

David Babbitt Home

CITY OF FLAGSTAFF HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Phase -2 Cultural Resource Review, HABS Format
PZ-19-00031-01
Address: 319 N Beaver St

DATE: January 12th, 2021
MEETING DATE: January 20th, 2020
REPORT BY: Mark Reavis, AICP, NCARB

BACKGROUND

As included in the HPC application the following description of the proposed project was provided. The applicant proposes to demolish the residential structure commonly known as the David Babbitt home as well as the adjacent school for the construction of the proposed project stated as follows:

The project known as San Francisco Square sits on approximately 2.064 acres of land in downtown Flagstaff, Arizona. The site is currently improved with an existing 25,000 square foot elementary school as well as a 1,500 square foot 3-story residential home. The site is not currently in use, but was formerly occupied by the San Francisco de Asis Catholic School and Catholic Renewal Center. The school closed in December 2016. The school structure will be demolished and developed separately as senior and workforce housing in two phases over two years. Phase I, the senior project will consist of a 70-unit apartment with structured or podium parking and will be well positioned near a number of amenities and services appropriate for seniors. San Francisco Square will serve seniors age 62 years and older at 40%, 50% and 60% of Area Median Income. The project will include 60 one-bedroom and 10 2-bedroom apartments. The one-bedroom units are approximately 700 square feet and the two-bedroom units are 900 square feet. Green features include low water plumbing fixtures, Energy Star appliances, lighting, fixtures, and mechanical equipment, low emissions wood solids and finishing materials and recycled materials in roofing and insulation. The multi-story building will include a lobby, administrative offices and community room with kitchen. It will focus on sustainability and will incorporate high R-value wall and roof systems that will save energy while providing a comfortable environment for the occupant's appliances, light fixtures and windows will be Energy Star® rated. Water efficiency will be accomplished with the use of low flow fixtures. Phase II Workspace Housing to be developed in 2021.

The Heritage Preservation Officer (HPO) was told by the developer that the project did not intend to preserve the home and intended to demolish the structure. As such, the HPO in consultation with the selected Cultural Resource Consultant determined that a Historic American Building Survey was the most appropriate report form for the recordation for the home. The HABS format does meet substantially the requirements of a Phase 2 Cultural Resource Study. The HABS report describes the significance of the property as follows:

The David Babbitt House is representative of an early twentieth century residence, home to one of Flagstaff's most prominent and savvy entrepreneurs. It was initially constructed as a local adaptation of the Queen Anne tradition in 1886. Subsequent renovations by 1901 stayed true to this style, but later

alterations incorporated Craftsman-influenced elements between 1910 and 1916. It is significant as a contributing component of the North End Historic Residential District (listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1986) under Criterion A for its association with the early settlement and development of Flagstaff, as well as its leading industries. It is also significant under Criterion B for its association with David Babbitt as a locally important person. Lastly, the property is also significant under Criterion C as a representation of the transition between architectural trends (the Queen Anne style of the late nineteenth century and the Craftsman style of the early twentieth century).

PREVIOUS HP DECISIONS

This property has not been previously evaluated beyond inclusion in the North End Historic District or had related Heritage Preservation determinations regarding its disposition.

REQUEST

This is a request to review the Phase 2 Cultural Resource Study to be accepted as same in a Historic American Building Survey format. The study is for a residential property commonly known as the David Babbitt home, located at 319 N Beaver Street, Flagstaff Arizona. The report was prepared by **SWCA Environmental Consulting**, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001. The report for the David Babbitt House at 319 North Beaver Street was prepared as part of a project to document the historic property with a Phase 2 Cultural Resource Study. SWCA Architectural Historian Annie J. Lutes was principal author of the report. The property owner is: FSL Holdings, 1201E. Thomas Rd. Phoenix AZ 85014, Stephen L. Hastings Director of FSL RES 602.285.1800 shastings@fsl.org. The application and report indicate a request for total demolition of the Babbitt home with no additional actions or mitigation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

HPC REVIEW: Staff asks that the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) review the HABS report, the supplemental appendix photo documentation, and the measured drawings and become familiar with the documentation in its entirety. The Phase 2 HABS Report is extensive and comprehensive regarding its documentation and recordation of the property noting local significance. The Commission review will need to determine if the report is sufficient to move forward with the development of the site and the requested demolition of the home. The Heritage Preservation Commission has the sole authority to approve the report with consideration of the Secretary of the Interior Standards for evaluating historic properties and local provisions. The HPC is to listen to the consultant's presentation of the report and their conclusions. The HPC may ask the consultant any relevant questions regarding their determinations made in the report.

Recommendation:

Accept the Phase 2 HABS format Cultural Resource Study as substantially complete recommending approval with the conditions of completing an addendum to the report that covers a determination of State and potential National significance with the addendum product monitored for compliance and completeness by the HPO. The addendum is to include additional evaluation of interior integrity tied to and not overshadowed by the home's exterior changes. *NOTE: Additional research will require access to archival records not currently available with Covid restrictions, completion of the addendum is due no later than January 2, 2022.*

Staff recommends that the HPC request that the report clarify and expand upon a determination of the

Babbitt Home's historic significance on a Local, State and Federal level.

- That the HABS report provides the additional research and documentation regarding Local, State and Federal significance with its preparation that is substantial in scope and meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the loss of a significant historic resource.
- That the HABS report's criterion of significance are noted only on a local level; and that the criterion evaluation shall be extended to include State significance as well as a determination of National significance of the Interior. Criterion A association with National early settlement and development in the west and Criterion B with its association with David Babbitt whose influence had direct impact on the development of major industries in northern Arizona with links to National aspects of the development of land and expansion of a major transportation corridor.
- That the HABS report fully evaluate the home's integrity regarding its significant interior aspects, their design and installation of features, surfaces, trim, materials and their workmanship. Evaluation of the home under Criterion C should not be limited to the evaluation of the integrity of the exterior. The property retains historic character-defining elements on the interior that demonstrate the aspect of "Feeling" and the lifestyle of those in the home.
- That the report shall also refer to the Flagstaff's determination of significance (10-30.30.050 Cultural Resources (5 required recommendation by report preparer) B. Determination of significance, 1. A Cultural Resource is significant a-e) noting similarities with the Federal determination of significance.
- That the report provides additional consideration of the contributions of David Babbitt, his wife and children with David the eldest who headed the various family endeavors with his brothers their wives and offspring that extended far reaching impacts for more than a century to the region, state, and with national implications.

Staff recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) determine if the HABS recordation provided is sufficient to fully document the historic David Babbitt Home. The HPC shall take into consideration their tour of the home in this determination of additional recordation.

- Staff recommends that additional photo recordation take place per HPC recommendations. Provide additional high-quality (large format Black & white) photo documentation (clean debris) prior to relocation or salvage or demolition of home for the exterior and interior.
- Provide floor plans in addition to the current measured drawings that indicate and link the Figure numbers with a directional pointer to the photos view. Plan preparation similar to requirements for Federal Tax Act photo documentation.

Staff Recommends that the Commission request that the additional addendum provide information in a format that is publicly accessible and concise. In writing, photos and graphics. It is recommended to be a synopsis report that features the original home and its additions and stylistic changes. Includes unique interior features and how David Babbitts family lived. That the synopsis report is in a form that returns the lost value of the resource to the public and can be for interpretive utilization.

- A synopsis report in booklet form.
- A layout for an interpretive plaque to include text, photos and graphics suitable for installation at the project site.

INTENT & PURPOSE

The intent of the preparation of Cultural Resource Reports is to preserve historic aspects of a property in and alternative report form when demolition is the requested alternative of a historic property. Cultural Resource Reports are intended to fully mitigate the loss of a historic property but also mandate a recommendation for appropriate mitigation. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards are incorporated into evaluation requirements for required research and documentation purposes.

The purpose of Heritage Preservation as noted in division **10-30.30.010** is to protect and enhance the cultural, historical, and archaeological heritage of the City of Flagstaff by recognizing, preserving, enhancing, and perpetuating the use of those objects, structures, sites, and landscape features that represent distinctive elements of the City's cultural, political, architectural, and archaeological history.

Cultural resources are an important consideration in an application for development. Professionally prepared cultural resource studies are therefore a requirement of an application for development. The type and format of studies required are determined based on the particular circumstances of the property on which development is proposed. Cultural resource studies assess the significance and integrity of potential resources, major impacts that would result from the proposed work and mitigation measures that could eliminate or offset any major impacts. This section provides detailed requirements for cultural resource studies and explains how such assessments are performed.

A. Cultural Resource Studies.

1. **Purpose.** To identify significant cultural resources and potential impacts of proposed development so that mitigation measures can be established for major impacts prior to development of the property.

2. Applicability.

a. Cultural resource studies are required for all public and private developments involving:

(3) Properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places; or

(5) Structures over 50 years old at the time of application.

Scope of Work

The primary considerations for this level of review.

10-30.30.050 3. Specific Application Requirements.

a. **Types of Studies.** Upon consultation with the Historic Preservation Officer and based on the resources that are known or likely to be present, the applicant shall provide an archeological resource study and/or a historic resource study.

b. **Preparation.** Cultural resource studies shall be prepared by professionals qualified in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation ([36 CFR 61](#) Appendix A) as currently amended and annotated by the National Park Service.

c. **Report Format.** The Historic Preservation Officer will work with the professional conducting the study to determine which one of the report formats is appropriate. *The resource present at the site did at a minimum require a Phase 2 Cultural Resource Study, that was required by the HPO. In consultation*

with the consultant a Historic American Building Survey (HABS) format was determined to be the best because of the requested demolition.

(2) **Phase 1 Cultural Resource Studies.** When a letter report is not appropriate, a Phase 1 Cultural Resource Study shall be prepared. A Phase 1 Cultural Resource Study shall:

- (a) Identify the presence of cultural resources;
- (b) Evaluate the potential for additional cultural resources being discovered;
- (c) Assess the significance of identified and potential cultural resources;
- (d) Assess the integrity of identified resources;
- (e) Assess identified and potential impacts proposed;
- (f) Provide measures to mitigate major impacts on cultural resources; and
- (g) Advise whether Phase 2 or Phase 3 Cultural Resource Studies will be required.

(3) **Phase 2 Cultural Resource Studies.** A Phase 2 Cultural Resource Study is required when major impacts are proposed for a significant resource that has integrity and when no other mitigation measures are proposed that would maintain the significance and integrity of the resource. A Phase 2 Cultural Resource Study includes all of the contents of a Phase 1 Cultural Resource Study plus complete text descriptions, as-built plans, and archival grade photography that fully document all physical aspects of the resource(s), including its setting. For archeological resource studies, the required field research shall also include sampling subsurface exploration to the satisfaction of the State Historic Preservation Office and coordinated with an appropriate repository.

DISCUSSION

COMMUNICATION BACKGROUND

The applicant contacted the HPO and included various individuals involved with the housing project. The communication by the HPO to the development team stressed the requirements of Flagstaff's Heritage Preservation requirements and processes. The HPO has asked the applicant to confirm that the project does not require Section 106 review as a Federal Undertaking requiring both SHPO and Federal clearance under the National Historic Preservation Act. The applicant has confirmed that the project does not meet the criteria for a Federal Undertaking. The applicant's heritage consultant contacted the Heritage Preservation Officer (HPO) noting that they had been retained by the property owner. Within initial IDS plan review it was noted the entire block was to be developed and that the home would not be avoided, and demolition was proposed and confirmed by the submitted preliminary plans. The HPO made the determination that a Phase 2 report in a HABS format would be required and the results of that report after HPC review will determine further actions. While acknowledging the importance of an affordable housing project and its desirable aspects the proposed project still must consider heritage preservation requirements. The Babbitt home is not being considered for avoidance of demolition or incorporation into the new development in some manner from the information presented. The provided HABS report is extensive in its scope and documentation and is professionally prepared by the Cultural Resource Firm of SWCA Environmental Consultants. The HABS report does not propose any additional mitigation beyond that of the report itself.

Flagstaff's Heritage Preservation Officer (HPO) commends the consulting firm and its preparers in providing a comprehensive professional report. The HPO does though not concur with the report's conclusion of the Babbitt house only having local significance. The Babbitt home's proposed demolition deserves additional consideration when evaluating its significance. The David Babbitt family home is not only a significant resource to the North End Historic Residential District listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Heritage Preservation Officer considers that it has standalone significance on a regional and State level. It can be argued that the home has National significance when you consider the contributions of David Babbitt, the eldest and head of the 5 brothers that had a substantial impact on the development, utilization and conservation of Arizona lands and Arizona's relationship to westward US population movement.

Justification for further investigation of significance:

Acceptance of Phase 2 Cultural Resource Study (Flagstaff Municipal Code Zoning, Heritage Preservation **10-30.30.050 Cultural Resources**) provided in HPO recommended Historic American Building Survey (HABS) format and documentation; HABS Outline report, David Babbitt House, November 2020, prepared by SWCA Environmental Consultants, principle Annie Jay Lutes M.A., M.S. for the structure commonly known as the David Babbitt House located at 319 N Beaver, Flagstaff AZ.

Mark Reavis, Flagstaff's Heritage Preservation Officer (HPO) found that the HABS format report to be substantially complete regarding it evaluation of the exterior of the home and its integrity. The HPO did though find the report lacking in regard to the evaluation of the home's interior. The report and its appendices did document the interior of the home and had substantial photo documentation but did not evaluate the interior in the same manner and level as with the exterior evaluation. The interior shall be evaluated for significance and integrity of its interior materials, surfaces, trim, features and craftsmanship; looking at an overall evaluation of its integrity. The HPO notes that the interior does substantially reflect the occupants and provides insight into the lifestyle and early success of the David Babbitt Family within the City of Flagstaff and the State.

The HABS report did follow US Secretary of the Interior Standards format for evaluating integrity and significance but seemed to only note its link to local significance. In noting the history of David Babbitt and his sibling's contributions to various and many business enterprises the home's place within Northern Arizona history should be fully recognized. It is further stated the David Babbitt's place in Arizona's development can be further recognized. The HPO believes that the legacy of Babbitt's actions can also be recognized on a National level of significance of Westward development.

The HPO recommends that additional research be conducted and documented in the HABS report of the David Babbitt Home's significance to the State of Arizona and for National significance and that those determinations be provided in the report. It is also recommended that the report includes additional evaluation of the interior's integrity and its significance and that this evaluation is not overridden by the changes that have occurred to the exterior of the home and its evolution. It is essential that the historical importance of the home be established for State and National significance, where such determinations may impact decisions of preservation and mitigation.

The HPO recommends that the HABS format report not be accepted at this time until interior evaluations of integrity and significant are completed and a determination of State and National significance are researched, noted and included in the report.

The HPO notes that the loss of the Babbitt home is a significant loss of a primary element of the North End District but there is concurrence with the HABS report conclusion that the loss of the Babbitt home will not adversely impact the North End District and will not lead to the delisting of the National Register District. This does not mean that individual properties can't have National significance. The practice now when considering historic properties within a proposed district they are either considered as contributing or noncontributing and will not be individually listed in that National Register. Just because the report met Federal evaluation criteria of significance the report may have not provided full evaluation; the HPO has also called out State as well as a link to National Significance. In reviewing the HABS Cultural Resource Study it has uncovered the need for additional considerations of significance. There are requirements within the Flagstaff Heritage Preservation Ordinance that calls out the need for full investigation of the significance of a Heritage Resources.

HISTORIC ERA INTEGRITY

The Heritage Preservation Officer Mark Reavis, AICP, NCARB has reviewed the property and the submitted Phase 2 HABS format report and has determined that the property retains historic significance and concurs with the report's conclusion of significance under Criterion A,B & C of the Federal Standards, with the report only noting local significance. The HPO believes that the home is also significant on a State as well as National level.

ARCHITECTURAL DISCRPTION:

The Phase 2 HABS report and the photo appendix calls out the architectural description of the home along with the architectural changes that have taken place.

Basis of Report:

The information in this summary staff report was derived from the application to the Heritage Preservation Commission for the preparation of a Cultural Resource Report, the Flagstaff Zoning Code, The US Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment and evaluation of Historic Resources and other Historic Preservation Resources and evaluation experience.

Evaluation of Effects

The evaluation of effect is recommended to be adverse after full consideration of findings by the consultant. Regarding the demolition proposal and resource report, the project can be considered for acceptance, though opportunities for additional investigation of significance and voluntary mitigation may be discussed.

Recent discussions regarding the disposition of the David Babbitt home established the most current history and efforts in evaluation and preservation of the property. City staff is reviewing plans for the proposed senior citizen's affordable housing project. Also discussed were past efforts to preserve the home. Providing affordable senior housing in the proximity of the Central Business District meets the goals of the City's Regional Plan and the recently declared Affordable Housing Emergency. Conversations pointed toward demolition as the preferred alternative by the developer. Though preservation in place of a cultural resource is an inherent goal in the Heritage Preservation program, it does not prevent demolition of the resource when processes are followed as outlined in the Zoning Code..

Considering the age of the home, its architectural aspects, and the major significance of David Babbitt to the Flagstaff community and the region, the Heritage Preservation Officer determined that a Phase 2 Cultural Resource Study was appropriate. Flagstaff's Zoning Code 10-30.30 provisions regarding Phase 2

reports cover requirements intended to protect cultural resource values. The Heritage Preservation Officer (HPO) in a dialogue with the Cultural Resource (CR) consulting firm considered the developer preferred option of the demolition. The Heritage Preservation Officer and the CR consultant felt that the Phase 2 report should be in the form of a Historic American Building Survey (HABS), a format that is meant to provide and emphasis on recordation of the building itself. The HPO directed the CR consultant to prepare a HABS report.

Much has been researched and written about David Babbitt, his wife, offspring and his brothers so that extensive research and greatly expanding upon this history in a more typical Phase 2 report would not be beneficial, though the report does cover this history well. The HABS format meets the criteria of a Phase 2 Cultural Resource Study with an emphasis on the building exterior. What the HABS recordation provides is an insight into how the Babbitts lived, what they achieved, and what prosperity it provided to them. The HABS report notes the change from family home to a facility transferred to Catholic Church that resulted in changes to the building form with additions and modifications. The basic configuration of the original home remains at Beaver Street but with the porch modified and enclosed and with sizable additions that took place toward the west. The HABS report states:

“ It was initially constructed as a local adaptation of the Queen Anne tradition in 1886. Subsequent renovations by 1901 stayed true to this style, but later alterations incorporated Craftsman-influenced elements between 1910 and 1916. It is significant as a contributing component of the North End Historic Residential District (listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1986) under Criterion A for its association with the early settlement and development of Flagstaff, as well as its leading industries. It is also significant under Criterion B for its association with David Babbitt as a locally important person. Lastly, the property is also significant under Criterion C as a representation of the transition between architectural trends (the Queen Anne style of the late nineteenth century and the Craftsman style of the early twentieth century).”

HABS format Cultural Resource Studies are intended to be full mitigation for the demolition of a historic property. Even though the Phase 2 may fully mitigate the demolition per the City Code this evaluation may also not be complete and there may be additional opportunities for mitigation and returning the value of the structure to the community that can be accommodated through the redevelopment process. In the case of the David Babbitt home, the HABS documentation can be utilized in various ways as mitigation, when considering the significant contributions of David Babbitt, the eldest of the 5 Babbitt Brothers. While the exterior appearance of the home has changed, the interior aspects of the original home portion remain largely intact and are impressive in their elegance and detailing; from the front door to paneled wainscoting and fireplaces. These architectural and interior features provide an impressive insightful look into the lives of the Babbitts.

It will be the Heritage Preservation Commissions responsibility to determine if the HABS report is sufficient in its scope and documentation as mitigation. The Phase 2 Cultural Resource Study in the form of a Historic American Building Survey notes the homes significant under Criterion B for its association with David Babbitt as a locally important person. David Babbitt the eldest of the five brothers lead various family enterprises that included his brothers that spanned from a prosperous trading company, ranch land acquisition to a cattle slaughterhouse and even a soda fountain and a business that still today includes their venture into the automobile industry. The Babbitts maintained their thriving cattle business that included a hand in more than 100 ranches spanning from Kansas to California. The

Flagstaff Heritage Preservation Officer feels that the association of the David Babbitt home is also significant on a regional level and significant to the development of the State of Arizona. It can be effectively argued that the David Babbitt home could be considered significant on a National level “*A property with national significance helps us understand the history of the nation by illustrating the nationwide impact of events or persons associated with the property*”. David Babbitt and his brothers greatly influenced the utilization of western lands and the movement of populations to the Southwest. Westward movement and Arizona development likely have National Significance in the context of the Nation’s history. The legacy of David Babbitt and his brothers had far reaching influence on a national level. A deep-seated respect for natural spaces and conservation had its roots in David Babbitt and has been passed from generation to generation in the Babbitts family tree. The family is long regarded for their dedication to public service, funding burgeoning businesses, and consistently giving back to the northern Arizona community. This philosophy extended to much later generation with Bruce Babbitt, a descendent of the five original Babbitt brothers who was former Arizona Attorney General, Governor, and Bill Clinton’s Secretary of the Interior.

OPTIONS FOR COMMISSION DECISION-MAKING:

- The Commission could accept the staff recommendation and approve the Phase 2 Cultural Resource Report/HABS format with conditions.
- The Commission could approve and accept the conclusions of the Phase 2 Cultural Resource Report/HABS format and require no further actions or requirements.
- The Commission could approve with conditions by requesting modifications, additional information and documentation in the Phase 2 Cultural Resource Study beyond HPO recommendations and have the report brought back to the Commission at a future date.
- The Commission could deny approval of the report and ask that it be returned to the commission with specific modifications. (Staff does not recommend this alternative because of the timing requirements associated with meeting milestones for the LITCH funding)