previously contacted Historic Denver and the City of Denver about the possibility of creating a historic district.

**August 26, 2016** – Ms. Kremer and Ms. Levinsky scheduled a meeting to be held at 119 E. Vassar Ave. on September 20th so the bungalow owners could meet with John Olson from Historic Denver and Kara Hahn from the City of Denver's Landmark Commission. Jennifer Kremer distributed flyers with the date, time, location, and agenda to the owners of 105, 115, 127, and 135 E. Vassar Ave., emailed the owner of 141 E. Vassar Ave. since he lives in California, and invited Paul Kashmann, the city councilman, via email.

**September 2016** – The meeting with the bungalow owners, Historic Denver, and the City of Denver's Landmark Commission was held at 7 pm on September 20th at 119 E. Vassar Ave. with two of the bungalows represented (105 & 119 E. Vassar Ave.). Mr. Olson and Ms. Hahn answered questions and distributed numerous handouts about the landmarking process. On September 22nd, Ms. Kremer distributed packets of information to all of the bungalow owners that contained a summary of the meeting, copies of all of the handouts, and Mr. Olson and Ms. Hahn's business cards. Since Councilman Kashmann was unable to attend the meeting, Ms. Kremer met with him on September 27th to discuss the creation of a historic district and to show him the six bungalows.

**December 2016** – 127 E. Vassar Ave., which had been a rental property, sold to Patrick and Brie Dichter just before Christmas. When Ms. Kremer met her new neighbors, she told them

about the history of their new home and the other five bungalows. She also mentioned that several of the bungalow owners were trying to create a small historic district to preserve the six homes. She copied the packet of information that was distributed to all of the other neighbors after the September 20th meeting and gave it to the Dichters so they could educate themselves about the landmarking process and the ramifications.

**May 2017** – Ms. Kremer reached out to Annie Levinsky, asking for a recommendation for a consultant who the bungalow owners could hire to compile the research and complete the landmark application. Ms. Kremer contacted Kristi Miniello of Miniello Consulting via email on May 18th, asking if she'd be interested in helping the Vassar bungalow owners with their landmarking project. Ms. Miniello met Ms. Kremer at 119 E. Vassar Ave. on May 25th to discuss the bungalows and the creation of a historic district. Ms. Miniello put together a proposal that included her fee, which was significantly higher than Ms. Kremer had expected. Ms. Levinsky pointed out that Historic Denver's Action Fund could help cover 75% of the consultant's fee. Unfortunately, no additional funding was available until September.

**August 2017** – Ms. Kremer began completing the application for Historic Denver's Action Fund. She contacted all of the bungalow owners to see if she could list them as members of the "5-member community group" on the application. On August 16th, she sent an email to Councilman Kashmann, asking for a letter of endorsement, an email to the Rosedale Harvard Gulch Neighborhood Association asking for a letter of support, as well as an email to Dan Heinrichs & Susan Benson who have lived across the street from the bungalows for over 20 years, asking for a letter of support. Councilman Kashmann responded to Ms. Kremer's email on August 19th, asking about the level of support from the other homeowners. She told him that four of the six were firmly on board and that she'd speak with the other two owners over the weekend. On August 20th, Ms. Kremer talked to the owners of 115 and 127 E. Vassar Ave, and both households stated they supported the landmarking effort. They agreed to be listed in the application as members of the "5-member community group".

Ms. Kremer emailed Councilman Kashmann on August 21st with the exciting news that all six of the homeowners supported the landmarking effort and would be listed as members of the "5-member community group" on the Action Funds' application. Upon receiving this news, Councilman Kashmann offered to file the completed Historic District application on behalf of the Vassar Avenue bungalow owners, sparing them the application fee. On August 31st, Ms. Kremer submitted the Action Fund application to Historic Denver. She sent an email to the other bungalow owners announcing this accomplishment and included a copy of the completed application.

**September 29, 2017** – Ms. Kremer received notification from Historic Denver that the Vassar School Bungalows' Action Fund application was approved and sent an email to all of the owners with this exciting news!

**November 2017** – Ms. Kremer sent an email to all of the bungalow owners on November 15th, stating that Historic Denver was ready to hire the consultant and asking who would be willing to contribute to the 25% matching funds required to hire the consultant. By November 18th, Ms. Kremer heard back from all of the bungalow owners, with everyone agreeing to contribute \$82.50 each to cover the 25% matching funds needed to hire the consultant! The following day, Ms. Kremer sent an email to all of the bungalow owners requesting each of their checks.

**December 2017** – On December 7th, Ms. Kremer met with Ms. Miniello (consultant) and Shannon Schaefer of Historic Denver, officially starting the project. In that meeting, Ms. Kremer provided Historic Denver with the \$495.00 check to cover the 25% matching funds. The following day, Ms. Kremer sent an email to all of the bungalow owners, updating them about the previous day's meeting. She explained that the consultant would start the project in January. She also mentioned that there would be a meeting with Historic Denver, the City of Denver Landmark Commission, the consultant, and all of the bungalow owners once the application was complete.

**February 8, 2018** – Ms. Kremer sent an email to all of the bungalow owners, informing them that she and the consultant needed access to their backyards on February 12th in order to photograph the buildings on each property. That same day, the Vassar School Bungalows were featured on Historic Denver's Facebook page in a post about the April deadline for the Action Fund.

**April 11, 2018** – Following the preparation of a draft application by Ms. Miniello, property owners, Councilman Kashmann, representatives from Denver Landmark Preservation and Historic Denver, Inc., as well as Ms. Miniello, attended a meeting at 119 E. Vassar Ave. City staff gave a presentation about the overall designation process including criteria, benefits, future requirements and considerations, and next steps. Ms. Miniello spoke about some of the information she discovered during her research and noted the significant elements that make the district unique. Questions from those in attendance were answered by City staff and Historic Denver.

## **12. Application Fee**

As Councilman Kashmann is the applicant for and supports this Landmark District Application, the fee has been waived.

## **13. Attachments**

Building permits  
Vassar School documents

## **8. DISTRICT OVERVIEW PHOTOGRAPHS**

**8. District Overview Photographs**



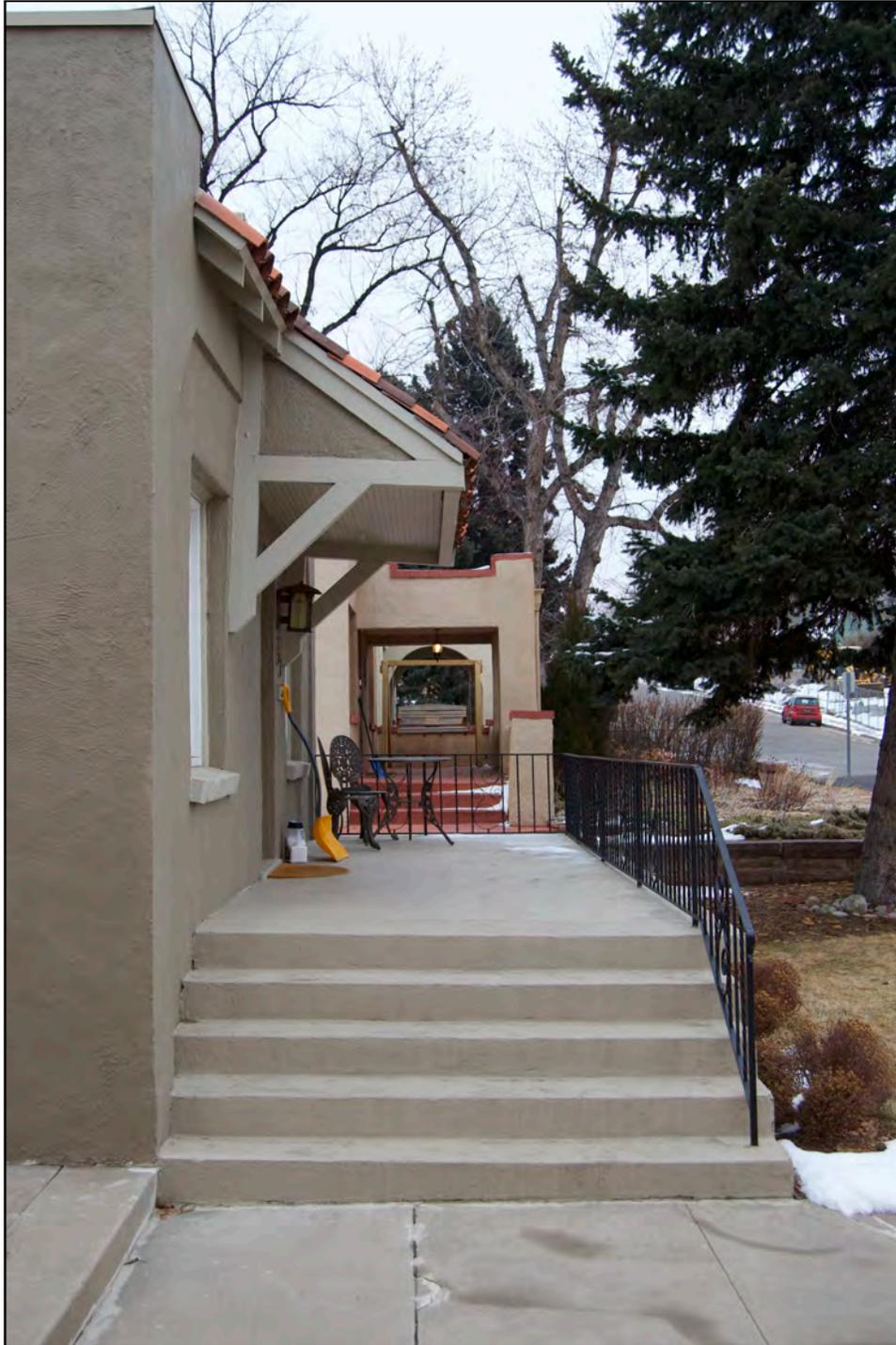
Looking northeast at Vassar Bungalow Historic District (105 E. Vassar Ave. closest on the left)

**8. District Overview Photographs**



**Looking northwest at Vassar Bungalow Historic District (141 E. Vassar Ave. closest on the right)**

## **8. District Overview Photographs**



**Looking east from 119 E. Vassar Ave. to illustrate line of sight between porches**

**8. District Overview Photographs**



**Looking west from 119 E. Vassar Ave. to illustrate line of sight between porches**

**8. District Overview Photographs**



Looking northeast at sandstone wall along southern property boundaries (119 closest on the left)

**8. District Overview Photographs**



**Looking northwest at sandstone wall along southern property boundaries (15 closest on the right)**

**8. District Overview Photographs**



**Looking southwest at sunken backyard of 141 E. Vassar Ave. (flagstone sidewalk, metal railing and top of stone wall associated with Vassar School)**

**8. District Overview Photographs**



Looking east from sunken backyard of 141 E. Vassar Ave. at stone wall and metal railing

**8. District Overview Photographs**



**Rear entrance and stone steps of 141 E. Vassar Ave.**

**8. District Overview Photographs**



Original downspout and closeup of parapet with brick coping on 135 E. Vassar Ave.

**8. District Overview Photographs**



**Door for milk and package delivery on the rear of 119 E. Vassar Ave.**

**8. District Overview Photographs**



**Roman numeral etched into wall railing at 141 E. Vassar Ave.**

**8. District Overview Photographs**



**Roman numeral etched into wall railing at 141 E. Vassar Ave.**

**8. District Overview Photographs**



**Roman numeral etched into wall railing at 141 E. Vassar Ave.**

**8. District Overview Photographs**



**Roman numeral etched into wall railing at 141 E. Vassar Ave.**



Camera facing northeast

**IDENTIFICATION**

- 1. **District Name:** Vassar School Bungalows Historic District
- 2. **Building/Structure Street Address:** 105 East Vassar Avenue
- 3. **Date of Construction:** 1925-26      **Source:** Denver County Assessor and Building Permit #1176

**ARCHITECTURAL**

- 4. **Architectural Style/Building Type:** Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Spanish Revival
- 5. **Primary Exterior Wall Material(s):** Stucco
- 6. **Primary Exterior Roof Material(s):** Membrane, Terra Cotta
- 7. **Key Architectural Features:** Rectangular plan, one story with full basement, flat roof, stucco exterior, 1020 square feet resource. Central front porch with arched entries, square window openings. Special design features include brick-lined parapets and window sills.
- 8. **Construction History:** Construction on this residential property began in 1925 and was likely completed in early 1926 for an estimated cost of \$4,000. That amount also included a single car garage, which is no longer extant. A one story enclosed rear addition was constructed (date unknown). Sometime after 2007, non-original windows were replaced with the current windows.
- 9. **Landscape or Special Setting Features:** This house occupies the northeast corner of East Vassar Avenue and South Lincoln Street, serving as the west anchor to the historic district. A low stone wall associated with the former Vassar School runs the entire length along the west and south property boundaries.
- 10. **Associated existing buildings, features, or objects:** Detached modern garage

**RECORDING INFORMATION**

11. **Date Form Completed:** February 2018

12. **Completed By:** Kristi H. Miniello

**CONTRIBUTING STATUS (Check one only)**     **CONTRIBUTING**     **NONCONTRIBUTING**

**HISTORICAL**

13. **Architect (if known):** Unknown

**Source:**

14. **Builder/Contractor (If known):** A.L. Franz    **Source:** 1926 Denver City Directory

15. **Original Owner:** A.L. Young (likely Franz)    **Source:** Denver Building Permit #1176, 26 Feb. 1925

16. **Original/Historic Uses:** Domestic: Single Dwelling

17. **Current Use:** Domestic: Single Dwelling

18. **Historic Building/Structure Name:** N/A

19. **Owner Name and Address (If different from street address):** Scott Nelson and Dana Trancoso

20. **Historical background:** Following the closure of Vassar School, this parcel was purchased in December 1924 by Albert L. Franz. Demolition of the school was completed by November 16, 1925, and numerous materials from the former building were incorporated into the home and site. Although there is no record of a sale, A.L. Young, listed as the owner (mostly likely Franz but mistyped), applied for a building permit in February 1925. The permit was for a, "Brick bungalow, full basement and garage 12x18'." In June of that year, sections of the northern portion of lots 20 and 29 were sold to Walter Ickes, then to J.H. Peterson two months later, and serve as the present-day alley. Prior to that, only the western half appears on the 1905 Baist Map.

The first recorded tenants were Dudley (agent with Travelers Insurance Company) and Edith Griggs, who lived at the property from 1926-27. In 1928, Arthur and Grace Denler purchased the home, which they rented out to numerous people with middle-class occupations including an engineer, clerk, and salesman. The Denlers sold the property to Harry and Ada Spath around 1947, and it continued to change ownership through the 1950s.

21. **References:** Denver Building Permit #1176, 26 February 1925; Denver County Assessor records; Denver Assessors Lot Indexes 1860-1917; Denver City Directories; Denver Householder Directories; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Fire Insurance Maps

22. **Attachments**     **Yes**     **No**

REVIEW BOX - TO BE COMPLETED BY LANDMARK PRESERVATION STAFF — PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE THIS BOX

**Checked by:**

**Date:**

**Summary of Information Updated on Form:**

**CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER - HISTORIC DISTRICT APPLICATION: INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY INVENTORY**



**Camera facing north**



**Camera facing northwest**



Camera facing northwest

**IDENTIFICATION**

1. **District Name:** Vassar School Bungalows Historic District
2. **Building/Structure Street Address:** 115 East Vassar Avenue
3. **Date of Construction:** 1925-26      **Source:** Denver County Assessor and Building Permit #1177

**ARCHITECTURAL**

4. **Architectural Style/Building Type:** Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Spanish Revival
5. **Primary Exterior Wall Material(s):** Stucco
6. **Primary Exterior Roof Material(s):** Membrane, Terra Cotta
7. **Key Architectural Features:** Rectangular plan, one story with full basement, flat roof, stucco exterior, 1010 square feet resource. Central front porch with arched entries, square window openings. Special design features include brick-lined parapets, brick window sills, and cut-off vigas.
8. **Construction History:** Construction on this residential property began in 1925 and was likely completed in early 1926 for an estimated cost of \$4,000. That amount also included a single car garage, which is no longer extant. Sometime between 2004-2011 non-original windows were replaced with the current windows.
9. **Landscape or Special Setting Features:** This house occupies the second lot to the east of the northeast corner of East Vassar Avenue and South Lincoln Street. A low stone wall associated with the former Vassar School runs the entire length along the south property boundary. Due to the slope of the land, steps were built leading down into the garage.
10. **Associated existing buildings, features, or objects:** Detached modern garage

**RECORDING INFORMATION**

11. **Date Form Completed:** February 2018

12. **Completed By:** Kristi H. Miniello

**CONTRIBUTING STATUS (Check one only)**     **CONTRIBUTING**     **NONCONTRIBUTING**

**HISTORICAL**

13. **Architect (if known):** Unknown                      **Source:**

14. **Builder/Contractor (If known):** A.L. Franz    **Source:** 1926 Denver City Directory

15. **Original Owner:** A.L. Franz                      **Source:** Denver Building Permit #1177, 26 Feb. 1925

16. **Original/Historic Uses:** Domestic: Single Dwelling

17. **Current Use:** Domestic: Single Dwelling

18. **Historic Building/Structure Name:** N/A

19. **Owner Name and Address (If different from street address):** Thomas and Lauren Drake

20. **Historical background:** Following the closure of Vassar School, this parcel was purchased in December 1924 by Albert L. Franz. Demolition of the school was completed by November 16, 1925, and numerous materials from the former building were incorporated into the home and site. Franz applied for a building permit in February 1925. The permit was for a, "Brick bungalow, full basement and garage 12x18'." In June of that year, sections of the northern portion of lots 20 and 29 were sold to Walter Ickes, then to J.H. Peterson two months later, and serve as the present-day alley. Prior to that, only the western half appears on the 1905 Baist Map.

The first recorded tenants were Harold (cashier for Reliance Life Insurance Company) and Olive McCrimmon, and they lived at the property from 1926-27. For the next 14 years, it appears that Franz retained ownership and rented the property to numerous people with middle-class occupations including a druggist, contractor, and salesman. Around 1940 it was sold to Gerald and Beulah Meusborn, and one or both of them remained in the home for at least 16 years.

21. **References:** Denver Building Permit #1177, 26 February 1925; Denver County Assessor records; Denver Assessors Lot Indexes 1860-1917; Denver City Directories; Denver Householder Directories; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Fire Insurance Maps

22. **Attachments**     **Yes**     **No**

REVIEW BOX - TO BE COMPLETED BY LANDMARK PRESERVATION STAFF — PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE THIS BOX

**Checked by:**    **Date:**

**Summary of Information Updated on Form:**

**CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER - HISTORIC DISTRICT APPLICATION: INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY INVENTORY**



**Camera facing north**



Camera facing northwest

**IDENTIFICATION**

1. **District Name:** Vassar School Bungalows Historic District
2. **Building/Structure Street Address:** 119 East Vassar Avenue
3. **Date of Construction:** 1925-26      **Source:** Denver County Assessor and Building Permit #1178

**ARCHITECTURAL**

4. **Architectural Style/Building Type:** Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Spanish Revival
5. **Primary Exterior Wall Material(s):** Stucco
6. **Primary Exterior Roof Material(s):** Membrane, Terra Cotta
7. **Key Architectural Features:** Rectangular plan, one story with full basement, flat roof, stucco exterior, 1260 square feet resource. Enclosed entry, square window openings. Special design features include parapets and brick window sills.
8. **Construction History:** Construction on this residential property began in 1925 and was likely completed in early 1926 for an estimated cost of \$4,000. That amount also included the single car garage. Between 2003-2004, a majority of the windows were replaced with the current windows (it is not known whether the previous windows were original).
9. **Landscape or Special Setting Features:** This house occupies the third lot to the east of the northeast corner of East Vassar Avenue and South Lincoln Street. A low stone wall associated with the former Vassar School runs the entire length along the south property boundary. Due to the slope of the land, steps were built leading down into the garage.
10. **Associated existing buildings, features, or objects:** Original single car stucco garage with flat roof; shed in back yard

CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER - HISTORIC DISTRICT APPLICATION: INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY INVENTORY

**RECORDING INFORMATION**

11. **Date Form Completed:** February 2018

12. **Completed By:** Kristi H. Miniello

**CONTRIBUTING STATUS (Check one only)**

**CONTRIBUTING**

**NONCONTRIBUTING**

**HISTORICAL**

13. **Architect (if known):** Unknown

**Source:**

14. **Builder/Contractor (If known):** A.L. Franz

**Source:** 1926 Denver City Directory

15. **Original Owner:** A.L. Franz

**Source:** Denver Building Permit #1178, 26 Feb. 1925

16. **Original/Historic Uses:** Domestic: Single Dwelling

17. **Current Use:** Domestic: Single Dwelling

18. **Historic Building/Structure Name:** N/A

19. **Owner Name and Address (If different from street address):** Matthew Kremer and Jennifer Tarble

20. **Historical background:** Following the closure of Vassar School, this parcel was purchased in December 1924 by Albert L. Franz. Demolition of the school was completed by November 16, 1925, and numerous materials from the former building were incorporated into the home and site. Franz applied for a building permit in February 1925. The permit was for a, "Brick bungalow, full basement and garage 12x18'." In June of that year, sections of the northern portion of lots 20 and 29 were sold to Walter Ickes, then to J.H. Peterson two months later, and serve as the present-day alley. Prior to that, only the western half appears on the 1905 Baist Map.

The property was initially vacant until being purchased by Arthur and Grace Denler in 1927. The Denlers were also listed as owners of 105 E. Vassar Ave. in 1928, and it appears that they owned and rented out both properties. Numerous tenants were associated with the property, including Simon (President of Lee & Rice, Inc.) and Florence Rice, William and Mildred Crawley, and Phil and Edna Feldhauser. The property was purchased around 1936 by Lester and Irma Boehm, and they continued to live in the home through the mid-1950s.

21. **References:** Denver Building Permit #1178, 26 February 1925; Denver County Assessor records; Denver Assessors Lot Indexes 1860-1917; Denver City Directories; Denver Householder Directories; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Fire Insurance Maps

22. **Attachments**

**Yes**

**No**

REVIEW BOX - TO BE COMPLETED BY LANDMARK PRESERVATION STAFF — PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE THIS BOX

**Checked by:**

**Date:**

**Summary of Information Updated on Form:**

**CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER - HISTORIC DISTRICT APPLICATION: INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY INVENTORY**



**Camera facing north**



**Camera facing northwest**



Camera facing northeast

**IDENTIFICATION**

- 1. **District Name:** Vassar School Bungalows Historic District
- 2. **Building/Structure Street Address:** 127 East Vassar Avenue
- 3. **Date of Construction:** 1925-26      **Source:** Denver County Assessor and Building Permit #1179

**ARCHITECTURAL**

- 4. **Architectural Style/Building Type:** Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Spanish Revival
- 5. **Primary Exterior Wall Material(s):** Stucco
- 6. **Primary Exterior Roof Material(s):** Membrane, Terra Cotta
- 7. **Key Architectural Features:** Rectangular plan, one story with full basement, flat roof, stucco exterior, 1140 square feet resource. Central entry covered by shed roof with wood brackets, square window openings. Special design features include parapets.
- 8. **Construction History:** Construction on this residential property began in 1925 and was likely completed in early 1926 for an estimated cost of \$4,000. That amount also included the single car garage. Sometime between 2015-2016, non-original windows were replaced with the current windows.
- 9. **Landscape or Special Setting Features:** This house occupies the third lot to the east of the northeast corner of East Vassar Avenue and South Lincoln Street. A low stone wall associated with the former Vassar School runs the entire length along the south property boundary.
- 10. **Associated existing buildings, features, or objects:** Original single car stucco garage with flat roof

**RECORDING INFORMATION**

- 11. **Date Form Completed:** February 2018
- 12. **Completed By:** Kristi H. Miniello

**CONTRIBUTING STATUS (Check one only)**

**CONTRIBUTING**

**NONCONTRIBUTING**



**CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER - HISTORIC DISTRICT APPLICATION: INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY INVENTORY**



**Camera facing north**



**Camera facing northeast**



Camera facing northwest

**IDENTIFICATION**

1. **District Name:** Vassar School Bungalows Historic District
2. **Building/Structure Street Address:** 135 East Vassar Avenue
3. **Date of Construction:** 1925-26      **Source:** Denver County Assessor and Building Permit #1181

**ARCHITECTURAL**

4. **Architectural Style/Building Type:** Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Spanish Revival
5. **Primary Exterior Wall Material(s):** Stucco
6. **Primary Exterior Roof Material(s):** Membrane, Terra Cotta
7. **Key Architectural Features:** Rectangular plan, one story with full basement, flat roof, stucco exterior, 1022 square feet resource. Central front porch with square column supports, square window openings. Special design features include brick-lined parapets and brick window sills.
8. **Construction History:** Construction on this residential property began in 1925 and was likely completed in early 1926 for an estimated cost of \$4,000. That amount also included the single car garage. Between 2012-2013, the windows were replaced with the current windows (it is not known whether the previous windows were original).
9. **Landscape or Special Setting Features:** This house occupies the second lot to the west of the northwest corner of East Vassar Avenue and South Sherman Street. Stone steps and a flagstone walk provide offset access to the main entrance. A low stone wall associated with the former Vassar School runs the entire length along the south property boundary, as well as an approximately 25 feet section along the western boundary.
10. **Associated existing buildings, features, or objects:** Original single car stucco garage with flat roof; carport, shed

**RECORDING INFORMATION**

11. **Date Form Completed:** February 2018
12. **Completed By:** Kristi H. Miniello

CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER - HISTORIC DISTRICT APPLICATION: INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY INVENTORY

**CONTRIBUTING STATUS (Check one only)**  
**HISTORICAL**

CONTRIBUTING

NONCONTRIBUTING

13. Architect (if known): Unknown

Source:

14. Builder/Contractor (if known): A.L. Franz Source: 1926 Denver City Directory

15. Original Owner: A.L. Franz

Source: Denver Building Permit #1181, 26 Feb. 1925

16. Original/Historic Uses: Domestic: Single Dwelling

17. Current Use: Domestic: Single Dwelling

18. Historic Building/Structure Name: N/A

19. Owner Name and Address (if different from street address): Jonathan Stevenson

20. **Historical background:** Following the closure of Vassar School, this parcel was purchased in December 1924 by Albert L. Franz. Demolition of the school was completed by November 16, 1925, and numerous materials from the former building were incorporated into the home and site. Franz applied for a building permit in February 1925. The permit was for a, "Brick bungalow, full basement and garage 12x18'." In June of that year, sections of the northern portion of lots 20 and 29 were sold to Walter Ickes, then to J.H. Peterson two months later, and serve as the present-day alley. Prior to that, only the western half appears on the 1905 Baist Map.

Marg Stepp, a public stenographer, was the home's first occupant in 1926, but for two years after that it was listed as vacant in householder directories. In 1929, Mark (city detective) and Grace Scott moved to the property and remained there until the early 1940s. In 1947, Martin (assistant department manager) and Pauline Mulligan purchased the home, likely from Franz, and remained there through at least the mid-1950s.

21. **References:** Denver Building Permit #1181, 26 February 1925; Denver County Assessor records; Denver Assessors Lot Indexes 1860-1917; Denver City Directories; Denver Householder Directories; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Fire Insurance Maps

22. Attachments

Yes

No

REVIEW BOX - TO BE COMPLETED BY LANDMARK PRESERVATION STAFF — PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE THIS BOX

Checked by:

Date:

Summary of Information Updated on Form:

**CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER - HISTORIC DISTRICT APPLICATION: INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY INVENTORY**



**Camera facing north**



**Camera facing northwest**



Camera facing northwest

**IDENTIFICATION**

- 1. **District Name:** Vassar School Bungalows Historic District
- 2. **Building/Structure Street Address:** 141 East Vassar Avenue
- 3. **Date of Construction:** 1925-26      **Source:** Denver County Assessor and Building Permit #1183

**ARCHITECTURAL**

- 4. **Architectural Style/Building Type:** Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Spanish Revival
- 5. **Primary Exterior Wall Material(s):** Stucco
- 6. **Primary Exterior Roof Material(s):** Membrane, Terra Cotta
- 7. **Key Architectural Features:** Rectangular plan, one story with full basement, flat roof, stucco exterior, 935 square feet resource. Central front porch with arched entries, square window openings. Special design features include 8-light wood windows, brick-lined parapets, brick window sills.
- 8. **Construction History:** Construction on this residential property began in 1925 and was likely completed in early 1926 for an estimated cost of \$4,000. That amount also included the single car garage.
- 9. **Landscape or Special Setting Features:** This house occupies the northwest corner of East Vassar Avenue and South Sherman Street, serving as the east anchor to the historic district. A low stone wall runs the entire length along the east and south property boundaries. The backyard is sunken several feet below the height of the sidewalk on the east boundary, and a metal railing that was likely associated with the school runs along the top of the wall. A series of Roman numerals are etched into the horizontal pieces of railing.
- 10. **Associated existing buildings, features, or objects:** Original single car stucco garage with flat roof

**RECORDING INFORMATION**

- 11. **Date Form Completed:** February 2018
- 12. **Completed By:** Kristi H. Miniello

**CONTRIBUTING STATUS (Check one only)**

**CONTRIBUTING**

**NONCONTRIBUTING**

**HISTORICAL**

13. **Architect (if known):** Unknown                      **Source:**
14. **Builder/Contractor (If known):** A.L. Franz   **Source:** 1926 Denver City Directory
15. **Original Owner:** J.A. Franz                      **Source:** Denver Building Permit #1183, 26 Feb. 1925
16. **Original/Historic Uses:** Domestic: Single Dwelling
17. **Current Use:** Domestic: Single Dwelling
18. **Historic Building/Structure Name:** N/A
19. **Owner Name and Address (If different from street address):** Olive and Rickard Schmidt (Life Est), 3846 Creststone Place, San Diego, CA 92130
20. **Historical background:** Following the closure of Vassar School, this parcel was purchased in December 1924 by Albert L. Franz. Demolition of the school was completed by November 16, 1925, and numerous materials from the former building were incorporated into the home and site. Although there is no record of a sale, John A. Franz, Albert's father, applied for a building permit as the property's owner in February 1925. The permit was for a, "Brick bungalow, full basement and garage 12x18'." In June of that year, sections of the northern portion of lots 20 and 29 were sold to Walter Ickes, then to J.H. Peterson two months later, and serve as the present-day alley. Prior to that, only the western half appears on the 1905 Baist Map.
- Albert Franz and his wife, Florence, were listed as the building's first occupants in 1926, and by 1927 they had already sold the property to John (pharmacist at Madison Pharmacy) and Alice Edwards. The Edwards remained in the home for a few years then began renting it in 1930 before selling it to Ralph (cashier at Navy Gas and Supply Company) and Eva Legg in 1933. Between 1937 and 1947, the home changed ownership four times, before Chas (automatic tech at Western Union) and Florence Bradbury purchased the property. It has remained in the family ever since.
21. **References:** Denver Building Permit #1183, 26 February 1925; Denver County Assessor records; Denver Assessors Lot Indexes 1860-1917; Denver City Directories; Denver Householder Directories; Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Fire Insurance Maps
22. **Attachments**     Yes     No

REVIEW BOX - TO BE COMPLETED BY LANDMARK PRESERVATION STAFF — PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE THIS BOX

**Checked by:**    **Date:**

**Summary of Information Updated on Form:**

**CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER - HISTORIC DISTRICT APPLICATION: INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY INVENTORY**



**Camera facing north**



**Camera facing northwest**

## **11. PUBLIC OUTREACH**

From: JENNIFER TARBLE <[tarble@msn.com](mailto:tarble@msn.com)>  
Date: Saturday, February 13, 2016 at 7:15 AM  
To: Annie Levinsky <[alevinsky@historicdenver.org](mailto:alevinsky@historicdenver.org)>, Mona Ferrugia  
<[mona.ferrugia@gmail.com](mailto:mona.ferrugia@gmail.com)>, "[arlevinsky@gmail.com](mailto:arlevinsky@gmail.com)" <[arlevinsky@gmail.com](mailto:arlevinsky@gmail.com)>  
Subject: RE: Saving the Vassar St. Bungalows in the Rosedale Neighborhood

Annie,

Thank you for your quick response! I'm available on Monday, February 22nd for either a phone call or a meeting, whichever you prefer. Please let me know which works best for you, as I have quite a bit of flexibility with my schedule. In the meantime, I'll start the conversation with my neighbors to see if they will support the formation of a historic district for our bungalows.

Jennifer Kremer

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From: [alevinsky@historicdenver.org](mailto:alevinsky@historicdenver.org)  
To: [mona.ferrugia@gmail.com](mailto:mona.ferrugia@gmail.com); [arlevinsky@gmail.com](mailto:arlevinsky@gmail.com)  
CC: [tarble@msn.com](mailto:tarble@msn.com)  
Subject: RE: Saving the Vassar St. Bungalows in the Rosedale Neighborhood  
Date: Fri, 12 Feb 2016 23:21:20 +0000

Mona,

Thank you for sending this along. What an interesting story- I never knew!

Jennifer, I'd be happy to talk with you more about options for protecting the homes, and how you could proceed with a historic district process if there is support among at least some of the other owners. Would you like to set-up a time to talk by phone or get together? Right now my best available time would be Monday, February 22 or sometime that week.

Thanks,

Annie

**From:** Mona Ferrugia [<mailto:mona.ferrugia@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 12, 2016 1:07 PM  
**To:** [arlevinsky@gmail.com](mailto:arlevinsky@gmail.com); Annie Levinsky  
**Cc:** [tarble@msn.com](mailto:tarble@msn.com)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Saving the Vassar St. Bungalows in the Rosedale Neighborhood

Annie,

My friend Jennifer approached me last week with questions about what she could do to protect this charming row of homes. I told her I would pass this on to you as I was a bit out of the loop these days. I was sure you would have some suggestions on how best to proceed.

Thanks so much for your help. Hope all is well.

Best,  
Mona

Sent from my iPad  
[mona.ferrugia@gmail.com](mailto:mona.ferrugia@gmail.com)

303-355-0834 - Home  
303-204-1157 - Cell

Begin forwarded message:

From: JENNIFER TARBLE <[tarble@msn.com](mailto:tarble@msn.com)>

Date: February 12, 2016 at 9:27:45 AM MST

To: "[mona.ferrugia@gmail.com](mailto:mona.ferrugia@gmail.com)" <[mona.ferrugia@gmail.com](mailto:mona.ferrugia@gmail.com)>

Subject: Saving the Vassar St. Bungalows in the Rosedale Neighborhood

Mona,

Thanks for your text yesterday regarding the article in this month's Westword. I actually read that article on Saturday afternoon, prompting me to ask you about Historic Denver at church that evening. For a while now, I've been trying to figure out what I could personally do to help preserve our block of bungalows, and the article at least gave me a couple of places to start.

If you could contact [Annie](#) at Historic Denver for me (or forward this email to her), I'd greatly appreciate it. And then if you can provide her contact information, I'll call or email her myself to figure out my next step.

As you know, we live in one of six Spanish-style bungalows built along Vassar Avenue between Lincoln Street and Sherman Street in 1926. Our entire Rosedale-Harvard Gulch neighborhood was recently rezoned for "multi-family" dwellings, and now older, affordable bungalows and cottages are being torn down and replaced with contemporary, three- and four-story duplexes and triplexes. These towering monstrosities are rapidly encroaching on our bungalows, with three having sprung up along the City of Kunming Park less than a block away. I've attached photos showing four structures recently constructed or in the process of being constructed on our block along Sherman Street, facing the park. I'm afraid this is what the future holds for our own homes if nobody steps up to protect them.

Here's what I know about these bungalows. The homes located at 105, 115, 119, 127, 135, and 141 E. Vassar Ave. were all constructed in or around 1926. The property where they sit was the site of the Vassar School, which was replaced by Rosedale Elementary. When the old school building was torn down, many of its building materials were used to construct these bungalows. This is readily apparent when looking at the walls in our basement, which are a strange mix of different types of brick and sandstone. I've been told that the wood wainscoting from the school's interior was used as the underlayment for the homes' wood floors. And when we dig in the yard, we never know what we'll find! While working on a landscaping project, we unearthed a large chiseled sandstone window sill from a much grander-scaled building. While all six of the homes are constructed of brick covered in stucco and have flat roofs, none of them look exactly the same. Each is charming with its own architectural details. I've attached photos of the six residences. They are attached in order, running from west to east.

The most easterly (and probably the most threatened) of the six bungalows is 141 E. Vassar Avenue, which sits on the corner of Sherman Street and Vassar Avenue, directly across the street from the City of Kunming Park. (I've attached a photo showing a side view of this particular home.) It has an amazing sunken backyard with a sandstone retaining wall along the north and east sides. The home is owned by a 93 year old woman who recently went into a care facility. I am so afraid of what will happen to that particular property when her family puts it on the market simply because of the desirability of its lot. Given what has occurred all along Sherman Street, I am almost certain its future will involve a bulldozer unless we can figure out a way to preserve it. And if we're preserving one of these bungalows, then it makes sense to preserve all six of them since they were all built at the same time, by the same builder, and in a similar Spanish-revival architectural style. They also share a sandstone wall that steps its way down from Sherman Street

to Lincoln Street along the front of the homes, and north to the alley on the east and west ends of the block, creating a cohesive little block.

At this time, four of the six homes are occupied by their owners. Only 127 E. Vassar is occupied by renters. That particular home was owned by the Parsons family for over 40 years, until it was sold a year-and-a-half ago to a real estate investor who removed its aluminum siding and restored the stucco exterior. But that home will probably be back on the market in 2017, after the investor has owned the property for the required 3 year period. And 141 E. Vassar is vacant at this time, since the owner has moved into a care facility.

I'm hoping this is enough information to at least get a conversation started about somehow preserving our little chunk of the Rosedale-Harvard Gulch neighborhood that is rapidly being destroyed by developers. If you can think of any additional information I should include, please let me know. Thanks for your help with this - this is something that I'm really passionate about! And I feel like time is running out!

Jennifer Kremer  
119 E. Vassar Ave.  
Denver, CO 80210  
303-861-9708 h. or 303-475-9713 c.

RE: Vassar Ave. Bungalows Homeowners' Meeting

Annie Levinsky

Mon 8/15/2016, 1:18 PM

Jennifer,

Thanks for getting in touch. I am sure we can get someone down there for a meeting in September. Let me check with some of my colleagues. I think it might also be good to invite Kara from the City of Denver.

Also, have you given any more thought to applying to our Action Fund? The application is due September 1, but would provide you with some financial support if you feel you will need it (for example you could hire someone to write the application, or get funds to pay the application fee).

Thanks-

Annie

From: JENNIFER TARBLE [mailto:tarble@msn.com]  
Sent: Monday, August 15, 2016 6:52 AM  
To: Annie Levinsky <alevinsky@historicdenver.org>  
Subject: Vassar Ave. Bungalows Homeowners' Meeting

Annie,

I'm wondering if a representative from Historic Denver is available to meet with the homeowners of the (6) Vassar Avenue bungalows sometime during the month of September to discuss the advantages/disadvantages of historic designation? I'm planning on hosting the meeting at my house, 119 E. Vassar Ave., and a Tuesday or Thursday evening would work best with my family's schedule.

Please let me know the organization's availability. Thanks for your help. I'm really trying to get things rolling again with the historic designation process!

Jennifer Kremer

COME HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM HISTORIC DENVER AND THE CITY OF DENVER REGARDING THE POSSIBLE HISTORIC DESIGNATION OF OUR SIX VASSAR AVENUE BUNGALOWS.

LEARN ABOUT THE ACTUAL DESIGNATION PROCESS, AS WELL AS THE PROS AND CONS OF GETTING THE DESIGNATION. IS THIS SOMETHING WE WANT TO PURSUE IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THESE HISTORIC STRUCTURES IN OUR RAPIDLY CHANGING NEIGHBORHOOD?

WHEN: 7:00 pm, Tuesday September 20<sup>th</sup>

WHERE: Jen and Matt Kremer's Bungalow, 119 E. Vassar Avenue

WHO: We'll be meeting with John Olson from Historic Denver and Kara Hahn from the City of Denver's Landmarks program.

PLEASE RSVP TO JEN KREMER AT [tarble@msn.com](mailto:tarble@msn.com) OR 303-861-9708 BY FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup>. LET ME KNOW HOW MANY WILL BE ATTENDING FROM YOUR BUNGALOW, AS DRINKS AND HORS D'OEUVRES/DESSERT WILL BE SERVED. THANK YOU! WE HOPE YOU CAN MAKE IT!

RE: Meeting to Discuss Possible Historic District in the Rosedale Neighborhood

Kashmann, Paul J. - City Council <Paul.Kashmann@denvergov.org>

Mon 9/19/2016, 10:31 AM

Jennifer -

I am so sorry to have taken so long to respond. Somehow your message had fallen through the cracks, and I just realized "it must be soon." I have a crazy evening tomorrow, but am trying to arrange things to get to your place by 7. I am very interested in what you are trying to do. Thank you for keeping me in the loop.

Regards,

Paul

Paul Kashmann

City Council, District 6

720-337-6666

720-260-0638

From: JENNIFER TARBLE [mailto:tarble@msn.com]

Sent: Friday, August 26, 2016 6:07 PM

To: Kashmann, Paul J. - City Council <Paul.Kashmann@denvergov.org>

Subject: Meeting to Discuss Possible Historic District in the Rosedale Neighborhood

Paul,

I was in touch with you earlier this year regarding the possible creation of a small historic district for the six Spanish-style bungalows located between Lincoln and Sherman on East Vassar Avenue. These homes are built on the site of the old Vassar School, with the schoolyard's wall still surrounding the block. Some of the school's building materials were reused in the construction of these homes.

On Tuesday, September 20th, the homeowners of these bungalows will meet with Kara Hahn from the City of Denver's Landmark program and John Olson from Historic Denver to discuss the historic designation process and the pros and cons of doing so. I'm reaching out to see if this meeting would be of interest to you as our District's Councilman? The meeting will be held at 7:00 pm at my bungalow, located at 119 East Vassar Avenue. If you can attend, please let me know. We'd love to have your support. Hope you can make it!

Jennifer Kremer

Hello neighbors!

The meeting to explore the creation of a historic district for our (6) Vassar Avenue bungalows was held on Tuesday, September 20<sup>th</sup>, at 7 pm, with John Olson from Historic Denver, Kara Hahn from the City of Denver's Landmark Division, and the homeowners of 105 & 119 E. Vassar Avenue in attendance. While I was disappointed that only a third of the homeowners could attend, it was still a very productive and informative meeting.

John Olson started the discussion by saying that he believes our homes meet all 3 of the criteria for landmark status - which means they are historically, architecturally, and geographically significant in the eyes of Historic Denver and the City. All of us in attendance agreed that the value of these homes is actually increased by the entire block being architecturally intact. If one of the six bungalows was torn down or insensitively altered, it would negatively affect the value of the other five and possibly lead to the eventual destruction of the entire block.

Attached are all of the materials distributed by the presenters from Historic Denver and the City of Denver. This packet explains the pros associated with creating and living in a historic district, as well as a few cons. Of particular interest are the tax credits available to homeowners who undertake qualifying renovation projects. Please review this information and feel free to contact me, John Olson, or Kara Hahn with any questions or concerns.

I'm meeting with Paul Kashmann, our city councilman, on Tuesday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, to walk our block and further discuss the historic district designation. If you're around at 4pm that afternoon and would like to join us, please feel free to do so.

At this point, Scott Nelson and I are going to start assembling the necessary materials to complete the historic district application. It will take quite a bit of time and effort, but we both feel like the end result will be worth it. We will be subject to a \$500 application fee; if you would like to contribute any funds to help cover this expense, it would be greatly appreciated.

Again, feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. My phone number is 303-861-9708, and my email is [tarble@msn.com](mailto:tarble@msn.com).

We'll keep you posted on our progress and any interesting tidbits we uncover about our bungalows or the Vassar School that was previously located on this site.

Jennifer Kremer  
Homeowner, 119 E. Vassar Ave.



# About Historic Denver, Inc.

Ideas and actions for the places you love.

Can you imagine the city without the Daniels & Fisher Tower, LoDo, or Union Station? Each contributes critical character to our community, each anchors economic revitalization efforts that have helped Denver weather several boom and bust cycles, and each was saved with the support of Historic Denver, Inc. In 1970 citizens stepped forward to create Historic Denver, Inc., which first focused on saving the Molly Brown House Museum from demolition and went on to citywide efforts. Historic Denver remains the city's leading preservation organization and as a private, supporter-driven non-profit we work to protect and promote the places that add to our quality of life, spur economic development and engender pride of place.



## Molly Brown House Museum

Serving as the catalyst for the founding of Historic Denver in 1970, the Molly Brown House Museum has continued to be the organization's flagship property and central educational resource. The Museum currently serves more than 45,000 visitors a year, and offers year-round programming, exhibitions and events. The Museum works to enhance educational resources for school groups as an on-going and important element of Historic Denver's mission. Learn more at [www.mollybrown.org](http://www.mollybrown.org).



## Youth Education

Historic Denver works with students across the metro area to provide immersive and interactive opportunities to engage with local heritage and architecture. Since the 1990s, Historic Denver has been a leader in providing history-based outreach programs in the schools, serving more than 8,000 students in 2014 alone. Looking forward, the organization plans to enhance learning resources by making improvements to on-site spaces for the enjoyment on student groups and families.



## Action Fund

New in 2015, the Action Fund is designed to catalyze innovative neighborhood and community projects that enhance the city's unique identity, promote and maintain authentic character, and honor cultural heritage as reflected in the built environment. Through the Action Fund Historic Denver selects one to three projects each year. Projects will receive technical assistance, staff support and direct financial investment. Projects are selected through an annual competitive application process.



## Advocacy

Historic Denver, Inc. has a 40 year history of serving as a leading advocate for the preservation, promotion and creative re-use of important historic landmarks, historic homes and significant landscapes. This has included support for numerous district and landmark designations, educational programs, hands-on training and countless meetings with neighborhoods, business leaders and elected officials.

## Technical Assistance

While preservationists will always be concerned with outstanding individual landmarks, the quality and character of the City's entire fabric, from urban to suburban neighborhoods, is also important. Historic Denver offers technical assistance to owners of historic homes across the metro-area. Offerings include workshops on hot topics like masonry restoration, windows, energy efficiency and how to use the Colorado State Preservation Tax credit. Much of this information is available on-line at [www.historicdenver.org/resources](http://www.historicdenver.org/resources).



## Walking Tours & Denver Story Trek

Historic Denver offers guided walking tours of LoDo and Capitol Hill from May through October each year. These tours offer residents and tourists the chance to see Denver's architecture and history and learn about the efforts required to preserve these important places. Historic Denver also hosts a city-wide heritage tourism collaboration entitled "Denver Story Trek." Denver Story Trek provides free, interactive content about historic places right on the street. The program an interactive website, physical signage and cell-phone provided audio content.



## Discover Denver: A Citywide Historic Resource Survey

In 2012 Historic Denver launched the pilot phase of Discover Denver, a comprehensive exploration of the city's built environment. Using new technologies and an innovative methodology this project will provide data on potentially historic sites throughout the city. The information will be accessible and useful to property owners, city officials, planners, neighborhoods and individuals. The multi-year project is a partnership with the City of Denver with funding from the Colorado State Historical Fund.

<http://www.discoverdenver.co/>

## Publications

For many years Historic Denver has published a series of popular walking tour/guidebooks about Denver's historic neighborhoods and architecture. Currently the series includes more than 22 titles including the *7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Historic District*, *Denver: the Modern City*, *Lower Downtown Historic District*, *Sacred Landmarks* and *Denver Women and their Places*. The books are available from \$5-\$10 each in local retailers and at [www.historicdenver.org](http://www.historicdenver.org). Historic Denver also publishes and distributes the popular *Denver the City Beautiful* book by Tom Noel and Barbara Norgren.

## Direct Preservation & Easements



The stewardship of Denver's historic places has always been a cornerstone of Historic Denver's programming. Much of our physical restoration work is completed through our Sacred Landmarks program, which provides project management, technical expertise and grant-assistance to historic churches, synagogues and mosques using grant funds from the Colorado State Historical Fund. In addition to working with sacred places, Historic Denver actively seeks other grant-supported projects that improve our city, such as the care and restoration of Union Station, the rehabilitation of the Capitol Hill Bed & Breakfast and work at the historic Oxford Hotel. Historic Denver also holds perpetual façade easements on more than 60 buildings.

For more information about Historic Denver and our programs call (303) 534-5288 or visit [www.historicdenver.org](http://www.historicdenver.org).

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## HISTORIC DENVER, INC



1420 Ogden St., Suite 202  
Denver, CO 80218  
303-534-5288 ext. 4  
jolson@historicdenver.org

**JOHN P. OLSON**  
Director of Preservation Programs



**Kara Hahn**  
Senior City Planner  
Landmark Preservation

Community Planning & Development  
Planning Services

201 W Colfax Ave, Dept 205  
Denver CO 80202  
p: 720.865.2919  
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kara.hahn@denvergov.org  
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# PRESERVATION IN DENVER:

## Chapter 30: The Preservation Ordinance

The City of Denver's Preservation Ordinance\* was created in 1967, just a year after the watershed passage of the National Historic Preservation Act. The ordinance is framework that supports Denver's historic districts and individual landmarks, and it specifically outlines provisions related to historic designation, design review and demolition review. It is important to note that these functions are managed by the City & County of Denver and its Landmark Preservation Commission as well as the Denver City Council. Historic Denver, Inc. is not part of these official processes and is not a regulatory agency, but a non-profit organization engaged in preservation activities that sometimes employ the tools of the preservation ordinance.

### **Designation:**

The city's preservation ordinance (Chapter 30 DRMC) enables Denver's Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) to recommend structures and districts for designation by the Denver City Council. The ordinance also sets forth the criteria for determining which structures or districts are eligible for designation. Unlike the National Register of Historic Places or the ordinances used in most cities, Denver's ordinance requires that a structure or district meet criteria in two out of three categories (instead of just one). These categories include history, geography and architecture. Additionally, a structure must be at least thirty years old or have extraordinary significance to be considered.

The process used to designate a structure or district under the local ordinance is much like the processes used in other land use decisions and includes many opportunities for public input. While any member of the community can submit a nomination for designation, in the form of an application, this is just the beginning of the process, which includes:

- 1) Review by Planning Department staff and the LPC to determine whether the application is complete and meets the criteria
- 2) A public hearing before the LPC on the merits of the application and recommendation to council if warranted
- 3) Denver Planning Board review of district applications with particular attention to existing city plans
- 4) Review by City Council's Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure Committee (LUTI) for determination of whether the full Council will consider the matter
- 5) First reading and second reading with a public hearing before City Council
- 6) City Council decision to designate or not weighing all factors and impacts

### **Design Review:**

For locally designated homes or commercial buildings, either individual landmarks or contributing structures in a historic district, certain exterior changes do require design review by the Landmark Preservation Commission. Typically design review is required for any change that requires a zoning, building, demolition, revocable or curb cut permit on the exterior of a building and/or its landscape. Examples of the kind of items reviewed include:

- Window replacement or installation
- Exterior doors
- New roofing or siding
- Additions

Property owners begin the process of design review by submitting an application to the Landmark Preservation Commission staff. Well over half of all applicants are approved administratively in less than two weeks. More significant projects are reviewed by the Landmark Preservation Commission and their twice-monthly meetings. Proposed changes are reviewed in accordance with the City's adopted Design Guidelines, which are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, a national document published by the Park Service. Information on design review and the application can be found at [www.denvergov.org/preservation](http://www.denvergov.org/preservation).

To ensure the design review process goes smoothly, owners can contact Landmark Preservation staff early in the planning process for advice and recommendations. Historic Denver is also willing to provide preliminary advice and answer general questions about design review.

### **Demolition:**

In 2006 Denver City Council unanimously passed an ordinance that requires review of all demolition applications for potential historic merit. Staff also reviews applications for "non-historic status" submitted by property owners or potential buyers conducting due-diligence. The ordinance was passed in response to a slew of "surprise" demolitions that caught city officials, neighbors and planners off-guard. While this sounds like a daunting task, in fact most structures reviewed simply do not meet the stringent requirements for designation. The small percentage that are deemed potentially eligible trigger a 14 day public posting period so the community can weigh the impact of demolition before a structure is lost forever. Should community members or a city councilmember choose, they can submit a designation application before the end of the posting period. Demolition is then postponed until the resolution of the designation process.

Since demolition review was implemented in 2006 there have been over 3,000 demolition permits issued in the city. Only a very small percentage of these properties met the criteria for public posting, while only a handful of the postings resulted in a designation application from the community, and only five of those applications have been debated by Council since 2006. The most important function of this tool is to provide a small window of time for the community to engage in dialogue before a structure is lost forever. There are several examples of this dialogue leading to constructive solutions outside the designation process.

### **Incentives:**

Colorado offers a Preservation Tax Credit for structures designated at the national, state or local level. The credit for residential property is 20% of the costs of qualified rehabilitation projects, which a minimum total cost of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$250,000. For commercial properties, the credit is 25% of qualified costs. Qualified projects include those that follow the Secretary of Interior Standards and/or local design guidelines. Unlike design review, the tax credit can be applied to interior upgrades, including improvements to plumbing, electrical or other systems and upgrades related to energy efficiency. A similar 20% federal tax credit is also available to designated commercial structures.



## Frequently Asked Questions Local Historic Districts Created by Historic Denver, Inc.

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The City of Denver's Preservation Ordinance was created in 1967, just a year after the watershed passage of the National Historic Preservation Act. The ordinance is a framework that supports Denver's historic districts and individual landmarks, and specifically outlines provisions related to historic designation, design review and demolition review. It is important to note that these functions are managed by the City & County of Denver, its Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC), and the Denver City Council.

There are 52 local historic districts in Denver and over 335 individually landmarked properties. Landmark designation is a tool for preserving the historic fabric of Denver's neighborhoods while encouraging thoughtful and sympathetic improvements and additions. Below we've compiled a number of questions we frequently receive about designation.

Please note: Historic Denver, Inc is a private, non-profit organization that provides ideas and actions for Denver's historic places. We do not manage the city's designation programs. The Landmark Preservation Commission is the formal city agency responsible for designation and design review. To contact the Landmark Commission, please visit [www.denvergov.org/preservation](http://www.denvergov.org/preservation) or call (720) 865-2709.

### ***Why do we need Historic Designation?***

Historic designation is one method of ensuring that changes to a neighborhood occur thoughtfully, preserving the fabric of a neighborhood that people love— homes with history, vital dwellings that preserve the past, while acknowledging modern lifestyles. Historic district designation can preserve the essential features of a neighborhood, while permitting contemporary improvements and additions that contribute to the historic character of the area.

### ***What is the designation process?***

The process used to designate a structure or district under the local ordinance is much like the processes used in other land use decisions and includes many opportunities for public input. While any single owner or a group of at least three community members can submit a nomination for designation, in the form of an application, this is just the beginning of the process, which includes:

- 1) Review by Planning Department staff and the LPC to determine whether the application is complete and meets the criteria.
- 2) A public hearing before the LPC on the merits of the application and recommendation to Council if warranted.
- 3) Denver Planning Board review of district applications with particular attention to existing city plans.
- 4) Review by City Council's neighborhood and land use committee for determination of whether the full Council will consider the matter.
- 5) First reading and second reading with a public hearing before City Council.
- 6) City Council decision to designate or not, weighing all factors and impacts.

### ***Will historic district designation devalue my property?***

Of the 50+ areas in Denver that have been designated historic districts, there is no evidence to support a contention of diminished value. The 2011 economic study *Property Values and Neighborhood Stability* conducted by Clarion Associates of Colorado analyzed the economic impacts of historic preservation in Colorado over the past 20 years. They found that Denver residential property values in historic districts **increased or stayed the same** as compared to values in nearby, undesignated areas. The Study states:

*"In fact, studies throughout the nation demonstrate that local historic designation programs not only help preserve an area's historic character, but they can also add value, stability, and desirability to homes and neighborhoods. Local historic designation typically leads to appreciation in property values at rates that are consistent with, and often greater than, rates in similar, non-designated areas."* (pg 23)

*"In several of the districts studied, average sale prices for homes within the designated historic district, as well as in the non-designated comparison areas, surpasses the average sale prices for the larger surrounding neighborhoods. This demonstrates that the preservation of historic districts often has a spillover effect into nearby areas, increasing overall desirability of homes in and near a historic district."* (pg 24)

### ***What is Design Review?***

For locally designated homes or commercial buildings, either individual landmarks or contributing structures in a historic district, certain exterior changes do require design review by the Landmark Preservation Commission. Design review is required for any change that requires a zoning, building, demolition, revocable or curb cut permit on the exterior of a building and/or its landscape. Examples of the kind of items reviewed include:

- Window replacement or installation
- New roofing or siding
- Exterior doors
- Additions

Property owners begin the process of design review by submitting an application to the Landmark Preservation Commission staff. Well over half of all applicants are approved administratively in less than two weeks. More significant projects are reviewed by the Landmark Preservation Commission at their twice-monthly meetings. Proposed changes are reviewed in accordance with the City's adopted Design Guidelines, which are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, a national document published by the Park Service.

To ensure the design review process goes smoothly, owners can contact Landmark Preservation staff early in the planning process for advice and recommendations. Historic Denver is also willing to provide preliminary advice and answer general questions about design review. There is no fee for design review.

### ***What is allowed and not allowed in a local historic district?***

Only **exterior** changes requiring a **permit** require an additional level of design review in a historic district or individual landmarks. The additional review ensures that the changes are done in a complementary manner to the original structure, the surrounding houses, and the neighborhood.

The following would **not** be affected by historic designation and **do not** require design review:

- Painting the exterior of your home the color of your choice
- Making interior changes to your home
- Most landscaping
- Installing a lawn sprinkler system
- Installing a satellite dish
- Placing play ground equipment in the yard

### ***Can I add to my home?***

Yes. Additions to homes in historic districts are reviewed and approved by the Denver Landmark Commission regularly, using a set of adopted design guidelines. Additions do not have to duplicate the original style and materials, but must be compatible in massing, size, and scale. Many changes can be approved relatively quickly by working with the Landmark Planning staff. For more complex additions and construction, the Landmark Commission meets twice a month to review applications. The Landmark Preservation Commission has an excellent record of approving projects that meet the contemporary needs of the owners while preserving the historic character of the structure.

### ***How does the Landmark Preservation Commission's "Design Guidelines for Landmark Structures and Districts" apply to homes in a historic district?***

The Guidelines are specific to historic districts, and are used by the Commission and staff to review submitted designs. If a residential project involves the exterior of the house and a **permit** is required for the project (this includes building permit, curb cut permit, demolition permit, revocable permit, zoning construction permit and request for zoning lot amendment) then the project must be reviewed and approved by the Landmark Preservation Commission before the permit will be issued.

The provisions of the Design Guidelines that relate to that particular project will be applied in the design review process. The City's staff is available to consult with you and provide input, regardless of the need for a permit. Where no permit is required, the Design Guidelines are non-binding. The city website ([www.denvergov.org/preservation](http://www.denvergov.org/preservation)) has helpful information, including application forms and submittal requirements.

### ***What is the Landmark Commission's approval rate for design review?***

- The Landmark Commission's approval rate for 2013 was 99%.
- Of the 399 applications that received formal design review in 2013, 398 received approval. (The approval rate for prior years is similar).
- Of the 398 approved, 325 were administratively approved, without formal Landmark Commission review.

### ***Can I use a contractor or architect of my own choosing?***

Yes. You can select your own architect or contractor for any project. It is important to check that contractors have the appropriate licenses. If you need recommendations, Historic Denver maintains a Contractor Resource List that includes individuals and companies with experience working on historic properties.

### ***What home improvements are eligible for tax credits in a historic district, and how significant are the credits?***

Provided the appropriate guidelines are followed, here are a few activities that could be eligible for the Colorado State Preservation Tax Credit:

- Window restoration
- Removal of historically incompatible materials
- Roof replacement
- Electrical, HVAC and plumbing upgrades
- Masonry repairs
- Foundation improvements

The financial benefits can be substantial. Owners of "contributing" properties in historic districts may receive a credit of 20% of their qualified costs up to a maximum credit of \$50,000. The credit can be used once every ten years or by each owner of the property.

Keep in mind that a tax credit is different from -- and much better than -- a deduction. A tax credit allows you to offset your taxes on a dollar-for-dollar basis. A deduction only allows you to reduce your taxable income.

### ***Who is eligible to apply for the State tax credits?***

Contributing homes more than 50 years old and part of a local or National Register historic district are eligible for the Colorado Historic Preservation Tax Credit. For more information and to apply for a tax credit, please visit [www.denvergov.org/preservation](http://www.denvergov.org/preservation).

### ***What is the difference between contributing and non-contributing homes?***

Both contributing and non-contributing structures require design review. A historic district can be comprised of both contributing and non-contributing structures. Typically, a designating ordinance for a historic district will include a Period of Significance. Structures that were built within this period are considered contributing unless there have been significant negative alterations. Non-contributing structures are those built outside the Period of Significance, or those that have been altered and no longer have historic integrity. Only homeowners of contributing buildings may be eligible for state income tax credits for qualified projects. If not specifically stated in the designating ordinance for a historic district, contributing or non-contributing status will be decided by the Landmark Preservation Commission.

### ***Can I demolish my home?***

Non-contributing (or non-historic) structures may be approved by the Landmark Commission for demolition without a public hearing. The Landmark Commission does review the replacement structure according to the infill chapter of the Design Guidelines. Contributing (or historic) structures may only be demolished if economic hardship is established at a public hearing of the Landmark Commission.

***What do I need to do if I want to install storm windows?***

Although alteration to windows in historic districts does require a permit, adding storm windows does not. While not required, the homeowner may opt to consult the City staff and get their input on the proposed project. Storm windows are encouraged, as is renovation and repair of existing windows.

***What do I need to do if I want to install a storm, security or screen door?***

Installing storm, security or screen doors does not require a permit from the City and therefore may be installed with no involvement by the City. While not required, the homeowner may opt to consult the City staff and get their input on the proposed project.

***What do I need to do if I want to add or repair a fence or retaining wall?***

There are specific zoning guidelines relating to fences, regardless of historic district status. From the front facade of the house forward to the street, a proposed fence cannot exceed 4 feet in height. (In historic districts, if appropriate, the fence should be "transparent" to maintain the open view plane from the street.) From the front facade of the house back along the property line to the alley, and along the alley, fences can be 6' tall. If taller, they will need a zoning variance.

Most substantial fences, brick or stucco, will need permits because of footings required for support posts. Design Review will take into consideration the street character and the impact on the neighborhood when reviewing proposed retaining walls and fences.

If the historic district is also located along a historically designated parkway there are customized set-backs designed to promote the park-like setting.

***What is the difference between a historic district and a conservation district?***

A neighborhood conservation overlay district is a zoning tool used to preserve, revitalize, protect, and enhance significant older areas within a community beyond what is specified in the standard zoning code. Conservation overlay regulations are applied in addition to standard zoning regulations. Conservation district regulations will differ from neighborhood to neighborhood depending on the area's character and needs.

Typically, conservation districts regulate fewer features and will focus more on significant character defining features, such as lot size, building height, setbacks, streetscapes, and tree protection. Unlike historic districts, conservation districts rarely consider specific elements, such as windows, buildings materials, or decorative details. In addition, most conservation districts do not include demolition delays or prohibitions, a tool utilized in historic districts.

Conservation districts are created through the desire and need of the neighborhood, and must be approved by City Council.

*Note: This FAQ was developed by Historic Denver, Inc with some material adapted from the work of volunteers in the Washington Park neighborhood. Historic Denver is happy to field questions about designation at (303) 534-5288 or [info@historicdenver.org](mailto:info@historicdenver.org). Questions can also be directed to the Landmark Preservation Commission at (720) 865-2709.*

# Financial Incentives for Historic Preservation

There are many benefits to owning a historic building, and there are tax credits to help keep them in good shape! These credits cover projects such as brick repointing, roof replacement, and window rehabilitation. Better yet, these credits also cover projects that will help modernize your home! HVAC, plumbing, and other rehabilitation projects also qualify. Keep reading to see which tax credit your property might qualify for:

**Locally Designated\***  
-OR-  
**State Register**

**National Register**

Commercial

Residential

Commercial

Residential

**25% State Tax Credit**  
-OR-  
**20% State Tax Credit**

**20% State Tax Credit**

**20% Federal Tax Credit**

**20% State Tax Credit**

**-AND-**

**25% State Tax Credit**

**-OR-**

**20% State Tax Credit**

\*Local landmarks include both individually listed properties and contributors in historic districts.

## The Fine Print:

- Residential projects must exceed \$5,000; commercial projects must exceed 25% of the adjusted basis
- Residential credit is capped at \$50,000 but can be renewed every 10 years
- Commercial credit is capped at \$1 million in tax credits per year. Commercial credits can be transferred
- Projects must meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards

## Qualified Work

### Exterior:

- Masonry Repair
- Siding, wood work and trim
- Foundation and excavation work
- Roofs
- Windows and doors

### Interior:

- Historic walls and finishes, wood work and trim
- Historic floor materials
- Insulation
- Electrical and plumbing
- Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning

For more information and details on how to apply, please visit: <http://www.historicdenver.org/resources/tax-credits/>



## State Historical Fund Grants

The State Historical Fund, established by voters in 1990, is funded by limited stakes gambling in Cripple Creek, Central City and Black Hawk. In the 26 years that the fund has been active, it has distributed over \$273 million dollars to historic preservation projects across Colorado. Grants from the SHF cover a number of areas, including survey and planning, education and acquisition and development (which includes physical preservation work).

The grant process is very competitive and projects must demonstrate clear public benefit. Non-profits and public entities can apply directly to the SHF, while private and for-profit owners must partner with a non-profit or public entity before applying. Private residential projects are not usually competitive. The State Historical Fund currently has two grant rounds: April 1st and October 1st. All properties receiving grant funds must be historically designated at the local, state or national level.

## Easements

A historic preservation façade easement is a legal agreement between the owner of a historic or architecturally significant property and a historic preservation agency, such as Historic Denver, granting to the preservation agency certain legal rights in the property.

Façade easements require the current and future property owners to maintain the exterior of the property in the same or better condition as it was in when the easement was established. By granting an easement, an owner is assured of the preservation their property in perpetuity. The easement "runs with the land," ensuring continued care.

Financial benefits of easements may include a one-time deduction on federal and state income taxes, federal estate and gift tax benefits and a possible reduction in state and local property taxes. You should consult a lawyer or other tax advisor regarding the potential tax benefits of granting an easement.

## Property Values

As they say in real estate, it's all about 'location, location, location'. Studies across the nation have shown that historic designation can add stability, desirability, and therefore value to historic properties. Local historic designation typically leads to appreciation in property values at rates that are consistent or greater than rates in similar, non-designated neighborhoods.

In Denver, a 2011 study by Clarion Associates found that in the three historic districts studied, historic designation did not decrease property values. In two of the districts, property values appreciated at a slightly greater rate than in non-designated areas immediately adjacent to the historic districts.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation's 2014 study, "Older, Smaller, Better" has also shown that established neighborhoods with a mix of older, smaller buildings perform better than districts with larger, newer structures when tested against a range of economic, social, and environmental outcome measures.



**Memo From: Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP), History  
Colorado, Denver, CO, June 30, 2015<sup>1</sup>**

**Re: Insurance coverage of privately owned properties listed in the National  
Register of Historic Places and Colorado State Register of Historic Properties**

Some insurance companies are unfamiliar with the National Register of Historic Places and State Register of Historic Properties and what designation entails for a historic property. Listing in either the National Register and/or State Register is honorary.<sup>2</sup> Both registers recognize a historic property's importance to its community, the State, or the nation and encourages good stewardship.

Listing, either individually or as a contributing resource in a registered historic district, should have no bearing on insurance coverage. Owning a property listed in the National or State Register does not impose a regulatory burden on the property owner. When making repairs to a listed property that may involve an insurance claim, the property owner is under no obligation to make the repairs following accepted historic preservation standards or guidelines, such as the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Should a listed property become damaged or be destroyed, there is no state or federal requirement that the property be rebuilt or repaired to reflect its historic appearance nor that a particular contractor be used to make repairs.

The National Register of Historic Places is a program of the National Park Service (NPS) and the State Register of Historic Properties is a program of History Colorado; OAHP administers both of these programs in Colorado. Listing in the National and State registers places no restrictions on private property owners.

*For example:*

- Exact replicas of listed properties are not required to be constructed if the original is damaged or destroyed;
- The same or very similar materials are not required to be used for repairs or replacement of all or part of the building.

Please be aware that:

- Private property owners are not restricted as to the use, treatment, transfer, or disposition of a listed property;
- Owners have no obligation to open their properties to the public, restore them, or maintain them in a particular way, if they choose not to do so, nor does listing lead to public acquisition;
- Under Federal and State laws, private property owners can do anything they wish with their National property, provided that no Federal or State license, permit, or funding is involved;
- Listing does not require that any specific guidelines be followed in rehabilitating, remodeling, repairing, or renovating (unless the owner is using federal funds or receiving Colorado State Historical Fund grant money, Federal or State Preservation Tax Credits, or other state funds);
- If a listed property is destroyed or its integrity is greatly altered, it may be removed from the National Register and State Register through an administrative action by OAHP, History Colorado Board of Directors and the NPS (if also listed in the National Register).

The only exceptions to the above are noted in the box below:

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<sup>1</sup> This memo has been adapted for Colorado from a similar memo from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources titled, "Insurance coverage of privately owned property in National Register-listed historic districts and properties individually listed in the National Register."

<sup>2</sup> Properties under the jurisdiction of certain local governing bodies are automatically listed as a local landmark if listed in the National and/or State Register and may be subject to any local ordinances as a result of such a listing. Please check with the local landmarking agency to see if this applies to the subject historic property.

### Exceptions

If a property is listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register, the National Historic Preservation Act requires the Federal government to take into account the possibility of adverse effects on the historic property by a project that receives *federal* licensing, permitting, or funding. If a property is listed in or eligible for listing in the State Register, the State Register Act requires the State Historic Preservation Officer (OAHP) to take into account the possibility of adverse effects on the historic property by a project that receives *state* licensing, permitting, or funding.

Questions about repairs to historic buildings often arise in the wake of natural and manmade disasters, especially in places that have been declared disaster areas by either Federal or State government. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) generally is the federal agency that responds first to such disasters. The Colorado Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management is the state agency that responds. FEMA has extensive information about historic preservation and requirements for making repairs when *federal* funds, licenses or permits are used, at the following website: <http://www.fema.gov/environmental-planning-and-historic-preservation-program/historic-preservation-information> For information regarding the Colorado Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management see: <http://www.coemergency.com>

An insurance claim filed by a private homeowner to his/her insurance company to repair typical damage, such as a fallen tree, burglary, vandalism, water or smoke damage, or other incidents is not the type of action generally considered subject to government oversight as it will not receive any federal licensing, permitting, or funding. If a property is within a Federal- or State-declared disaster area, such as parts of Colorado after the 2013 and 2015 floods and 2012-2013 wildfires, the property owner and their insurance company are likely to work with disaster response agencies. OAHP staff also can assist in the wake of a disaster.

Federal and State Preservation Tax Credits for rehabilitation may be available for listed properties, should a property owner choose to use them, to offset maintenance and rehabilitation costs. OAHP administers the Federal and State Preservation Tax Credit programs by assisting owners who are considering potential tax credit projects for historic properties. To learn more about these programs, visit our website at: <http://www.historycolorado.org/oaHP/preservation-tax-credits>

A property listed in the State or National Register may also qualify for Colorado State Historical Fund grants; visit: <http://www.historycolorado.org/grants/available-grants> for more information.

To review the National Register's rights of private property owners, please consult the federal regulations concerning the program, as follows:

» Further information can be found on the National Register website at: <http://www.nps.gov/nr/faq.htm> ;  
» National Historic Preservation Act. United States Code, Title 16, Subsection 470, or 16 USC 470. The full text of the law is at this website link: [http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online\\_books/fhpl/nhpa.pdf](http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/fhpl/nhpa.pdf)  
Regulations for the National Register of Historic Places. Code of Federal Regulations, Part 36, subsection 60.2 (commonly abbreviated as 36 CFR 60 (subsection 60.2)). The regulations are available online at this website link: <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=1&SID=8c7b4dc18661d0c519b22291f5e7585e&ty=HTML&h=L&r=PART&n=36y1.0.1.1.26>

For more information about the State Register program and rights of property owners, please see:

» <http://www.historycolorado.org/archaeologists/colorado-state-register-historic-properties> (the last paragraph under Benefits of Listing);  
» To review the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties law which established the program, please see: [http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms\\_edumat/pdfs/1307.pdf](http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms_edumat/pdfs/1307.pdf)

### **Insurance Companies Offering Insurance for Historic Properties**

Some insurance firms are knowledgeable about the National and State Registers and what listing of a privately owned historic property (individually or in a historic district) does and does not mean when it comes to insurance coverage. Purchasing insurance coverage is a complex matter unique to each property and owner. Property owners are encouraged to become informed consumers of all their insurance products, to speak with experts in insurance and financial planning, and to work with a trusted insurance agent and company to design a policy that is appropriate.

The table below is provided solely for the information and convenience of property owners seeking insurance for their historic property. This list does not presume to be all inclusive; however, all property companies that request inclusion will be listed.

Inclusion on this list does not constitute an endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by OAHP, History Colorado, or a demonstration of professional competence. As a government agency, History Colorado cannot recommend the services of a specific insurance company, agent, or firm and does not accept responsibility for the performance of any insurance company, agent, or firm. While OAHP strives to make the information available to the public as accurate and current as possible, OAHP makes no claims, promises, or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of the contents of this list, and OAHP expressly disclaims liability for errors and omissions in the contents of this list. No warranty of any kind, implied, expressed, or statutory, including but not limited to the warranties of non-infringement of third party rights, title, merchantability, or fitness for a particular purpose, is given.

<b>Insurance Company and website</b>	<b>Additional information</b>
Chubb Group of Insurance Companies <a href="http://www.chubb.com/">http://www.chubb.com/</a>	Provides insurance coverage specific to historic houses and other property types
Fireman's Fund Insurance Company <a href="http://www.firemansfund.com/Pages/welcome.htm">http://www.firemansfund.com/Pages/welcome.htm</a>	Provides insurance coverage specific to historic houses and other property types
National Trust Insurance Services, LLC <a href="http://nationaltrust-insurance.org/">http://nationaltrust-insurance.org/</a> and <a href="http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/insurance.html">http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/insurance.html</a>	The National Trust for Historic Preservation has formed a subsidiary, National Trust Insurance Services, LLC that offers a variety of insurance solutions to property owners
<b>Other Options</b>	Major insurance companies, such as Allstate, American Family, Farmers, GEICO, Nationwide, State Farm, USAA, as well as other companies and firms offer numerous types of insurance policies. Insurance coverage requirements vary from state to state and policy coverage available in one place may not be available in another. Property owners should speak with a knowledgeable local agent representing the firm with which they wish to do business to see what options are available in their property's locality and most appropriate for their historic property.

To contact OAHP regarding the National and /or State Register programs, call 303.866.3392 or email: [oahp@state.co.us](mailto:oahp@state.co.us)

# Historic Denver

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## Did you know?

Denver is home to 51 historic districts and over 300 individually landmarked properties.

## Resources

[Tips & Tools for You](#)[Action Fund](#)[Contractor Resource List](#)[Historic Denver News](#)[Owners Manual for Historic Homes](#)[Designation](#)[Easements](#)[Funding & Grants](#)[Tax Credits](#)[Learn about Denver Landmarks](#)[Learn about Denver Architects](#)[2015 City Council Races](#)[Virtual Tours of Denver's Historic Buildings](#)[Style Guide](#)[Lead Paint and Your Historic Home](#)[Real Estate Professionals](#)[Resources for Real Estate Professionals](#)

## Frequently Asked Questions About Historic Designation.

The city of Denver's [Preservation Ordinance](#) was created in 1967, just a year after the watershed passage of the National Historic Preservation Act. The ordinance is a framework that supports Denver's historic districts and individual landmarks, and specifically outlines provisions related to historic designation, design review and demolition review. It is an important to note that these functions are managed by the City & County of Denver, its Landmark Preservation Committee, and the Denver City Council.

There are 52 local historic districts in Denver and over 300 individually landmarked properties. Landmark designation is a great tool for preserving the historic fabric of Denver's neighborhoods while encouraging thoughtful and sympathetic improvements and additions. Navigating the ins and outs of what designation means for your property, however, can seem like a daunting task. Below we've compiled a number of questions we frequently receive about designation to highlight the benefits of landmark designation and to shed light on the many misconceptions surrounding the process. The City of Denver's Landmark Preservation Commission also has a list of [Frequently Asked Questions](#) about historic designation.

Please note: Historic Denver, Inc is a private, non-profit organization that provides ideas and actions for Denver's historic places. We do not manage the city's designation programs. The Landmark Preservation Commission is the formal city agency responsible for designation and design review. To contact the Landmark Commission, please visit their [website](#) or call them at (720) 865-2709.

[Why do we need Historic Designation?](#)[Will historic district designation devalue my property?](#)[What is allowed and not allowed in a historic district?](#)[Can I add to my home?](#)[What is the Designation process?](#)[What is Design Review?](#)[What kinds of projects are reviewed by the Landmark Commission?](#)[How does the Landmark Preservation Commission's "Design Guidelines for Landmark Structures and Districts" apply to homes in a historic district?](#)[What is the Landmark Commission's approval rate for design review?](#)[What home improvements are eligible for tax credits in a historical district, and how significant are the credits?](#)[What costs are covered by the tax credits?](#)[Who is eligible to apply for the State tax credits?](#)[What is the difference between contributing and non-contributing homes?](#)[Can I demolish my home?](#)[What do I need to do if I want to install storm windows?](#)[What do I need to do if I want to install a storm, security or screen door?](#)[What do I need to do if I want to add or repair a fence or retaining wall?](#)[What do I need to do if I want to put up shutters?](#)[What is the difference between a historic district and a conservation district?](#)

## Why do we need Historic Designation?

Historic designation is one method of ensuring that changes to a neighborhood occur thoughtfully, preserving the fabric of a neighborhood that people love— homes with history, vital dwellings that preserve the past, while acknowledging modern lifestyles. Historic district designation can preserve the essential features of a neighborhood, while permitting contemporary improvements and additions that contribute the historic character of the area.



Please take a moment to visit our sponsors

## Will historic district designation

HOME PROGRAMS RESOURCES SITEMAP

Of the 50+ areas in Denver that have been designated historic districts, there is no evidence to support a contention of diminished value. The 2011 economic study *Property Values and Neighborhood Stability* conducted by Clarion Associates of Colorado analyzed the economic impacts of historic preservation in Colorado over the past 20 years. They found that Denver residential property values *increased or stayed the same* as compared to values in nearby, undesignated areas. For example, the Study states:

*"In fact, studies throughout the nation demonstrate that local historic designation programs not only help preserve an area's historic character, but they can also add value, stability, and desirability to homes and neighborhoods. Local historic designation typically leads to appreciation in property values at rates that are consistent with, and often greater than, rates in similar, non-designated areas." (pg 23)*

*"In several of the districts studied, average sale prices for homes within the designated historic district, as well as in the non-designated comparison areas, surpasses the average sale prices for the larger surrounding neighborhoods. This demonstrates that the preservation of historic districts often has a spillover effect into nearby areas, increasing overall desirability of homes in and near a historic district." (pg 24)*

## What is allowed and not allowed in a historic district?

Only exterior changes requiring a city building permit require an additional level of design review in a historic district or individual landmarks. The additional review ensures that the changes are done in a complementary manner to the original structure, the surrounding houses, and the neighborhood.

The following would not be affected by historic designation and do not require design review:

- Painting the exterior of your home the color of your choice
- Making interior changes to your home
- Most landscaping
- Installing an air conditioning unit
- Installing a lawn sprinkler system
- Installing a satellite dish
- Placing play ground equipment in the yard

The following would likely be allowed after the design review process:

- Sensitive additions to enlarge your home
- Adding or replacing a garage
- Replacing the front door

For more information about the design review process, you can read Historic Denver's *Owner's Manual for Historic Homes*.

## Can I add to my home?

Additions to homes in historic districts are reviewed and approved by the Denver Landmark Commission before a building permit is issued. Additions do not have to duplicate the original style and materials, but must be compatible in massing, size, and scale. Many changes can be approved relatively quickly by working with the Landmark Planning staff. For more complex additions and construction, the Landmark Commission meets twice a month to review applications. The Landmark Preservation Commission has an excellent record of approving projects that meet the contemporary needs of the owners while preserving the historic character of the structure.

## What is the designation process?

The process used to designate a structure or district under the local ordinance is much like to processes used in other land use decisions and includes many opportunities for public input. While any member of the community can submit a nomination for designation, in the form of an application, this is just the beginning of the process, which includes:

- 1) Review by Planning Department staff and the LPC to determine whether the application is complete and meets the criteria.
- 2) A public hearing before the LPC on the merits of the application and recommendation to council if warranted.
- 3) Denver Planning Board review of district applications with particular attention to existing city plans.
- 4) Review by City Council's Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure Committee (LUTI) for determination of whether the full Council will consider the matter.
- 5) First reading and second reading with a public hearing before City Council.
- 6) City Council decision to designate or not weighing all factors and impacts.

## What is Design Review?

For locally designated homes or commercial buildings, either individual landmarks or contributing structures in a historic

district, certain exterior changes do require design review by the Landmark Preservation Commission. Typically design review is required for any change that requires a zoning, building, demolition, revocable or curb cut permit on the exterior of a building and/or its landscape. Examples of the kind of items reviewed include:

- Window replacement or installation
- New roofing or siding
- Exterior doors
- Additions

Property owners begin the process of design review by submitting an application to the Landmark Preservation Commission staff. Well over half of all applicants are approved administratively in less than two weeks. More significant projects are reviewed by the Landmark Preservation Commission and their twice-monthly meetings. Proposed changes are reviewed in accordance with the City's adopted Design Guidelines, which are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, a national document published by the Park Service.

To ensure the design review process goes smoothly, owners can contact Landmark Preservation staff early in the planning process for advice and recommendations. Historic Denver is also willing to provide preliminary advice and answer general questions about design review.

## What kinds of projects are reviewed by the Landmark Commission?

In historic districts, only exterior changes to the structure that require a building permit receive design review by the Landmark Commission. This review will ensure that the changes are done in a complementary manner to the structure, the surrounding homes, and the neighborhood.

- No restrictions or review for interior renovations.
- Most major additions and changes go before the Landmark Commission for review.
- Smaller additions, modifications, and most garage additions are approved administratively.
- Minor changes that can be reviewed by Planning staff, such as re-roofing, detached garages, replacement of downspouts and gutters, or re-pointing, receive a quick sign-off.

## How does the Landmark Preservation Commission's "Design Guidelines for Landmark Structures and Districts" apply to homes in a historic district?

The [Guidelines](#) are specific to historic districts, and are used by the Commission and staff to review submitted designs. If a residential project involves the exterior of the house and a *permit* is required for the project (this includes building permit, curb cut permit, demolition permit, revocable permit, zoning construction permit and request for zoning lot amendment) then the project must be reviewed and approved by the Landmark Preservation Commission before the permit will be issued.

The provisions of the Design Guidelines that relate to that particular project will be applied in the design review process. The City's staff is available to consult with you and provide input, regardless of the need for a permit. Where no permit is required, the Design Guidelines are non-binding.

The [city website](#) has helpful information, including application forms and submittal requirements

## What is the Landmark Commission's approval rate for design review?

- The Landmark Commission's approval rate for 2013 was 99%.
- Of the 399 applications which received formal design review in 2013, 398 received approval. (The approval rate for prior years is similar).
- Of the 398 approved, 325 were administratively approved, without formal Landmark Commission review.

## What home improvements are eligible for tax credits in a historical district, and how significant are the credits?

Provided the appropriate guidelines are followed, here are a few activities that could be eligible for the Colorado State Preservation Income Tax Credit:

- Window restoration
- Removal of historically incompatible materials
- Roof replacement
- Electrical and plumbing upgrades
- Masonry repairs

The financial benefits can be substantial. Owners of "contributing" properties in historic districts may receive a credit of 20% of their qualified costs up to \$250,000 taken over five years, i.e., five annual \$10,000 state tax credits.

[Keep in mind that a tax credit is different from -- and much better than -- a deduction. A tax credit allows you to offset your

taxes on a dollar-for-dollar basis. A deduction only allows you to reduce your taxable income.]

Between 1991 and 2010, 951 property owners in Colorado have qualified for the state tax credit approval for restoration, renovation, and repair, totaling more than \$98.5 million dollars in qualified expenditures.

### What costs are covered by the tax credits?

Costs covered by the tax credits include the "hard costs" associated with the physical preservation of a historic property, covering such aspects as:

- Carpentry
- Ceilings
- Cleaning
- Doors & exterior repair
- Painting
- Plaster
- Roofing & flashing
- Sheetrock
- Re-pointing
- Windows

### Who is eligible to apply for the State tax credits?

Homes more than 50 years old and part of a historic district are eligible for Colorado Historic Preservation Income Tax Credit. In Denver, the Landmark Preservation Commission reviews applications for tax credits. Property owners and tenants with a lease of five or more years are eligible. For more information and to apply for a tax credit, please visit the City of Denver's Community Planning and Development [website](#).

### What is the difference between a contributing and non-contributing building?

Both contributing and non-contributing structures require design A historic district can be comprised of both contributing and non-contributing structures. Typically, a designating ordinance for a historic district will include a Period of Significance. Structures that were built within this period are considered contributing unless there have been significant negative alterations and thus loss of historic integrity. Non-contributing structures are those built outside the Period of Significance, or those that have been altered and no longer have historic integrity.

Both contributing and non-contributing structures require design review before permits will be issued. Homeowners of contributing buildings may be eligible for state income tax credits for qualified projects. If not specifically stated in the designating ordinance for a historic district, contributing or non-contributing status will be decided by the Landmark Preservation Commission.

### Can I demolish my home?

Non-contributing (or non-historic) structures may be approved by the Landmark Commission for demolition without a public hearing. Contributing (or historic) structures may be demolished if economic hardship is established at a public hearing of the Landmark Commission.

### What do I need to do if I want to install storm windows?

Although any alteration to windows in historic districts does require a permit, adding storm windows does not. While not required, the homeowner may opt to consult the City staff and get their input on the proposed project. Storm windows are encouraged, as is renovation and repair of existing windows. The installation of storm windows should be appropriate to the existing architecture.

### What do I need to do if I want to install a storm, security or screen door?

Installing storm, security or screen doors does not require a permit from the City and therefore may be installed with no involvement by the City. While not required, the homeowner may opt to consult the City staff and get their input on the proposed project. If contacted, the city can provide advice utilizing related Design Guidelines.

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### What do I need to do if I want to add or repair a fence or retaining wall?

There are very specific zoning codes relating to fences whether or not there is a historic district. From the front facade of the house forward to the street, a proposed fence cannot exceed 4 feet in height. (In historic districts, if appropriate, the fence should be "transparent" to maintain the open view plane from the street.) From the front facade of the house back along the property line to the alley, and along the alley, fences can be 6' tall. If taller, they will need a zoning variance. Substantial fences, or brick or stucco retaining walls, will need permits because of footings required for support posts. Design Review will take into consideration the street character and the impact on the neighborhood when reviewing proposed retaining walls and fences.

### What do I need to do if I want to put up shutters?

Shutters do not require a building permit and may be put up by the homeowner with no involvement by the City. However, as in all projects in historic districts, consideration should be given to the appropriateness of shutters (or any other similar addition) in terms of the original architecture.

If the homeowner decides to consult the City staff (which is not required) the staff will offer advice based on historic documentation. In some instances, the addition of shutters might be discouraged if they do not fit the architectural character of the house. It's important to note that since no permit is required to install shutters, the advice provided by the City is non-binding.

### What is the difference between a historic district and a conservation district?

A neighborhood conservation overlay district is a zoning tool used to preserve, revitalize, protect, and enhance significant older areas within a community beyond what is specified in the standard zoning code. Conservation overlay regulations are applied in addition to standard zoning regulations. Conservation district regulations will differ from neighborhood to neighborhood depending on the area's character and needs.

Typically, conservation districts regulate fewer features and will focus more on significant character defining features, such as lot size, building height, setbacks, streetscapes, and tree protection. Unlike historic districts, conservation districts rarely consider specific elements, such as windows, buildings materials, colors, and decorative details. In addition, most conservation districts do not include demolition delays or prohibitions, a tool utilized in historic districts.

Conservation districts are created through the desire and need of the neighborhood, and must be approved by City Council.

Note: This FAQ was developed by Historic Denver, Inc with material adapted from the work of volunteers in the Washington Park neighborhood. Historic Denver is happy to field questions about designation, as we strive to be a resource. Questions can also be directed to the Landmark Preservation Commission at their [website](#), or you can call them at (720) 865-2709.

# Colorado's Historic Preservation Tax Credit for Residential Properties

## WHAT IS A TAX CREDIT?

A tax credit is a dollar-for-dollar reduction in the amount of tax owed to the government. Tax credit projects create jobs and provide financial incentives to revitalize historic buildings. Federal and state tax laws offer tax credits for historic preservation projects that follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Properties. The federal government offers a tax credit between 10 and 20 percent, which can be paired with the state tax credit.

In 2015, Colorado will offer tax credits for historic buildings. Preservation tax credits are managed by History Colorado.

## WHAT TYPE OF PROPERTY IS ELIGIBLE?

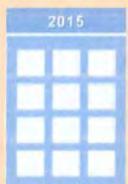
	Property must be:
Pre-2015 state tax credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» At least 50 years old</li> <li>» Locally landmarked or listed on the State Register</li> </ul>
New state tax credit for residential properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» At least 50 years old</li> <li>» Locally landmarked or listed on the State Register</li> </ul>
New state tax credit for commercial properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Locally landmarked or listed on the State Register</li> <li>» Income-producing</li> </ul>

[www.historycolorado.org/ohp/available-programs](http://www.historycolorado.org/ohp/available-programs)

## HOW CAN THE TAX CREDITS HELP ME?

- » Historic preservation tax credits lower your tax bill, which can increase your tax refund.
- » Preservation tax credits can be used to offset the cost of rehabilitating and restoring historic buildings.

## WHEN CAN I APPLY?



Applications for the new residential state preservation tax credit are accepted year-round on a rolling basis. Applicants may apply at any time. Applicants are encouraged to apply before starting work or in the early stages of the rehabilitation project.

**Note:** Each building is limited to \$50,000 in credits over a ten-year period unless the building is sold to a new owner.



### Want to learn more?

Visit [h-co.org/statetaxcredit](http://h-co.org/statetaxcredit) or Contact Joseph Saldibar at: [joseph.saldibar@state.co.us](mailto:joseph.saldibar@state.co.us) or 303/866-3741

## HOW DO I CLAIM A TAX CREDIT?

1. Submit Part 1 of the tax credit application.
2. History Colorado will conduct a preliminary review of project materials and respond to your request.
3. If your submitted Part 1 meets the requirements, History Colorado will approve the proposed work.
4. Submit Part 2 of the tax credit application.
5. History Colorado will conduct a detailed review and ensure your project follows the Standards for Rehabilitation.
6. If your submitted Part 2 meets the requirements, History Colorado will approve the work and you will receive your tax credit.

*All applications are reserved on a first-come, first-served basis.*

	NEW CREDIT RESIDENTIAL	OLD CREDIT
	More than 50 years old, <i>and</i>	More than 50 years old, <i>and</i>
<b>Eligible properties</b>	Listed on State Register of Historic Properties or landmarked by a Certified Local Government (CLG)	Listed on State Register of Historic Properties or landmarked by a Certified Local Government (CLG)
<b>Eligible applicants</b>	Property Owner, <i>or</i> Tenant with lease of at least 5 years	Property Owner, <i>or</i> Tenant with lease of at least 5 years
<b>Eligible projects</b>	Costs must exceed \$5,000 Project must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards	Costs must exceed \$5,000 Project must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards
<b>Time limits</b>	<b>No time limit</b>	Project must be completed within 24 months (or 48 with a one-time extension)
<b>Completed work</b>	Can be claimed if completed <b>within past 24 months*</b> and documented (* or 7/1/15, whichever is later)	Can be claimed if within 24 month period and documented
<b>Extent of tax savings</b>	<b>20%</b> of Qualified Rehabilitation Expenditures (QREs)	20% of Qualified Rehabilitation Expenditures (QREs)
<b>Disaster relief</b>	Additional <b>5% credit</b> for properties located in areas that have been designated as disaster areas within past 6 years	None
<b>Project cap</b>	<b>\$50,000</b> per property, but resets upon new ownership or after 10 years	\$50,000 per property
<b>Credit availability</b>	See Credit Limits Per Year chart on opposite page	Subject to yearly budget estimates
<b>Credit length</b>	Can be used for up to 10 years	Can be used for up to 10 years
<b>Allowable costs</b>	List of allowable expenditures (interior and exterior)	Qualified Rehabilitation Expenditures (QREs)
<b>Fees</b>	"Reasonable" Part 1 fee (may be <b>waived for projects under \$15,000</b> ); No Part 2 fee	\$250 Part 1 fee (may be waived for projects under \$15,000) \$0-\$750 Part 2 fee
<b>Recapture</b>	No recapture of credits under the new law	Recapture plan if property sold within 5 years
<b>Transferability</b>	None; credits stay with owner	None; credits stay with owner

Learn more or apply at: [h-co.org/statetaxcredit](http://h-co.org/statetaxcredit)

January 2015

Pursuing a Historic District Designation for the 100 Block of East Vassar Ave.

JENNIFER TARBLE

Wed 8/16/2017, 12:14 PM

RHGNA (info@rhgna.org)

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Jennifer Kremer. My husband and I own one of six Spanish-style bungalows located on East Vassar Avenue between Lincoln and Sherman Streets. We bought our home and have lived in it since 2004. For the past year and a half, a couple of my neighbors and I have been exploring the idea of creating a small historic district that would incorporate only these six homes. They were built in 1926 on the site of the old Vassar School (1892-1925), which was replaced by Rosedale Elementary. The Vassar School's red sandstone wall still surrounds the properties, and many of the school's building materials were salvaged and used in the construction of the bungalows.

I have already met with representatives from Historic Denver, as well as from the city's Landmark Preservation Commission, and both entities think these six homes meet all three of their criteria for historic designation. They are historically, architecturally, and geographically significant in their eyes. I walked our block with Paul Kashmann, our city councilman, who was also enthusiastic about preserving and protecting our homes.

All of the bungalow owners were invited to an informational meeting with Historic Denver and the Landmark Preservation Commission last fall. Those who attended strongly supported the creation of a historic district. Those who couldn't attend were given copies of all of the information that was distributed at the meeting, and they also have given me positive feedback. It seems like this could be a civil designation process, instead of becoming hostile like the DeBoer historic district designation several years ago. Saving these homes from the developers' wrecking ball is our top priority. The bungalow located on the corner of East Vassar and Sherman is definitely the most vulnerable, since it's situated on a very desirable lot that faces City of Kunming Park. The same family has owned this particular home for almost 70 years, and the adult children are very worried about the fate of their grandparents'/parents' home if they ever decide to sell. A quick glance at the 2500 block of South Sherman Street demonstrates what sort of structure would replace that particular bungalow. We all believe that if one of the bungalows gets demolished, then it will negatively affect the property values of the remaining five. It would destroy our block's cohesive streetscape, with its six Spanish-style stucco homes surrounded by the historic stone wall that steps its way down the hill along East Vassar Avenue. Quite frankly, I haven't approached the neighborhood association until now because I didn't want any developers to get wind of our efforts and become more aggressive in their pursuit of that corner lot facing the park.

I'm in the process of applying for a grant from Historic Denver's Action Fund. If we receive a grant, the money will pay for a consultant who will use our already-gathered research to complete the city's Landmark District Application. The Action Fund application requires us to submit 3 letters of support for our project. I would love for our neighborhood association to provide one of these letters, as it could only help our case! The application is due September 1st and is almost complete. Could someone from the association put together a letter on our behalf? If you want to find out more about our project or take a look at our block, please let me know. If we succeed in our efforts, the 100 block of East Vassar Avenue will become "The Vassar School Bungalows Historic District". Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jennifer Kremer  
119 E. Vassar Ave.  
Denver, CO 80210

303-861-9708

Your Endorsement of The Vassar School Bungalows Historic District

JENNIFER TARBLE

Wed 8/16/2017, 8:08 AM

Kashmann, Paul J. - City Council (Paul.Kashmann@denvergov.org)

Paul,

My name is Jennifer Kremer. You and I met at my home (119 E. Vassar Ave.) last year to discuss the creation of a historic district to preserve and protect our six Spanish-style bungalows located along East Vassar Avenue between Lincoln and Sherman Street in the Rosedale neighborhood. We're finally ready to move forward with "The Vassar School Bungalows Historic District"! I'm currently in the process of applying for a grant from Historic Denver's Action Fund to pay for a consultant to complete the City's historic district application on our behalf. If we receive the grant, it will pay for almost all of her services, and the homeowners will pay the city's \$500 application fee.

Because we are considered a 5-Member Community Group on the Action Fund's application, we are required to have the endorsement of our city councilman. I'm wondering if you can provide a letter showing that you have some knowledge of our project and support the creation of this historic district. If you need to be reminded about some of the project details, please let me know. I need to submit your letter, along with our application, no later than September 1st. Hopefully I've submitted this request with enough notice so none of us are scrambling at the last minute. Thank you for your help with this. I know the City Council has much more pressing issues to deal with right now, so any time you can spend on this endorsement is greatly appreciated.

Jennifer Kremer

303-861-9708 h. / 303-475-9713 c.

119 E. Vassar Ave.

Denver, CO 80210

Action Fund Application Has Been Submitted!

JENNIFER TARBLE

Thu 8/31/2017 4:34 PM

To:

kaschmidt2@earthlink.net;

Rivendell Real Estate (scott@rivendellrealestate.com);

Jon Stevenson (jonp Stevenson@gmail.com);

thomas.b.drake@gmail.com;

Patrick D. (patrick.dichter@gmail.com)

[Final Action Fund Application 2017-The Vassar School Bungalows Historic District.pdf](#)

[659 KB](#)

Hello neighbors!

I wanted to let everyone know that I just submitted our completed Action Fund application to Historic District, 24-1/2 hours before tomorrow's deadline. As soon as I hear anything back from them, I'll let everyone know. I've attached the completed application just in case you'd like to review it.

Thank you for all of your support.

Jen Kremer

119 E. Vassar Ave.

Fw: Action Fund

JENNIFER TARBLE

Fri 9/29/2017 4:11 PM

To:

kaschmidt2@earthlink.net;

Jon Stevenson (jonpstevenson@gmail.com);

Rivendell Real Estate (scott@rivendellrealestate.com);

Patrick D. (patrick.dichter@gmail.com);

thomas.b.drake@gmail.com;

dannsusan@centurylink.net;

Rob Roper (rob@robproper.com);

Kashmann, Paul J. - City Council (Paul.Kashmann@denvergov.org);

Kristi Miniello (Kristi@minielloconsulting.com);

Matt Kremer (mattkremer@msn.com)

Hello everyone!

I just received notification from Historic Denver that our Action Fund application has been approved, which means they'll help us pay for the consultant to complete our Historic District application. I'm so excited! Thank you to everyone for your support, with a special thank you to those who wrote the letters that were submitted with the application. I'll keep you posted on the progress!

Jennifer Kremer

---

From: Annie Levinsky <alevinsky@historicdenver.org>

Sent: Friday, September 29, 2017 9:14 PM

To: JENNIFER TARBLE

Subject: Action Fund

Jennifer,

I just wanted to send an informal note that our committee did vote to approve your Action Fund application. I just need to formally notify our board and get ratification early next

week, but we will begin working on the partnership agreement and you can let Kristi know that we're almost ready to get started!

Really excited to get this project underway!

Thanks-

Annie



Annie Robb Levinsky  
Executive Director  
Historic Denver, Inc  
1420 Ogden St.  
Denver, CO 80218

303-534-5288 ext. 1

[www.historicdenver.org](http://www.historicdenver.org)

Re: Matching Funds for Historic Denver's Action Fund

Sun 11/19/2017 6:32 AM

To:

kaschmidt2@earthlink.net;

Jon Stevenson (jonpstevenson@gmail.com);

Patrick D. (patrick.dichter@gmail.com);

thomas.b.drake@gmail.com;

snelsonco@gmail.com

Hey neighbors!

I'm happy to report that all six bungalows will contribute to the "25% matching funds" fund! So that reduces the amount per household to only \$82.50. If everyone wants to write me (Jennifer Kremer) a check for \$82.50, I'll go ahead and send a \$495.00 check to Historic Denver.

You can either walk it over and slip it in our mail slot at 119 E. Vassar Ave., or mail it to me.

Thank you so much for your support! I'm so excited that getting our bungalows landmarked has become a group effort!

Jen Kremer

---

From: JENNIFER TARBLE <tarble@msn.com>

Sent: Thursday, November 16, 2017 3:11 AM

To: kaschmidt2@earthlink.net; Jon Stevenson; Patrick D.; thomas.b.drake@gmail.com; snelsonco@gmail.com

Subject: Matching Funds for Historic Denver's Action Fund

Hello neighbors!

The signed paperwork has been submitted to Historic Denver, and they're ready to hire the consultant who will compile our research and complete the historic district application for our six bungalows. They're paying \$1485.00 of the consultants' fee (75%), and we, as the homeowners, are responsible for contributing the other 25%, or just \$495.

I'm emailing to find out who is willing to contribute to the "25% matching funds" campaign. If all six homeowners chip in, everyone is only responsible for \$82.50. If five homeowners chip in, it will be \$99.00 each. And if only four decide to pitch in, it will be \$123.75 each.

Please let me know if you're able to contribute financially to the effort. Once I hear back from everyone, I'll let you know how much we owe. No hard feelings if you're not able to contribute.

I'd like to send our matching funds to Historic Denver by the end of November. Thanks!

Jen Kremer

# Update on the Historic District Project

Fri 12/8/2017 11:09 AM

To:

kaschmidt2@earthlink.net;

Jon Stevenson (jonpstevenson@gmail.com);

Patrick D. (patrick.dichter@gmail.com);

thomas.b.drake@gmail.com;

snelsonco@gmail.com

Hello all!

I wanted to let you know that I met with Historic Denver and the consultant yesterday afternoon, and our project is officially under way! I turned over a \$495.00 check for our matching funds, so that requirement has been met. I already have received payment from 3 of the 5 other bungalow owners - if you haven't yet given me your \$82.50 check, please put it in our mailbox sometime over the next few days.

Kristi Miniello from Miniello Consulting will get started on our project after the holidays. So if you see a gal studying your house very carefully and taking lots of notes and photos, don't panic! It's probably just Kristi completing the inventory and architectural survey of the six bungalows. Feel free to introduce yourself. Also, if you have any information regarding your home or all of the bungalows, please contact her at [kristi@minielloconsulting.com](mailto:kristi@minielloconsulting.com). She's very open to input from any or all of us!

Once she has our historic district application completed (early spring?), we'll have another meeting with Historic Denver, the City of Denver's Landmark Commission, and all of the homeowners to review the contents of the application and to answer any last questions about the ramifications of living in a historic district. Then we'll submit the application through Paul Kashmann, our city councilman, who has so generously offered to do so and save us the normal \$500 application fee.

Let me know if you have any questions or concerns along the way. Thanks again for all of your support!

Jen Kremer  
119 E. Vassar Ave.

# We'll Be Taking Photos of the Bungalows on Monday, 2/12

Thu 2/8/2018 5:16 PM

To:

snelsonco@gmail.com;

thomas.b.drake@gmail.com;

Patrick D. (patrick.dichter@gmail.com);

Jon Stevenson (jonp Stevenson@gmail.com);

kaschmidt2@earthlink.net

Hello neighbors!

I wanted to give everyone a heads up that I'll be walking our block with Kristi Miniello (the consultant who is completing our historic district application) on Monday morning as she photographs our bungalows and the (4) remaining original garages. These photos will assist her as she writes the architectural and physical descriptions of each property for the application. We'll get started at 9:30 am. We will need access to everyone's back, side, and front yards. So please keep your dogs inside and your gates unlocked. I didn't want anyone calling the cops on us, or worse yet, one of us getting attacked by a dog trying to protect its territory. Thanks for your help! If anyone wants to join in or just meet Kristi, feel free to track us down on the block.

Jen Kremer

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## The Rough Draft of Our Historic District Application is Complete! Meeting Scheduled for Wednesday, April 11th

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JENNIFER TARBLE <tarble@msn.com>

Wed, Mar 21, 2018 at 1:49 PM

To: "snelsonco@gmail.com" <snelsonco@gmail.com>, "thomas.b.drake@gmail.com" <thomas.b.drake@gmail.com>, "Patrick D." <patrick.dichter@gmail.com>, Jon Stevenson <jonpstevenson@gmail.com>, "kaschmidt2@earthlink.net" <kaschmidt2@earthlink.net>

Hello neighbors!

Kristi Miniello, the consultant we hired, has completed the rough draft of our historic district application! So now it's time for all of the bungalow owners to meet with the "powers-that-be" to review that rough draft and ask any last questions about the designation process and the ramifications of being designated a historic district.

On **Wednesday, April 11th at 7:00 pm**, we'll gather at our bungalow, **119 E. Vassar Avenue**. Kristi Miniello, Shannon Schaefer from Historic Denver, Kara Hahn from the City's Landmark Preservation department, and Paul Kashmann, our city councilman, will all be in attendance.

Come find out what Kristi unearthed in her research (demolition permit for the Vassar School, building permits for the six bungalows, names of early residents and the dates they lived in our homes, etc.) And learn what happens next in this landmarking process.

Please let me know if your bungalow will be represented at this meeting, and if so, how many people will attend. I want to make sure I have enough chairs, drinks, hors d'oeuvres, and desserts on hand.

We're one step closer to creating the "Vassar School Bungalows Historic District"! We hope to see you on April 11th!

Jen Kremer

## **13. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**





Street East Vassar #115 Date 2-26-25 Date 2-26-25 No. 1177

Owner A. L. Franz Stories 1 Size 29'6"x34'

Description Brick bungalow, full basement and garage 12x16'

Lot Part Block 2 Addition Broadway Highlands

Architect Contractor

Plan Filed Plan Ret'd Dup. #1176--2-26-25

Residence "B" District

Building Inspected by [Signature] Date 3-6-25

Remarks: 1st [Signature] [Signature] 5-15-25  
Foundation [Signature] 10-5-25 completed

2nd

Estimated Cost . . \$ 4000 Fee . . . . \$ 4

Street East Vassar #119 Date 2-26-25 Date 2-26-25 No. 1178

Owner A. L. Franz Stories 1 Size 29'6"x34'

Description Brick bungalow, full basement and garage 12x18'

Lot Part Block 2 Addition Broadway Highlands

Architect \_\_\_\_\_ Contractor \_\_\_\_\_

Plan Filed \_\_\_\_\_ Plan Ret'd Dep. #1176--2-26-25

Residence "B" District

Building Inspected by J. H. [unclear] Date 3/2/25

Remarks: 1st Work started 5-18-25

Brick all laid 10-8-25 completed

2nd \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Cost . . \$ 

			4	0	0	0
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 Fee . . . . \$ 

			4
--	--	--	---



Street East Vassar #135 Date 2-26-25 Date 2-26-25 No. 1161

Owner A. L. Franz Stories 1 Size 29'6"x34'

Description Brick bungalow, full basement and garage 12x16'

Lot Part Block 2 Addition Broadway Highlands

Architect Contractor

Plan Filed Plan Ret'd Dup. #1176-2-26-25

Residence "B" District

Building Inspected by [Signature] Date 3/2/25

Remarks: 1st [Signature] McDonald 5-15-25

Brick all laid 10-8-25 Complete

2nd

Estimated Cost	\$					4	0	0	0	Fee	\$					4
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While it is doubtless true that our children in this isolated district are out of reach of many harmful influences, it is also true that they miss many advantages. Knowing these facts, our most persistent efforts have been directed toward forming ideals of cleanliness, courtesy, self-respect, and respect for the rights of others.

MAUD L. CRAIG,  
Principal.

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#### VASSAR SCHOOL

With a stretch of blue sky above it, a broad expanse of land about it, plenty of trees to shade it, a hundred miles of mountains in sight of it, a well-equipped playground beside it, an efficient janitor, and healthy, cheerful teachers within it, Vassar School is a home well fitted to turn out happy, open-minded, self-dependent children. The interior of the building was thoroughly renovated during the summer of 1918. The back hall was connected with the furnace and was equipped for a much-needed recitation room. The new south entrance has been free from ice in winter and has made the hall lighter and more cheerful. The two groups of steps at the old north entrance have made pleasant recitation rooms for hot weather.

The classes have been large enough for keen competition and socialized recitation, and small enough for meeting individual needs. The children are practical minded, coming, to a large extent, from thrifty families who own their own homes. Several children from Englewood, attracted by the advantages of the school, were permitted to attend. By using the departmental system above the second grade we have been able to assign work according to the special qualifications of the teachers.

We have appreciated the victrola and the piano as much as any larger school could have done. We have especially encouraged the use of the piano outside of school hours by pupils whose homes are not furnished by such luxuries. A new balopticon was obtained this year through the generous contributions of parents and children. The pictures were shown at assembly periods in Room 4. Such subjects as science, art, the war, travel, history, birds, flowers, insects were thus brought before the children in illustrated lecture form. Besides the weekly loan of slides from the extension department of the State University, we have borrowed slides from our friends.

Mr. Babcock, government specialist on "Insect Pests of Poultry and Domestic Animals," brought lantern slides to illustrate a talk describing the life cycle of such pests and methods of extermination. In order to enhance the practical value of this lecture we invited the children to bring to school any infected animal in the neighborhood, as well as their apparently healthy pets. The program consisted of talks by the children about the habits, food, care, and value of their pets, displayed in each room. After adjournment to the yard, each



AN ATTENDANT AT THE ANIMAL CONGRESS, VASSAR SCHOOL

owner again told his story to a new group of visitors. A similar share of attention was given to a burro, a pony, and a goat who had been happily nibbling grass as they waited their turn. In this way we learned the comparative value of seven breeds of hens, two of ducks, two of rabbits, Belgian hares, geese, and pigeons. Insect pests were found on all kinds except the live crow, who sat apart making wise remarks about it all. As nearly every family in the district has poultry or rabbits the influence of the animal congress was far-reaching, the experts themselves being introduced to some new species.

Home gardening is practiced by all but seven families and the fall exhibit showed that people of the Vassar district have reached a high degree of skill in raising vegetables. The school has attempted to give practical help by lessons on soils, seed testing and planting, cultivation, weeds, insect enemies and remedies, etc.

An aquarium containing gold fish, native fish, snails, tadpoles, and water plants started an interest in all life, an interest that is manifest at all times, in school and out.

A Junior Audubon Society has been formed and the joy of learning the secrets of bird life has spread to all phases of nature

study. With excursions to give the children a chance to become familiar with life histories of flowers, birds, insects, etc., sympathies have been aroused and a continued watchfulness encouraged.

No greater eagerness has been displayed in nature study than in their much-loved sewing, cooking, manual work, debates, and argument.

The physical welfare of the children had a prominent place in the ideals of the school. With the building well ventilated and very clean, it has been easy to emphasize personal cleanliness, and we have noticed gratifying results.

Along with other playground work, the team work of the baseball and indoor organizations has been good for the individual whether the game resulted in victory or defeat. Submerging self for the success of the whole helped develop the democratic spirit. Individual abilities were increased by practice of athletic stunts, the climax of which was the appearance of four of our stunt-performing boys at the play festival. A track meet in which all children participated spurred the defeated to greater exertion and gratified the leaders without spoiling them. At a larger track meet, the winners in our Vassar competitions vied with the athletes of Milton and McKinley Schools. It was an occasion of mutual benefit. The regular work in dumb-bell, wand, and Indian club drill was shown at an out-of-door meeting of the parent-teacher association. All grades participated with song, drill, dance, recitation, spelling match, or debate. Then came the glorious moment when the parents treated the children to ice cream and cake, and presented a printing set to the primary teacher.

The eighth-grade class exercises took place at Community House where the audience enjoyed "Little Women," a short play adapted from Miss Alcott's much-loved book, and the usual class history, prophecy and musical numbers.

The children feel that Vassar School is a pleasant place where friends meet and work together to accomplish something worth while.

HATTIE E. RICHARDSON,  
Principal.

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#### WEBSTER SCHOOL

In order to qualify the pupils for right living under existing social and industrial conditions, Webster School has work in oral

### MILTON - ROSEDALE SCHOOLS

This is a story of our yesterdays; a story of this portion of South Denver in earlier years, before the establishing of this school and of the Parent Teacher Association that now takes in both Milton and Rosedale. For our schools and Parent-Teacher organizers of yesterday were truly the Founders of our present group...

This was the land that echoed the war-cries of the Cheyennes and Arapahoes--the stampeding herds of buffalo--and sagas of famous plainsmen and trappers. Then came the gold-seekers,--and finally, pioneer settlers raised their cabins side by side with Indian tepees. It was at the same time when the United States east of here were embroiled in the beginning of a Civil War, that the young city of Denver emerged from the combination of two colonies, Auraria and St. Charles. In 1859 there was one school here with thirteen pupils and a teacher. (Let's take just a moment to bridge that gap of years to the present of 1945; eighty-six years have passed, and today's enrollment figure for Denver's public schools is 67,800.)

There are those among us who have grown from childhood, raised their families, and welcomed their children's children--in this neighborhood. They remember the great sweep of prairie between the houses that are now landmarked among snug, modern bungalows; They remember the artesian well at South Broadway and Warren, where the community flocked for its water supply; and the Cherrellyn horse-car that operated in Englewood until comparatively recent years--that unique conveyance which gave its faithful servant a ride downhill on the return trip! Thirty-five years ago there were few sidewalks; no street grading; no gas; no sewer; and electricity could be had only by bearing the expense of one's own individual line, poles and all. The tract now occupied by Rosedale Park had been the old Patridge farm; but, already, property owners were paying a tax for the purpose of developing the tract between Illiff and Harvard as a city park. From Bannock Street to the railroad tracks stretched a wheat field, unbroken except by a house or two.

School District Number 7 had been a scattered country district, dating from pre-railroad days, with its own Board of Education. When South Denver was annexed by the growing city, in 1894, District Number 7 became a part of the school system which in thirty-five years had grown from the first log-cabin schoolhouse near the banks of the Platte. This district at first extended from Mississippi Avenue to Dartmouth Avenue (now in Englewood), and from the Platte River to University Boulevard. It comprised the old Fleming School, Built in 1885 at South Grant and Colorado Avenue (later replaced by Thatcher School); The Grant building which then housed the South Denver High School; and our own schools, Milton and Vassar.

Vassar School is reported as having been built in 1892 or 94. It was situated on Vassar Avenue between South Lincoln and Sherman Streets. It was the typical old-fashioned school; two stories; two rooms on each floor; the long rickety stairway; and heated by stoves. Miss Fanny Richardson was teaching-principal. Miss Ada B. Gibbs and Mrs. Margaret Ogden were teachers, and Mr. Lewis Kees was custodian. Among the principals who followed, are these names that are well-known to many of us here: Miss Emma Brown, Miss Adele McClure, Mr. Lewis Strueland, Miss Elizabeth Walsh, Miss Hattie Richardson, Mrs. Lila O'Boyle. Miss Ethel Holmes was one of the teachers.

Today the passer-by will see a modern row of stuccoed bungalows in that block; a closer look will reveal some of the very bricks of the old school in the construction of near-by houses. Likewise, the old sidewalk of sandstone slabs and the original sandstone coping that once surrounded the school yard, and still there.

Milton School was built in 1894 on "Myrtle Avenue", the historian says, "between South 14th Street and Evans Avenue". "Myrtle Avenue" is now Bannock, and the Milton is still there, apparently not greatly changed. It is noteworthy, that the pail-and-dipper era of refreshing thirsty children had passed when the Vassar and Milton Schools were built. Vassar even boasted a marble-topped washbowl and had running water to each floor.

Through long ago, as these beginnings may seem, women in Colorado, in 1893, had been granted equal suffrage--twenty-seven years before the Federal government made woman suffrage nation-wide. In 1897, three years after the foundings of Milton and Vassar, two women whose names were to become revered whenever parents met together--Mrs. Theodore Birney and Mrs. Phoebe Hearst (the publisher's mother),--called a Congress of Mothers in far-off Washington, D. C.. They hoped for an attendance of fifty and attracted a thousand! (One mother brought her seven children in order that she might attend. Thus, our South Denver Schools have grown up together and thru the same period of time with the organization which has brought parents and teachers together as consultants in the building of youthful character. The Spanish-American War was fought and a new century had begun when the National Congress of Mothers was incorporated; and in 1902, the first National Convention launched its activities in earnest. The Denver Circle of National Congress of Mothers was organized in 1905, and the Colorado State Congress, in 1907.

Denver was at first in Arapahoe County. When the City and County of Denver incorporated, Englewood was also organized, and thereafter, educated its own children.

We learn from an historian of 1901 that the people who object to streamlining and "frills" in the school curriculum are not a modern problem. Smiley's History of Denver pauses in its narrative of the city's growth to defend vigorously such innovations as kindergarten and manual training, and quoted a part of Superintendent Gov's annual report of 1899 which dealt with that matter. The most severe criticisms of these additions to the curriculum, as he pointed out, came from those who did not understand the running of the schools. Our teachers inform us that Vassar and Milton had kindergartens very early and they were exceptionally well supported in this section.

The Parent-Teacher Associations at Milton and Vassar Schools must have been organized somewhere near the same time, as early presidents of each, estimate this event as having fallen about 1914. Each was a unit of the County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations from the first. Fairly early in the history of these organizations, property owners from around both schools held joint meetings, trying to hit upon a location for a desired new building which should be agreeable to both groups.

We believe Mrs. Simpson to have been the first P. T. A. president at Vassar. Mrs. Fishel, who followed her, and is the mother of our Mrs. Staats, tells of officers being sent to attend the county meetings in the auditorium of the old A. T. Lewis Dry Goods Store, and to bring back reports,--where at they were laughingly called "tale-bearers". However, the Association was most active and held an important place in community life. The late Mrs. T. C. Koogle, who followed Mrs. Fishel in the presidency (and whose daughter, Dorothy, grew up to be a P. T. A. president of our own), had an opportunity to compare parent-school relationships before and after the advent of P. T. A. She observed that the Association made for much better appreciation between homes and school; better behavior on the part of the children; and a finer community spirit all around.

Lacking competition from movies and radio, the school entertainments, the bazars and cooked food sales, were, to us, amazingly successful for a small scattered community. Later there was war work, Mrs. Koogle, having finished her long and eventful term of office, became active in the leadership of Liberty Bond drives; and Mrs. Largen, (now Mrs. Evans), began an active term fraught with problems of its own. The P. T. A. thru the children salvaged scarce materials, such as tinfoil, Mothers did Red Cross work and served on bond drives. There were meatless days, food substitutes, sugar rationing--Yes, we "vets" of that period can face 1945 with the confidence of experience!

When mothers were found to be staying away from meetings in those days of strict economy and high prices, because they did not feel well-dressed--Mrs. Largen made herself a housedress of bleached flour sacks, trimmed attractively in color, and, this attired, made a round of calls. Result? Everyone, then wore a house dress to P. T. A. and no one felt out of place. The Association also voted to abolish the ten-cent dues as being too hard for all to meet.

The principal at Milton when the P. T. A. was organized there, was Miss Doble who had come here from Boston, bringing with her a fine feeling for human values and an appreciation of new methods in club work. She invited Mrs. Florence Dick, now known as the Mother of Colorado P. T. A., to address the mothers at Milton school; and from that meeting sprang the association at Milton. That organization was progressing and working actively by the time of the World War; but before that time it was challenged by a serious human problem.

We are told that a large cotton mill used to stand near the present location of the wheel works on West Evans. This mill was planned by workers brought in from the South. They had their own community, even to stores and church, clustered around the mill. The owners ran the plant on humanitarian principles, paid very well, and took a personal interest in their employees welfare. Unfortunately, the high scale of wages and the expense of transporting cotton from the South seems to have overtaxed the owners' resources, so that they were forced to cease operations. When the mill closed its personnel faced an unusually hard winter in a climate whose winters, to them, were severe at best. They were trained for only the one occupation, and were without money for a return to the Southland. Their plight, called forth all the helpfulness and generosity of the P. T. A. workers. Two Associations worked along with two aid societies, to tide

the mill workers thru a period of adjustment and job-hunting.

The children's Bureau, which was to undertake a tremendous program of child and maternal welfare, had already been active for some years in studying the conditions of child life throughout the country and the needs of children. With the end of the War came new visions of world peace; and parents of small children confidently hoped that their little ones' maturity might find war outlawed for all time. True, the period of readjustment after the war, with its excitement and unrest, brought on the "flapper" era and rumors of "flaming youth", which gave parents fresh grounds for concern.

At the same time, the efforts of parent groups were redoubled, and the P. T. A. generally swept on to new activity. Incidentally, the oak tree is said to have been adopted as the symbol of the Organization, in 1920. The pre-depression period called prosperous, was well under way when three changes in which we have a special interest took place. The National Congress of Mothers and Parent-Teacher Associations changed its name to the present one--The National Congress of Parents and Teachers. The present South Denver High School was completed and opened its doors, leaving the old building for a new institution, the Grant junior high school. And, third, and most to our purpose here, Rosedale School was opened, replacing Vassar.

The block of ground on which the Rosedale School was built, was bought from the estate of Thomas Fields who also woned and lived in the Stone House at the State Home. The city had an option on the land from Illiff Street to Harvard and from Grant to Sherman Streets, for a Park. But before the sale was closed, the school board, thru an agent, bought the block where the school was built. Rosedale was opened in September 1924, and formally dedicated in the following November,--although it was still unfinished inside. There were five class rooms and a Kindergarten. Originally, there was a nice, large auditorium with elevated platform in the south end of the first floor, but due to larger enrollment than anticipated, it was soon made into two classrooms. Mr. Keys, the custodian of Vassar came to Rosedale--serving thirty years, in all.

For a time the Rosedale and Milton P. T. A.'s continued on their separate ways, and Miss Keller, the principal, endeavored to attend the meetings of both. Before long they were persuaded to consolidate; and in this union, an old rivalry between Milton and Vassar was ended harmoniously. Within another year or so, Rosedale Park was laid out; the view from the eastern windows of the school had embraced an old apple orchard and a huddle of antiquated farm buildings. The gnarled apple trees still stand in the park to perfume each new spring with their blossoms and speak of older times to all of us.

Following, are a few dated hi-lights on the activity of the Milton-Rosedale P. T. A. taken from its records of the 1920's:

1924--The P. T. A. purchased a drinking-fountain for the first floor of Rosedale.

1926--Money was given the Kindergarten for purchase of Rhythm Band Musical instruments. (This same year, the sidewalks were completed around Rosedale.)

1927-28--The Pre-School group was organized with sixty-three mothers and seventy-six children enrolled.

1928-29--From a newspaper clipping of that year, we read:

"H. S. Phillips, principal of Aron Grove Junior High School said in his opening remarks to the Milton-Rosedale P. T. A., that it was the first P. T. A. he had ever attended where parents had to be turned away because there was not room enough for them."!!  
During this same term, the Summer Playground with a Supervisor, was obtained for this school by the P. T. A.

During the last fifteen years, the Milton-Rosedale Organization has greatly increased its interests and activities by keeping apace and in close contact with County, State and National Organizations. Some valuable equipment had been provided for both educational and recreational purposes, such as: a movie-projector; two radios; a supplementary library to fit all grades; and a duplicating machine.

This, then is the story of our yesterdays. The Milton-Rosedale Parent-Teacher Association, its achievements, and the growth of pre-school, all are of to-day. Its present activities occupy much of our time and thought; with its past activities, most of us are familiar. But for a little while we have looked lovingly back even farther into the past to think of the parents and the teachers of the earlier Milton and Vassar Schools---  
our Founders.

It is fitting that, at this time we rededicate ourselves to the cause for which they strived. It is a challenge, that we shall meet in the future.

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"Brief Histories of the Denver Public Schools: Compiled for the  
Administrative Offices of the Denver Public Schools"

1952 pp. 292-296

Denver Public Library, Western History / Genealogy Dept.

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