



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
Planning and Economic Development Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Bruce K. Walden, CAO

FROM: Rob Kowalski, Senior Planner

DATE: November 1, 2001

SUBJECT: Case HP-01-HDD-1, Request for designation of the “Joseph Royer Historic District” consisting of 801 W. Oregon Avenue and 701 S. Busey Avenue.

Introduction

The Preservation and Conservation Association (PACA) has submitted an application for a historic district for the properties of 801 W. Oregon Avenue and 701 S. Busey Avenue. 801 W. Oregon was the original residence of Joseph Royer, a prominent Urbana architect. 701 S. Busey Avenue was originally built by Royer as a “mother-in-law” cottage subsequent to the construction of the primary residence. Today, the two structures are situated on two separate parcels and are owned by different interests.

On October 29, 2001, the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission held a public hearing to consider the matter. After testimony and discussion, the Commission voted 5-0 with one abstention to recommend approval of the proposed district to the Urbana City Council. This memorandum will give a brief overview of the proposal, background on ownership and their support/opposition for the district, and the motion by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Background

The Structures

For complete details about the architectural and historical features of the structures, please refer to the Historic Preservation Commission Memorandum prepared on October 23, 2001.

801 W. Oregon Avenue

The structure at 801 W. Oregon Avenue was designed and built by Joseph Royer in 1905. The house was built in the Mission style of architecture with an Arts and Crafts influence. The Mission style is unique to the area of the country and more typically found out west in California or parts of the southwestern United States. It is believed that Royer was inspired to construct the

home after seeing a similar type of structure at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis called the "California Building". The home was built of a brick foundation, finished in stucco and covered with a clay tile roof. The home contains an arched doorway on the prominent northward facing bay. Above the entrance is a balcony sheltered by a hip roof also finished with clay tile. The north side of the home features a concrete terrace which extends eastward to an elaborate pergola. The rear of the home contains a kitchen wing in which the first floor is original construction and finished in stucco. The second story was added in 1968 and contains a more modern wood siding. The property shares a gravel driveway off of Busey Avenue with 701 S. Busey Avenue to the south. Joseph Royer and his wife Adelaide finished construction of the home in 1906 and lived there until their deaths in early 1950s.

Today the home is structurally sound although there is evidence of minor deterioration of parts of the structure due primarily to water. There are a number of window sills, fascia boards and eaves that have rotted over the years. This past June, an electrical fire in the attic forced firefighters to open a section of the roof in order to vent smoke. This caused damage to many of the clay tiles. Currently, an approximately 50 square foot area of the roof is boarded-up and in need of repair.

701 S. Busey Avenue

The structure at 701 S. Busey Avenue was also designed and built by Joseph Royer. Royer built the home in 1923 as a "mother-in-law" cottage for his mother-in-law Ella Danley. The structure is often referred to at the "Danley Cottage" or the "Fairy House". The home was designed in the English Revival style of architecture and relates to 801 W. Oregon in the fact that it is also finished with stucco siding. The most prominent feature of the home is the arched, eyebrow entrance way and the chimney finished in stucco with randomly placed fieldstones. Today, the structure is in exceptional condition and well cared for.

Joseph Royer

Joseph Royer is Urbana's most noted and recognized architect. Royer was an Urbana native and graduated from the University of Illinois in 1895 with a degree in civil engineering. He worked as the Urbana City Engineer from 1898 to 1906. During the time, Royer designed the historic Champaign County Courthouse and Sheriff's Residence and Jail. In 1905 he formed his own firm and went on to design other well known Urbana landmarks such as Urbana High School (1914), Urbana Lincoln Hotel (1924), Urbana Christian Church (1910), Urbana Free Library (1918), Alpha Rho Chi Chapter House (1927), Urbana Flat Iron Building (1906), and the Urbana Country Club (1922) among others. Royer finished construction of the house at 801 W. Oregon Avenue in 1905 and resided there with his wife Adelaide. He finished construction of the Ella Danely Cottage in 1923. Adelaide's mother resided in the home until her death in 1953. Royer continued to live at 801 W. Oregon Avenue and have a successful architectural firm in Urbana until his death in 1954.

Discussion

Ownership & Support

801 W. Oregon Avenue has been owned by the Theta Club since 1969. The Theta Club is a private, non-profit organization that has used the home primarily as a fraternity for veterinary medicine students at the University of Illinois. Since the fire in June, the home has been vacant and the Theta Club has put it on the market for sale. The Theta Club does not support the historic district nomination and has submitted a protest form against the request. They indicate that historic district status places uncertainty of how the home can be repaired and maintained and that potential buyers are hesitant to purchase the home unless they can accurately assess how the home, including the roof, will have to be repaired.

701 S. Busey Avenue is privately owned and occupied by Ann Wymore. Ms. Wymore has lived at the residence for the past seven years. She has submitted a registered preference supporting the inclusion of her property into the proposed district.

The Historic Preservation Ordinance specifies that if greater than forty percent of the property owners within the proposed district protest the designation request, a two-thirds vote of the Urbana City Council is required to designate the district. In this case, fifty percent of the owners object thus forcing a super-majority vote.

Historic Preservation Commission Hearing / October 29, 2001

Although the proposed district is small and only contains two structures, the applicant stressed that the two structures significantly relate to each other and should be considered as one district rather than two separate landmarks. On October 29, 2001 the Historic Preservation Commission concurred and unanimously voted in favor of the proposed district. The Historic Preservation Ordinance outlines three main criteria for the Commission to use in considering a proposed district. It is required that the Commission conclude that the nomination meet at least one of the three criteria. These criteria include:

Historic District Criteria:

1. A significant number of buildings, structures, sites or objects meeting any of the standards in Section XII-5-C-1.
2. An area containing a contiguous grouping of properties having a sense of cohesiveness expressed through a style, period or method of construction.
3. An area of sufficient historical integrity to convey a sense of historical time and place.

The standards of Section XII-5-C-1 are as follows:

1. Landmark Criteria. A proposed landmark must meet one or more of the following criteria for designation:
 - a. Significant value as part of the architectural, artistic, civic, cultural, economic, educational, ethnic, political or social heritage of the nation, state, or community.
 - b. Associated with an important person or event in national, state or local history.
 - c. Representative of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, craftsmanship, method of construction or use of indigenous materials and which retains a high degree of integrity.
 - d. Notable work of a master builder, designer, architect or artist whose individual genius has influenced an area.
 - e. Identifiable as an established and familiar visual feature in the community owing to its unique location or physical characteristics.
 - f. Character as a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian structure, including, but not limited to, farmhouses, gas stations or other commercial structures with a high level or integrity or architectural significance.
 - g. Located in an area that has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

The Commission supported the staff findings and moved that the request meets all three of the criteria for a historic district and also that the request satisfies “a” through “e” of subset for criteria #1.

Options

The Urbana City Council has the following options. In Case HP-01-HDD-1, the Council may:

- a. Approve the request for the proposed “Joseph Royer Historic District”
- b. Deny the request for the proposed “Joseph Royer Historic District”
- c. Request additional information not presented at the Historic Preservation Commission public hearing on October 29, 2001

Staff Recommendation

Based on the summary of staff findings articulated in the staff report to the Historic Preservation Commission dated October 23, 2001 and the summary of the findings of the Historic Preservation Commission at the October 29, 2001 public hearing, staff recommends that the Urbana City Council approve the proposed "Joseph Royer Historic District" as presented in Plan Case HP-01-HDD-1.

Attachments: Additional Photos
 October 29, 2001 Historic Preservation Commission public hearing minutes
 Ordinance

c: Karen Kummer, PACA
 Dr. Linda Berent, The Theta Club
 Ann Wymore, 701 S. Busey Avenue

Additional Photos



North Façade



North Entryway



East & South legs of L-Plan





Kitchen & Addition





701 S. Busey East Façade



Entryway with stucco and stone chimney



North Façade of 701 S. Busey



ORDINANCE NO. 2001-11-141

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE DESIGNATION OF THE "JOSEPH ROYER HISTORIC DISTRICT" UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE URBANA HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE.

(for parcels located at 801 W. Oregon Avenue and 701 S. Busey Avenue - Plan Case HP-01-HDD-1)

WHEREAS, the Preservation and Conservation Association (commonly referred to as PACA) has submitted a nomination for a historic district pursuant to the Urbana Historic Preservation Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the district nomination is commonly referred to as the "Joseph Royer Historic District" and contains the properties of 801 W. Oregon Avenue and 701 S. Busey Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the owners of the subject properties as well as the petitioner have been duly notified of the nomination and each have registered a preference related to the nomination; and

WHEREAS, the owner of 801 W. Oregon Avenue has submitted a registered preference form protesting the nomination and the

owner of 701 S. Busey Avenue has submitted a registered preference form consenting to the nomination; and

WHEREAS, after due publication and notice to all parties as is required under the Historic Preservation Ordinance, a public hearing was held by the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission on October 29, 2001 concerning the historic district nomination; and

WHEREAS, following the public hearing, the Historic Preservation Commission voted to approve historic district designation for the subject parcels by a vote of 5 ayes, 0 nays, and 1 abstention, and made a written recommendation accompanied by a report summarizing the evidence presented at the hearing, with an explanation of its recommendation, which said recommendation and attachments was forwarded to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission evaluated the designated criteria as documented in the Historic Preservation Ordinance and made the following findings of fact for designation of the Joseph Royer Historic District:

1. The Joseph Royer Historic District contains a significant number of buildings, structures, sites or objects meeting the standards as follows:

- a. The Joseph Royer Historic District is a significant value as part of the architectural heritage of the community.
- b. The Joseph Royer Historic District is associated with an important person in local history.
- c. The Joseph Royer Historic District is representative of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, craftsmanship, method of construction or use of indigenous materials and which retains a high degree of integrity.
- d. The Joseph Royer Historic District represents the notable work of a master builder, designer, architect or artist whose individual genius has influenced an area.
- e. The Joseph Royer Historic District is identifiable as an established and familiar visual feature in the community owing to its unique location or physical characteristics.

2. The Joseph Royer Historic District is an area containing a contiguous grouping of properties having a sense of

cohesiveness expressed through a style, period or method of construction.

3. The Joseph Royer Historic District is an area of sufficient historical integrity to convey a sense of historical time and place.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF URBANA, ILLINOIS, THAT,

Section 1: The Urbana City Council hereby adopts the findings of the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission presented above and hereby determines that the subject nomination for 801 W. Oregon Avenue and 701 S. Busey Avenue is hereby designated as a historic district, pursuant to the Urbana Historic Preservation Ordinance.

Section 2. The City Clerk is directed to publish this Ordinance in pamphlet form by authority of the corporate authorities. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication in accordance with the terms of Chapter 65, Section 1-2-4 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes (65 ILCS 5/1-2-4).

PASSED by the City Council this _____ day of _____, _____.

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSTAINS:

Phyllis D. Clark, City Clerk

APPROVED by the Mayor this _____ day of

_____, _____.

Tod Satterthwaite, Mayor

CERTIFICATE OF PUBLICATION IN PAMPHLET FORM

I, Phyllis D. Clark, certify that I am the duly elected and acting Municipal Clerk of the City of Urbana, Champaign County, Illinois.

I certify that on the _____ day of _____, 2001, the corporate authorities of the City of Urbana passed and approved Ordinance No. _____, entitled "AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE DESIGNATION OF THE "JOSEPH ROYER HISTORIC DISTRICT" UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE URBANA HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE. (for parcels located at 801 W. Oregon Avenue and 701 S. Busey Avenue - Plan Case HP-01-HDD-1)" which provided by its terms that it should be published in pamphlet form. The pamphlet form of Ordinance No. _____ was prepared, and a copy of such Ordinance was posted in the Urbana City Building commencing on the _____ day of _____, 2001, and continuing for at least ten (10) days thereafter. Copies of such Ordinance were also available for public inspection upon request at the Office of the City Clerk.

DATED at Urbana, Illinois, this _____ day of _____, 2001.