



King County

Department of Natural Resources and Parks

Historic Preservation Program

201 S. Jackson, Suite 700 [MS: KSC-NR-0700]

Seattle, WA 98104

206.296.8689 (v) 206.296.3749 (f)

www.kingcounty.gov/landmarks

CITY OF KENT LANDMARKS COMMISSION

FINDINGS OF FACT AND DECISION

Mill Creek Historic District

SUMMARY

The City of Kent Landmarks Commission (commission) unanimously voted to designate the Mill Creek Historic District (district) as a City of Kent Landmark on November 20, 2014.

Property Description: Block 1, Lots 9-13; Block 3; Block 4, Lots 1-24 of Clark's First Addition to Kent; and Block 2, Lots 7-8; Block 3; Block 4, Lots 7-12 of Clark's Second Addition to Kent; and legal parcels 1612500314, 1922059035, 1922059135, 1922059155, 1922059139, 1922059138, 1922059144, 1922059140, 1922059344, 1922059116, 1922059124, 1922059106, 1922059105, 1598600130, 1598600120, 1598600110, and including all bounding roads and alleys to their centerlines. See attached map.

BACKGROUND

The Mill Creek Historic District landmark registration form was prepared by Mimi Sheridan, a preservation consultant, under the direction of the Mill Creek Neighborhood Council (Council), and Todd Scott, King County Preservation Architect. Members of the Council conducted extensive research and prepared the initial draft of the registration form. The nominated area, located east of downtown Kent on the edge of East Hill, consists of approximately five blocks of historic single family houses which constitute a subarea of the larger Mill Creek Neighborhood.

The district was originally identified as potentially eligible for landmark designation in 2007 following an historic resource survey of the city. During this period Mill Creek residents undertook efforts to formally recognize the neighborhood and in 2007 the City established the Mill Creek Neighborhood Council. Between 2009 and 2012, the Council undertook a campaign to preserve and enhance the history of the neighborhood. In June 2014, the Council sought the approval of the City Council to nominate the district as a City of Kent Landmark. The City Council unanimously recommended nominating the district for consideration by the Landmarks Commission. A completed nomination application was submitted to the Landmarks Commission in September 2014.

Public Hearing: The commission held a public hearing on nomination of the Mill Creek Historic District on November 20, 2014, at the Kent Senior Activity Center, 600 E. Smith Street, Kent, Washington. The landmark registration form, a boundary map delineating the boundaries of the nominated district, and a list of property owners in the proposed district were submitted to commissioners prior to the meeting. Immediately preceding the hearing commissioners toured the district.

At the hearing a staff report/recommendation was submitted to the commission followed by a PowerPoint presentation that summarized staff's recommendation. In addition, the following corrections/additions to property descriptions in the landmark registration form, received from Sharon Bersaas, were read into the record:

1. 436 Jason Ave N - change siding material from metal to original wood siding
2. 429 Jason Ave N - add that the metal siding has been removed
3. 410 Prospect Ave N - change historic name to the Andrew Sandwick House
4. 617 E Temperance St - add that house was built by W.R. Murker in 1909 and that he served as mayor of Kent from 1927-30.

In addition, the commission asked staff to amend the landmark registration form to correct grammatical and formatting errors, and to rectify any discrepancies in dates.

Eleven people testified in favor of landmark designation generally citing that the neighborhood retained its historic character and designation would provide stability for the district and an opportunity to obtain grants for restoration work. Two people testified in opposition to designation citing a desire to avoid additional regulations, and stating the neighborhood was not the most significant historic area in Kent. Three people had concerns or questions about potential design guidelines for the district. Prior to the hearing two people submitted written testimony asking to be removed from the district.

FINDINGS

In support of its decision the commission found that although many of the houses have been altered to some degree the overall scale, massing, and orientation to the street of the majority of buildings remains intact. In addition, most houses retain original siding, fenestration patterns and primary entrances sufficient to convey a strong sense of historic character thus the district meets integrity criteria. The commission found that the district meets the age criterion of 40 years because the majority of houses in the district date to between 1903 and 1958. Further, the commission found that the district meets landmark designation criterion A3 because it contains a well-preserved concentration of historic dwellings that together reflect the physical evolution of domestic architecture in Kent during the first half of the 20th century. The following specific findings were made:

1. A landmark district is defined in KMC 14.12 as “*a geographic area that possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development...*”
2. The district consists primarily of portions of two early plats: most of the southern half of Clark’s First Addition and the central section of Clark’s Second Addition. William and Laura Clark filed the First Addition plat in April 1890; I.C. and Grace Clark and H.L. and Norma Clark filed the Second Addition plat in May 1907.
3. Buildings in the district are associated with three distinct periods of growth articulated in the landmark registration form. These include: Dairy Production Era (1890s -1920s); Truck Farming Era (1920s – 1940s); and, Industrialization Era (1950s – 1960s). The majority of houses, 28, were built during the era when the dairy industry was dominant, followed by the Truck Farming Era when 18 houses were built. Only eight houses date to the period of increasing industrialization during the 1950s and 60s.
4. The district’s *period of significance* extends from 1903, the date built of the oldest house in the district, to 1962, when the Howard A. Hanson Dam was completed. This event began the transformation of the White River Valley from agricultural use to large scale commercial/industrial uses.
5. Because of its proximity to downtown, many of Kent’s leading citizens built homes here, including numerous business owners and three mayors. Well-known early residents include Duffy Armstrong and Louis and Chuck Becvar, who along with a third Becvar brother operated the Kent Flying Service. Another prominent resident was Ward Rader, who bottled the popular Rader’s root beer.
6. The registration form identifies contributing and noncontributing properties. Contributing properties are those that were built during the historic period, remain in their original location, and possess sufficient integrity of design, materials, association, setting, and feeling to contribute to the historic character of the district. Contributing buildings are synonymous with “feature of significance” as defined in Kent Municipal Code (KMC) 14.12. Non-contributing properties are those built after the historic period and/or do not possess integrity sufficient to convey historic character. All contributing properties identified in the registration form are recommended as features of significance herein.
7. The district contains 60 properties of which 50 are contributing. Forty-eight of the contributing properties are houses; two are vacant lots. Ten properties are non-contributing due to age, relocation, or because they have been substantially altered and do not possess sufficient physical integrity; one of these serves as a parking lot. Regarding relocation of properties, one house, 721 E. Temperance St., was moved into the neighborhood during the

historic period and is therefore considered contributing; another, 432 Clark Ave N., was moved into the district after the historic period and is considered non-contributing.

8. A district can contain features that lack individual distinction as well as individually distinctive features that serve as focal points. A district may be considered eligible even if all of the components lack individual distinction, provided that the area as a whole conveys historic character. In either case, the majority of components that contribute to a district's historic character, even if they are individually undistinguished, must possess some degree of integrity. The district possesses integrity of:
 - Location, because most of the houses are located on their original sites;
 - Design, because the elements that characterize the district are largely intact including but not limited to, narrow streets oriented to the cardinal directions, building orientation and placement on the lot; original massing and roof configuration; porch configuration; exterior cladding; fenestration and associated sash;
 - Setting, because the surrounding area retains many houses constructed in the first half of the 20th century and retains its historic use as a residential neighborhood;
 - Materials, because the houses retain much of the original exterior material, including but not limited to, wood cladding (horizontal and vertical boards and shingles), brick veneer, and decorative wood trim. The significant changes to materials on the exterior are replacement of: wood shingle roofs with asphalt/composition shingles; some wood window sash with aluminum or vinyl sash; and original front doors;
 - Feeling, because overall the physical features of the district strongly convey the its historic character and use as a residential neighborhood; and
 - Association, because the district has a documented link to the historic context as described in the landmark registration form including association with three distinct periods of development in Kent and the larger White River Valley.
9. The landmark registration form provides additional contextual information supporting its eligibility for designation as a City of Kent landmark.
10. The district contains one City of Kent landmark, the Bereiter House, designated in 2008; it will be subject to the same design standards as those applied to the district.
11. Features of significance described herein are subject to the regulatory provisions contained in KMC 14.12.060 until such time as district-specific design standards are developed and adopted by the Commission. Section V of the Commission's Rules and Procedures provide for development of such standards.

MINUTES AND EXHIBITS

The following exhibits are part of the record:

1. City of Kent Landmark Registration Form, *Mill Creek Historic District* (October 2014)
2. Boundary Map
3. Email from Elizabeth Evans (October 23, 2014) asking to have her non-contributing property removed from the district.
4. Email from Barb Purcell (October 27, 2014) asking to have her contributing property removed from the district.
5. Email from Desiree Canter (November 20, 2014) expressing concerns about possible design guidelines and costs associated with designation.
6. Staff Report/Recommendation (November 20, 2014)
7. PowerPoint presentation (November 20, 2014)
5. Minutes of November 20, 2014 public hearing
6. Audio recording of November 20, 2014 public hearing

All exhibits are on file in the King County Historic Preservation Program office, 201 S. Jackson, Suite 700, Seattle, WA.

DECISION

At its November 20, 2014 meeting the City of Kent Landmarks Commission unanimously approved a motion to designate the Mill Creek Historic District as a City of Kent landmark based on the above findings.

Boundaries of Significance: Block 1, Lots 9-13; Block 3; Block 4, Lots 1-24 of Clark's First Addition to Kent; and Block 2, Lots 7-8; Block 3; Block 4, Lots 7-12 of Clark's Second Addition to Kent; and legal parcels 1612500314, 1922059035, 1922059135, 1922059155, 1922059139, 1922059138, 1922059144, 1922059140, 1922059344, 1922059116, 1922059124, 1922059106, 1922059105, 1598600130, 1598600120, 1598600110, and including all bounding roads and alleys to their centerlines. See attached map.

Features of Significance: All exterior portions of houses on contributing properties, and all open space, including but not limited to parking areas, street rights-of-way, and undeveloped portions of properties both contributing and non-contributing. More specifically these include the following components:

1. Buildings: Exterior siding; roof forms; porches; fenestration; orientation on lot
2. Roads and parking areas and particularly street width

3. Vacant and undeveloped land for all parcels within the district boundaries (reviewed for new construction only)

PROTECTION MEASURES

Controls: No feature of significance may be altered nor may any new construction take place within the designated boundaries, without first obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness from the City of Kent Landmarks Commission pursuant to the provisions of King County Code 20.62.080 as adopted by reference in Kent Municipal Code 14.12.060. The following exclusions are allowed:

1. In-kind maintenance and repair
2. Routine landscape maintenance
3. Emergency repair work

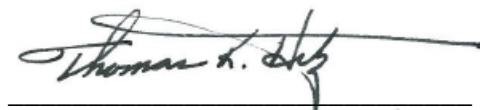
INCENTIVES

The following incentives are available to the property owners:

1. Eligibility to apply for funding for property rehabilitation/restoration through King County's cultural development authority *4Culture*
2. Eligibility for technical assistance from King County Landmarks Commission and staff
3. Eligibility for special tax programs through King County

Decision made November 20, 2014
Findings of Fact and Decision issued December 3, 2014

CITY OF KENT LANDMARKS COMMISSION



Thomas K. Hitzroth, Chair

December 3, 2014
Date

TRANSMITTED this 3rd day of December 2014 to the following parties and interested persons:

Terry Dreblow
Earl Fleming

Amy Peri
Sharon Bersaas

Michael Johnson
Sharon Franklin-Dudash
Lori Dru Fleming
Michael Lane
Mary Jacob
James McHugh
Mr. & Mrs. Derrick Dooley
Raymond Kozlowski
Maureen Vander Pas
Jack Sheaharb
Stacey Kroeze
Ruby Armstrong
Angela Schultz
Carolyn Clayton
Vern & Joan Schultz
Gregory Brown
Desiree Canter
Nancy Simpson
Robert & Jana Weber
Elizabeth Evans
Chris Morrison
Douglas Scharnhorst
Amy Derheim
Darrell & Lyndell Ehlers
John Lloyd & Joanne Ottini
Jack Mazickacki
Terry Pallas
Ngocdzung & Jason Smith
Gwen Meyers
Steve Frail
Darik Eaton
Rose & John Dunkel

Robin Curran
Carmela Tiangco & E Thormeyer
Robert & Kirst Richardson
Joung Sook Lim
Anthony Greco
Katherine Coyle & Ruiz Ma
Stephen & Melinda Schmeising
Cheryl & Lionel Forde
Anh Hoang & Paul Nguyen
John & Lacey M Bray
Ken & Sala Louie
Kimberly Portera
Lee & Susan Weise
Barbara Purcell
Shannon & Joshua Dierks
City Of Kent
Efren Diaz & Luz Palacios
Jennifer Hickey
Carla Janes
Laura Jean Gorder
Robert & Vickie Pringle
Gregg Merryman
Clint & Sarah Gossett
Paul & Holly Seim
Barbara McMichael
Cheri Sayer
Greg & Laura Gorders
Dan Ulrey
Sandy Ulrey
Erik Pfaff
Grant Weasner

NOTICE OF RIGHT TO APPEAL

Appeal. A party of record aggrieved by a decision of the commission designating or rejecting a nomination for designation of a landmark, may, within fourteen (14) calendar days of mailing of notice of such decision, appeal such decision in writing to the hearing examiner. The written notice of appeal shall be filed with the historic preservation officer and the city clerk. The written notice of appeal shall be accompanied by a statement that includes the items required in Kent City Code [12.01.195\(E\)](#) for similar closed record appeals. The appeal to the hearing examiner shall be a “closed record appeal,” as that term is used in Ch. [12.01](#) KCC. If, after the closed record appeal hearing, the hearing examiner determines: 1) An error in fact was made by the commission, the hearing examiner shall remand the proceeding to the commission for reconsideration; or 2) The decision of the commission is based on an error in judgment or conclusion, the hearing examiner may modify or reverse the decision of the commission. The hearing examiner’s final decision shall include findings of fact and conclusions from the record which support the decision. The hearing examiner may adopt all or portions of the commission’s findings and conclusions. The decision of the hearing examiner shall be final unless within twenty-one (21) calendar days from the date of issuance of the decision an appeal is filed in King County superior court. (Ord. No. 3809, § 1, 9-5-06)