

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council



STAFF

Paul Sizemore, Director, Community Development & Neighborhood Services
Maren Bzdek, Manager, Historic Preservation Services
Jim Bertolini, Senior Historic Preservation Planner
Heather N. Jarvis, Legal

SUBJECT

First Reading of Ordinance No. 091, 2023, Amending the Boundary of the Fort Collins Historic Landmark at 401 Smith Street, the Loomis-Jones Property, Pursuant to Chapter 14 of the Code of the City of Fort Collins.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The property owners of 401 Smith Street, a City landmark designated in 2008, are seeking a modification to the landmark boundary as listed in the designation ordinance to allow for subdivision of the property and construction of an additional home. After review and consideration of the proposal, the Historic Preservation Commission recommended approval of the boundary change at their April 19, 2023, hearing. Municipal Code 14-35 requires City Council action within seventy-five days of this recommendation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of the Ordinance on First Reading.

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

City Council designated the Loomis-Jones House at 401 Smith Street (ordinance attached) as a City Landmark on December 2, 2008, under City Landmark Standards 1 - Events/Trends and 3 - Design/Construction. Under Standard 1, the property was considered significant as one of the oldest frame residences in Fort Collins (with a construction year of 1872) and for likely association with Abner Loomis, an important and influential early resident, developer, and business owner in Fort Collins. Under Standard 3, the property was considered important as a rare surviving example of the "Vernacular Architectural Style of the late 19th and early 20th centuries." To add to that generic description, the property appears to be a Cross Wing type house with more generic Victorian detailing, and it is possible that it was originally built as a Temple Form without its side (south) addition.¹

The proposed project would re-subdivide the property currently addressed as 401 Smith Street into separate parcels addressed as 401 and 405 Smith Street and create a new subdivision with a third lot and parcel at its northeast corner, largely comprising the rear half of the 401 Smith Street property. The primary purpose of the subdivision is to allow a third lot with enough size to accommodate a new, detached, single-

¹ Utah State Division of History, *Utah's Historic Architecture Guide*, 2018, https://issuu.com/utah10/docs/architectural_guide_booklet, pp20-23.

family dwelling. Notes have been added to the proposed subdivision plat detailing historic preservation requirements regarding setbacks and height for the new lot, and the height restrictions have been included as a clause in the Ordinance for adoption to change the boundary.

CITY FINANCIAL IMPACTS

Historic Preservation staff does not have any records of any historic preservation loans or grants made based on the originally designated property. Therefore, no amendments are needed to any grant or loan agreements. Additionally, the current owners acquired the property on February 13, 2023, and a requirement of the transfer of ownership would have been to satisfy any liens, had there been any, at or before the time of transfer.

BOARD / COMMISSION / COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

At their April 19, 2023, regular meeting the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) determined that amending the landmark designation would support the City's historic preservation policies in Municipal Code 14-1 and purposes in 14-2 and would not result in a negative effect to the historic property based on its significance, period of significance, and character-defining features. HPC members inquired about the nature of possible new construction, but noting the requirements that would be recorded on the subdivision plat regarding height of construction on the new Lot 3, there was consensus that the rear of the lot was not critical to conveying the Loomis-Jones House's historic significance, and that the presence of a new single-family residence in that location would not have an adverse effect on the landmark. The HPC adopted a resolution (7-0, 1 absent, 1 vacancy) recommending Council adopt an ordinance modifying the landmark boundary to accommodate the subdivision.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Public outreach included the Historic Preservation Commission meeting on April 19, 2023, which was properly noticed, including posting of a sign at the property.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Ordinance for Consideration
2. Historic Preservation Commission, Resolution 3, 2023
3. Historic Preservation Commission Minutes, April 19, 2023 (Excerpt)
4. 2008 Landmark Ordinance for the Property
5. 2008 Landmark Nomination for the Property