

The City of Muskogee encourages participation from all citizens in public meetings if participation is not possible due to disability, please notify the City Clerk in writing at least forty-eight hours prior to the scheduled meeting and necessary accommodations will be made. (ADA/36).

AGENDA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MARCH 21, 2023

Official action can only be taken on items which appear on the agenda. The public body may adopt, approve, ratify, deny, defer, recommend, amend, strike, or continue any agenda item.

When more information is needed to act on an item, the public body may refer the matter to Staff or back to Committee or the recommending body.

Under certain circumstances, items are deferred to a specific date or stricken from the agenda entirely.

REGULAR SESSION - 3:00P.M. 3RD FLOOR, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 229 W. OKMULGEE, MUSKOGEE, OKLAHOMA

ROLL CALL

- 1 Consider approval of the Historic Preservation Commission Minutes of February 21, 2023, or take other necessary action. (Andrea Chancellor)
- 2 Discuss and take action to elect a new Vice Chairman for the Historic Preservation Commission. (Andrea Chancellor)
- 3 Consider approval of an Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for 1417 Emporia Street, Muskogee Oklahoma, to remove porch cover, build a portico at front door, replace decaying wood and uplift exterior, or take other necessary action. (Laura Enlow)
- 4 Consider approval of the home located at 305 Honor Heights Drive, Muskogee, Oklahoma for historic designation, or take other necessary action. (Laura Enlow)
- 5 Discuss distribution of 2022's Certified Local Government Grant funds. (Laura Enlow)
- 6 Discuss and take possible action on an application for 2023 Certified Local Government Grant. (Laura Enlow)
- 7 Discuss the alteration of properties located within the city of Muskogee Historic District. (Laura Enlow)

- 8 Discuss National Historic Preservation Month (May) activities. (Laura Enlow)

- 9 Discuss and consider approval of the Historical Preservation Commission Strategic Plan.
(Laura Enlow)

- 10 New Business

ADJOURN

Historic Preservation Commission

1.

Meeting Date: 03/21/2023

Initiator: Robin Orman, Office Administrator

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:

Consider approval of the Historic Preservation Commission Minutes of February 21, 2023, or take other necessary action. (Andrea Chancellor)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

BACKGROUND:

RECOMMENDED STAFF ACTION:

Fiscal Impact

Attachments

minutes

MINUTES

**OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF MUSKOGEE, OKLAHOMA,
MET IN A REGULAR MEETING
IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL
FEBRUARY 21, 2023**

The Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Muskogee, Oklahoma, met in Regular Session at 10:00 a.m., on FEBRUARY 21, 2023, in Council Chambers, Municipal Building, 229 W. Okmulgee Ave., Muskogee, Oklahoma.

The meeting was called to order and the roll was called as follows:

Present: Vice Chairperson Andrea Chancellor; Commissioner Julie Watson-Ledbetter;
Commissioner Darzella Newton; Commissioner Diana Newton

Absent: Commissioner Julie Macomb; Commissioner Edwyna Synar

Staff Jennifer Swezey, Assistant City Manager/ Interim Planning Director; Chelsea Hamilton,

Present: Administrative Assistant; Everett Wilson, Chief Building Instructor; Robin Orman,
Administrative Assistant

Attendees: Melony Carey, Honorary Member, Dr. Jerri Stoutemire, Roxy Theater

- 1 Consider approval of the Special Call Historic Preservation Commission Minutes of January 24, 2023, or take other necessary action. (Andrea Chancellor)

Motion was made by Vice Chairperson Andrea Chancellor, seconded by Commissioner Diana Newton to approve the Special Call Historic Preservation Commission Minutes of January 24, 2023.

AYE: Vice Chairperson Andrea Chancellor, Commissioner Julie Watson-Ledbetter,
Commissioner Darzella Newton, Commissioner Diana Newton

Carried - Unanimously

- 2 Discuss and take action to appoint a new Chairperson, or take other necessary action.(Andrea Chancellor)

Motion was made by Commissioner Diana Newton, seconded by Commissioner Darzella Newton to appoint Andrea Chancellor as the new Chairperson for the Historical Preservation Commission.

AYE: Vice Chairperson Andrea Chancellor, Commissioner Julie Watson-Ledbatter,
Commissioner Darzella Newton, Commissioner Diana Newton

Carried - Unanimously

- 3 Discuss Board vacancies and possible new members. (Andrea Chancellor)

The Commissioners will ask people they know who might be interested to fill out applications on the city's website. There was some discussion.

- 4 Discuss the alteration of properties located within the City of Muskogee Historic Districts, or take other necessary action. (Andrea Chancellor)

The Commissioners wanted to know if these addresses had pulled permits:

514 N. 13th and 558 N. 14th were addresses

Chief Building Inspector Everett Wilson was going to check and get back to the Board at the next meeting.

There was some discussion.

No action was necessary.

- 5 Discuss and review the National Historic Preservation Month Activities. (Jennifer Swezey)

The Commissioners had a few of ideas to bring to the team to participate in National Historic Preservation. The Commissioners are checking into participating in the Home and Garden Show at Hatbox by setting up a booth as part of the activities for National Historic Preservation in May.

Other ideas for May are setting up walking tours of the Masonic Temple and other Historic Properties.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 PM.

ANDREA CHANCELLOR, CHAIRPERSON

LAURA ENLOW, ASSISTANT PLANNING DIRECTOR

Historic Preservation Commission

2.

Meeting Date: 03/21/2023

Initiator: Robin Orman, Office Administrator

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:

Discuss and take action to elect a new Vice Chairman for the Historic Preservation Commission. (Andrea Chancellor)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

BACKGROUND:

RECOMMENDED STAFF ACTION:

Fiscal Impact

Attachments

No file(s) attached.

Historic Preservation Commission

3.

Meeting Date: 03/21/2023

Initiator: Robin Orman, Office Administrator

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:

Consider approval of an Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for 1417 Emporia Street, Muskogee Oklahoma, to remove porch cover, build a portico at front door, replace decaying wood and uplift exterior, or take other necessary action. (Laura Enlow)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

BACKGROUND:

RECOMMENDED STAFF ACTION:

Fiscal Impact

Attachments

CO

**CITY OF MUSKOGEE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Application for Certificate of Appropriateness**

Type of Permit: Building Demolition _____ Moving _____ Sign/Mural _____

Street Address of Property: 423 N. 15th St Muskogee, OK 74401

Legal description of property: Muskogee blocks 201-220, Block 215, 550' lot 5 Muskogee County

Existing Use of Property: Residential Proposed Use: Residential Zoning: Residential

Name of property owner: 3 Forks Properties

Street address of Owner: PO Box 605

City: Muskogee State: OK Zip Code: 74402 Phone: 918-577-7414

Name of Applicant (if different from owner): Russell Sain

Street address: 1417 Emporia St

City: Muskogee State: OK Zip Code: 74401 Phone: 918-577-7414

Describe the proposed modifications to the structure(s) and site. Explain how the modifications will maintain the historic character of the structure and meet the intent of the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (use additional sheets if necessary):

Remove the collapsed porch roof from porch covering that was added during the 1980's and was not in keeping with the historic appearance of the house. Build a portico at the front door to provide protection of historic front entrance from the elements and restore historic character. Replace ~~the~~ rotted wood & repaint exterior.

I certify that the above information is correct:

[Signature] Signature of Owner(s) 1/20/23 Date

See back of this form for instructions and information regarding the Certificate of Appropriateness process.

I. FOR PLANNING DEPARTMENT USE: Date Submitted: _____	
Date of Historic Preservation Commission Meeting: _____	
Action of Commission: Approved: _____	Denied: _____
Signature of Historic Preservation Commission Chairperson _____	Date _____

Historic Preservation Commission

4.

Meeting Date: 03/21/2023

Initiator: Robin Orman, Office Administrator

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:

Consider approval of the home located at 305 Honor Heights Drive, Muskogee, Oklahoma for historic designation, or take other necessary action. (Laura Enlow)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

BACKGROUND:

RECOMMENDED STAFF ACTION:

Fiscal Impact

Attachments

Zaroor Home

CITY OF MUSKOGEE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Application for Historic Designation

Street Address of Property: 305 Honor Heights Drive

Legal description of property: Block 4182 Lot 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 Block 21 Canard Edition
Tax Record Legal

Use of Property: residential

Name of property owner: Marcia Owen

Street address of Owner: 305 Honor Heights Dr.

City: Muskogee State: OK Zip Code: 74401 Phone: 918-681-0063

Name of Applicant (if different from owner): Melony Carey, HP Commission

Street address: City Hall

City: Muskogee State: OK Zip Code: 74401 Phone: _____

State reason(s) why property should receive designation as a historic property (use additional sheets if necessary): See attached sheets.

I certify that the above information is correct:

Marcia Owen 3/11/23
Signature of Owner(s) Date

See back of this form for instructions and information regarding the Historic Designation process.

I. FOR PLANNING DEPARTMENT USE: Date Submitted: _____	
Date of Historic Preservation Commission Meeting: _____	
Action of Commission: Approved: _____	Denied: _____
Signature of Historic Preservation Commission Chairperson	Date

Frederick Zaroor Home
305 Honor Heights Dr.
Muskogee, OK 74401

Frederick Zaroor was a prominent Muskogee architect working between the years of 1930 – 1970. His family immigrated from Lebanon and built a reputation in Haskell and Muskogee as farmers and businessmen. Mr. Zaroor graduated with an architecture degree from Stanford University and returned to Oklahoma to open a practice.

While his style was not restricted to any one type, he preferred the developing modern style. His buildings reflect a range of buildings from Art Deco to what is now called Mid-Century Modern, having been influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright. This can be seen in the following buildings designed by Mr. Zaroor and his firm:

1. Two fire stations located at Spaulding Park and corner of Junction and Okmulgee respectively.
2. Sacred Heart Catholic Church, now Monarch
3. Westside church of Christ
4. Muskogee Public Library on Okmulgee
5. Victor Federal Savings and Loan
6. OG+E Building on Court Street
7. Phoenix Federal Saving and Loan
8. Renovation of Federal Court House

He also played an important role in Muskogee Public Schools modern building projects:

1. Manual Training High School
2. Tony Goetz Elementary
3. Grant Foreman Elementary
4. Indian Capital Vo Tech
5. Alice Robertson Junior High
6. The Indian Bowl
7. And also, St. Joseph's Catholic School

Mr. Zaroor also designed many modern homes in Muskogee, including his own home at 305 Honor Heights Dr. Influenced by the designs of Frank Lloyd Wright, the 1952 home features deep eaves,

panoramic view window casings, birch paneling, an indoor fountain/gold fish pond, and unusual styles of brick, including Roman. The style is among the earliest Mid-Century Modern examples in Muskogee.

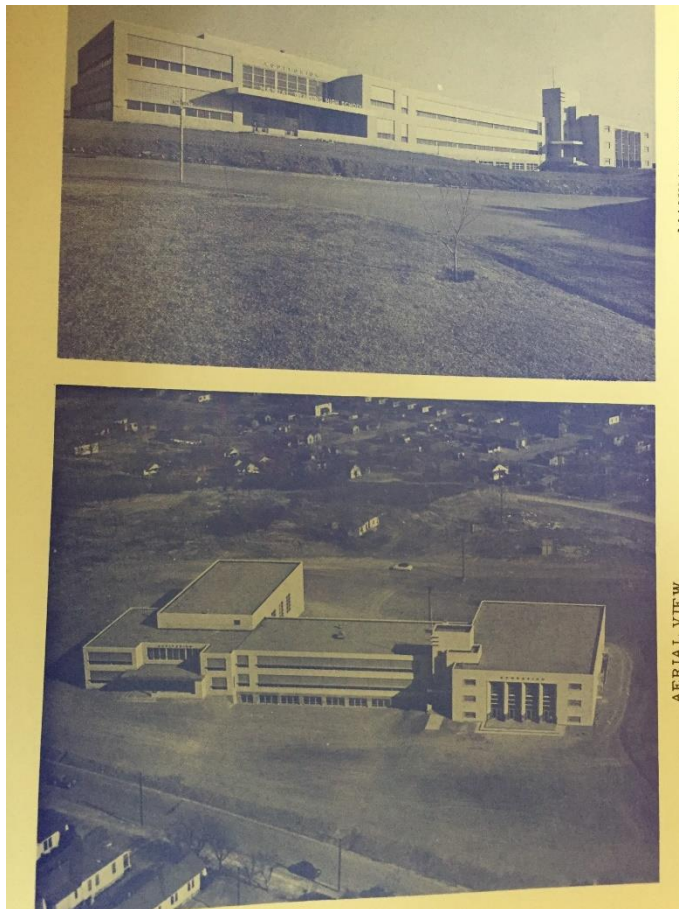
Mr. Zaroor can be said to have built modern Muskogee. His prolific body of work meets the following standards for landmark recognition according to the Secretary of the Interior's criteria:

****Exemplifies or reflects the broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the nation, state or community;***

****Properties that embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen exceptionally valuable for a study of a period, style, or method of construction;***

****Is representative of a notable master builder, designer or architect whose work influence his age or development in the nation, state, region or local area.***

Attached are examples of the buildings designed by Mr. Zaroor and his firm. These are not inclusive of the over 300 properties listed in documents at the Muskogee Public Library and Three Rivers Museum.

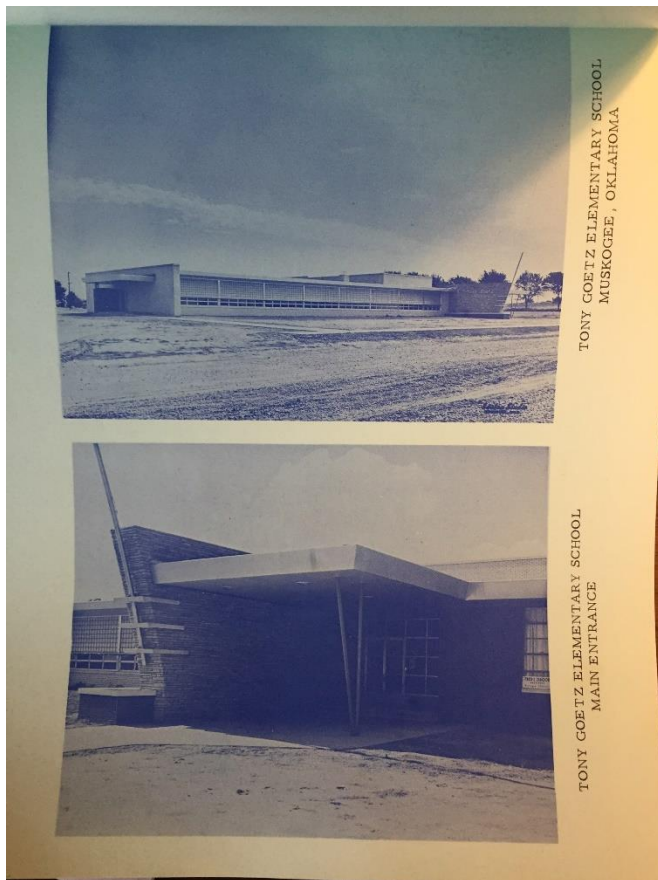


New Manual Training High School on Altamont circa 1953



ALICE ROBERTSON
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
AND
INDIAN BOWL STADIUM
MUSKOGEE, OKLAHOMA

Alice Robertson Junior High School on N. S St. circa 1940



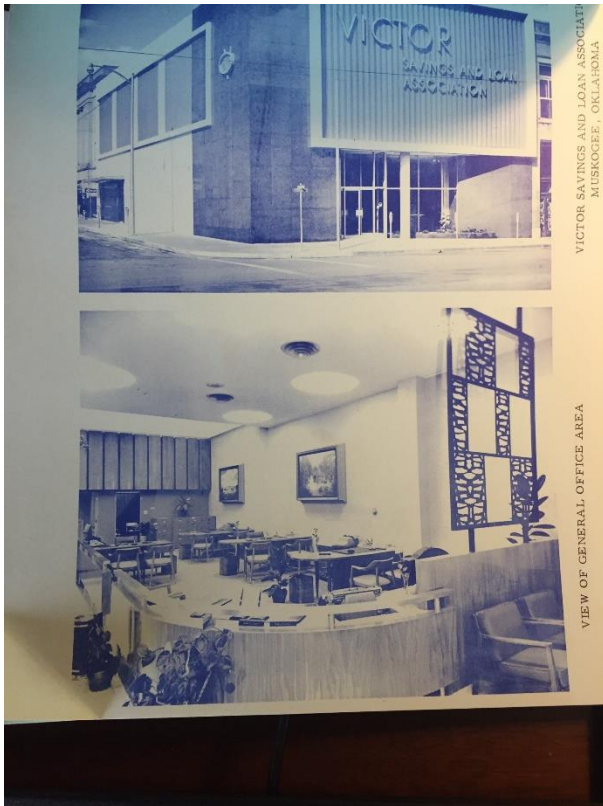
TONY GOETZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
MUSKOGEE, OKLAHOMA

TONY GOETZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
MAIN ENTRANCE

Tony Goetz Elementary School on Haskell Blvd. circa 1959-60?



Grant Foreman Elementary School on Bacone St. – circa 1957



Victor Federal Savings and Loan on Broadway circa 1960



OG+E Building on Court Street circa 1959

Historic Preservation Commission

5.

Meeting Date: 03/21/2023

Initiator: Robin Orman, Office Administrator

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:

Discuss distribution of 2022's Certified Local Government Grant funds. (Laura Enlow)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

BACKGROUND:

RECOMMENDED STAFF ACTION:

Fiscal Impact

Attachments

No file(s) attached.

Historic Preservation Commission

6.

Meeting Date: 03/21/2023

Initiator: Robin Orman, Office Administrator

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:

Discuss and take possible action on an application for 2023 Certified Local Government Grant. (Laura Enlow)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

BACKGROUND:

RECOMMENDED STAFF ACTION:

Fiscal Impact

Attachments

No file(s) attached.

Historic Preservation Commission

7.

Meeting Date: 03/21/2023

Initiator: Robin Orman, Office Administrator

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:

Discuss the alteration of properties located within the city of Muskogee Historic District.
(Laura Enlow)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

BACKGROUND:

RECOMMENDED STAFF ACTION:

Fiscal Impact

Attachments

No file(s) attached.

Historic Preservation Commission

8.

Meeting Date: 03/21/2023

Initiator: Robin Orman, Office Administrator

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:

Discuss National Historic Preservation Month (May) activities. (Laura Enlow)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

BACKGROUND:

RECOMMENDED STAFF ACTION:

Fiscal Impact

Attachments

No file(s) attached.

Historic Preservation Commission

9.

Meeting Date: 03/21/2023

Initiator: Robin Orman, Office Administrator

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:

Discuss and consider approval of the Historical Preservation Commission Strategic Plan.
(Laura Enlow)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

BACKGROUND:

RECOMMENDED STAFF ACTION:

Fiscal Impact

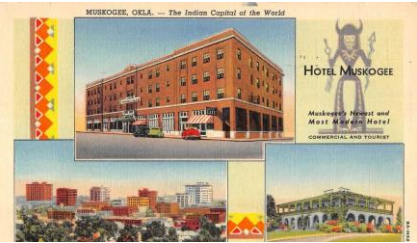
Attachments

Strategic Plan



Muskogee
Historic
Preservation
Commission

Strategic Plan



2022 - 2027

Submitted to City Council
Date



Acknowledgements

This document was developed with the input of the Historic Preservation Commission and dozens of other city officials and citizens whose insight helped shape our goals for preservation efforts in the City of Muskogee.

Historic Preservation Commission

Andrea Chancellor, Chair
Julie Macomb
Teresa Chaudoin
Julie Ledbetter
Darzella Newton
Diana Newton
Melony Carey, ex officio

City Staff

Jennifer Swezey, Assistant City Manager
Laura Enlow, Assistant City Planner

City Council

Marlon Coleman, Mayor
Jamie Stout
Alex Reynolds
Shirley Hilton Flanary
Derrick Reed
Tracy Hoos
Traci McGee

In memoriam
Tish Callahan, former planning director

The activity that is the subject of this brochure has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior.

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What is Historic Preservation Planning?

Historic Preservation Commission Vision and Mission

Since 1983 the City of Muskogee Historic Preservation Commission has worked to identify, register, and preserve landmarks and structures in our community that are important to local and state history. Our work is reflected in our vision and mission statements:

VISION STATEMENT

To promote the education, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public.

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Commission is intended to promote the education, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public, through the protection, enhancement, perpetuation, and use of structures and areas of historic, architectural or cultural significance.

The Muskogee Historic Preservation Strategic Plan is developed to celebrate and preserve the places that represent the city's collective histories, which include African American, Native American, and white influences in their development. It provides guidance for educating potential investors and the general public, implementation of measures to ensure preservation is integrated into both long-range planning and current development projects, and provide support to new local or National Register nominations.

The Plan recommends strategies and tools to 1) more effectively lead and integrate historic preservation into public policy, 2) utilize existing land use, zoning, and development standards to support preservation, 3) explore educational and promotion partnerships, 4) capitalize on economic development and financial incentives, and 5) encourage heritage tourism.

The City has an established preservation program with numerous successful adaptive reuse projects that have been catalytic for individual properties and neighborhoods. While Muskogeeans know about historic preservation, many factors challenge the preservation of historic properties here. This plan identifies policies, resources, training, and other strategies in hopes of making preservation feasible and valued in our town.

“The purpose of the Commission is intended to promote the education, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public, through the protection, enhancement, perpetuation, and use of structures and areas of historic, architectural or cultural significance.”

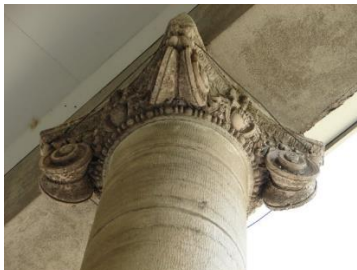
History of Historic Preservation In Muskogee

The history of Muskogee refers to the history of the region in which the city of Muskogee, Oklahoma now lies. Muskogee’s history begins before its official incorporation in 1898. Prior to becoming an incorporated city, it was named Muskogee Station in honor of the Creek Nation in 1872 as Muskogee became a terminus for the MK&T Railroad.

The preservation of Muskogee’s historic resources became a priority in 1983 when Mrs. Dorothy Ball decided that in order to preserve our city’s landmarks and historic buildings they needed to be included in our city’s future. The first to be placed on the National Register had been Thomas-Foreman Home in 1973.

The Historic Commission began by placing signs of former known and qualified National Register properties in front of 15 homes. Those included the homes of; A.W. Robb, the Patton home, Alice Robertson, the Trumbos, the Dawes, the Fite home, the Pattersons, Mary E Locke home, the Oldham home, the Callahan home, the Coss home, the Welches, the Doyle-McCormick home, and the homes attributed to Henry Kendall College dorms and faculty. The city now has 27 homes that are registered as historic along with 20 other historic buildings.

The Historic Commission was also starting to lay out local historic districts in the mid-1980’s. Muskogee currently has seven historic districts. Most are on the National Register. Bacone College Historic District was added to National Register 2014; Kendall Place Historic District added to National Register 2005, Muskogee Depot and Freight Historic District added to National Register in 2006; and Founders’ Place Historic District listed in the National Register in 2019. There are also other locally designated districts, such as the Y District and downtown business district. Today the Commission continues to identify historic properties for preservation as local or state landmarks.



Trends in Historic Preservation Planning

Rather than being about stodgy relics of the past or adhering to stuffy values, modern historic preservation is about contributing to neighborhood revitalization, sustainability, and awareness of historical and cultural events. Below are current ways historic preservation is providing economic and social benefits through revitalization.

LIVABILITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Blocks of smaller, older buildings create vibrant walkable neighborhoods and commercial districts that are comfortable spaces for all generations. Adaptive reuse as restaurants and coffee shops provide gathering places for residents to meet, relax, or work and make mixed-use neighborhoods a preferred choice.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Historic preservation projects include a variety of economic benefits, such as job creation, increased tax value, and increased tourism. The investment can be catalytic and spur redevelopment of surrounding properties throughout the neighborhood, such as in our historic downtown area.

CULTURAL PRESERVATION AND TOURISM

The number of travelers interested in arts, culture, and history continues to grow. Experiencing a city or neighborhood while learning about the sites benefits visitors, as well as local residents. Cultural tourism, such as historic home tours, can be a local and state economic driver.

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Preserving and showcasing links between underrepresented groups and significant events or cultural identity can create a community connection. Preservation projects can be part of the storytelling experience.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS

Rehabilitating existing structures can be less expensive than new construction, especially with current construction pricing. Rehabilitation often spurs additional renovation and investment, reducing vacancies and stabilizing neighborhoods.

ENTREPRENEUR FOCUSED and ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

Adaptive reuse of old buildings provides an affordable option for new businesses. Clustering of investment can develop into mixed-use neighborhoods with housing and restaurants, and attract additional investors. The 'creative economy' is proven to thrive in older, mixed-use neighborhoods with legacy businesses.

The Plan Goals and Objectives reflect these current trends as well as traditional tools for promoting historic preservation, as outlined in upcoming sections.

Contexts for Historic Preservation in Muskogee, Oklahoma

The Historic Districts

Muskogee has several recognized local and National Register historic districts. These include two residential neighborhoods, Kendall Place Historic District and Founders' Place Historic District, both on the National Register.

We also have three downtown historic districts, The Depot and Freight Historic District listed in the National Register in 2006, the Pre-Statehood Commercial District listed in the National Register in 1983, and the Downtown Muskogee Historic District, the central business district locally listed in 2008.

There are two education institutions listed, Bacone College, which was placed on the National Register in 2014, and Samuel L. Sadler Historic District, which contains the historic Manual Training High School (now Sadler Arts Academy) and its original location at the corner of Altamont and Martin Luther King St. (originally called Fondulac).

In addition, there is an area called the Y District, an area of importance to African American enterprise where the McIntosh Nursing Home was located for many years. This was placed on the local register in 2014.

African American History and Preservation

Muskogee has a rich and significant African American history beginning with the Freedmen and black slaves who came to Oklahoma on the Trail of Tears and later immigrations. Many well-known families have made their homes here for well over one-hundred-and-fifty years. Early leaders were men such as newspaperman William Henry Twine, mortician William Ragsdale, or clothier Tollie Julius Elliott.

Another significant event, the Tulsa Race Massacre, prompted many people to move from Tulsa in the 1920's and relocate in Muskogee. Muskogee's Black Wall Street along 2nd Street was a thriving commercial hub before statehood, but has now been all but erased due to urban renewal that began in the 1960's.

Prior to desegregation, Muskogee also had many fine African American schools. Manual Training High School stands out as a beautiful reminder of mid-century modern architecture in Muskogee, an impressive landmark on Tower Hill that replaced the original Manual Training High School that was built in 1910. In the 1970-71 school year Muskogee desegregated its schools and Manual Training's students were transferred to Muskogee Central High School located at 3200 E. Shawnee. Later the Manual Training building became Sadler Arts Academy, a National Blue Ribbon K-8 magnet school for the arts.

Efforts are underway to memorialize the 2nd Street commercial district, which was also the beat of Muskogee Police Officer, Bass Reeves. Historic houses built and owned by wealthy African American merchants between 7th and 11th Streets in the early 1900's are also being researched for inclusion in the local or national registers. More can be read in The Historic Context for African American History on the commission's webpage at [The Historic Context for African American History.pdf](#) ([revize.com](#))

Native American History and Preservation

Native American history foments the history of Muskogee, Oklahoma. With the Indian Removal Act of 1830, the Five Civilized Tribes were relocated to Indian Territory, with the boundary between the Creek and Cherokee Nations being on the far east side of present day Muskogee.

In 1874 U.S. Indian agencies for the Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Chickasaw, and Seminole tribes were consolidated into one office, the Union Agency, in Muskogee. This office was located west of town on a hill that became known as Agency Hill (located at the entrance to Honor Heights Park). From early fall 1874 Muskogee held annual Indian Fairs to promote interracial and intertribal harmony, education, agricultural improvement, and social progress.

Muskogee also became the location on March 1, 1889, of the first federal district court established in Indian Territory. In 1894 the Dawes Commission was located in Muskogee to administer the enrollment of members of the Five Tribes and the allotment of lands. At the time Muskogee lay in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and each tribal citizen was ascribed 160 acres. As Muskogee continued to grow, most of these lands were sold off for development of the town. The allotment of Pleasant Porter, chief of the Creek Nation at the time, comprises much of the historic districts in Muskogee. "Porter's Pasture" or Three Bar Ranch on 24th Street was well documented for its amazing herd of cattle. Controversy ensued between those who wanted to retain their allotments and those who believed in progressive development. Today we see the controversy continued in the McGirt Ruling and the idea of reservations in Oklahoma.

With Oklahoma's statehood the federal government established the boundary between the Creek Nation and Cherokee Nation with mile markers, a few of which still exist in Muskogee. The Cherokee Nation has been working to map the markers in GIS and has partnered with the Muskogee Historic Preservation Commission and the Creek Nation to document the history of these markers.

Women in Muskogee's History and Preservation Efforts

While men played a prominent role in the development of Muskogee's architectural heritage, women cannot be overlooked for their contributions to the city long before statehood. We must remember that women had few rights prior to the right to vote for white women in 1920, long before the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Nevertheless, women contributed greatly to the progress of Muskogee as one of the largest cities in the state.

Some of the influential early Muskogee women include:

- Anna Catherine Trainor – represented Indian Territory in the statehood celebration in Guthrie, November 16, 1907, where a symbolic marriage ceremony was performed between the two territories, the State of Oklahoma and Indian Territory.
- Sara Davis - Sarah Davis was one of the leading free African Creek merchants who lived in the Creek Agency settlement, near Fern Mountain west of present day Muskogee before the Civil War. Sarah was born in the Old Creek Nation in 1799 and was formerly a slave of William McIntosh's daughter Rebecca. Later she owned and operated a hotel/boarding house in the Creek Agency village, one of the only places for hundreds of miles where one could find a clean bed and hot meals, dancing, and music, all under the same roof. She was persuaded by A. W. Patterson to move to a spot near the Muskogee depot.
- Alice Robertson – Alice Robertson's importance as an educator in Indian Territory cannot be exaggerated. Her family came to Oklahoma to mission to the Creek, translating the Bible into the Muskogee language. Miss Alice, as she is known, ran a school for Indian girls called Minerva House, located in downtown Muskogee. Later she organized Henry Kendall College located near Kendall Boulevard, which later moved to Tulsa and became Tulsa University. She was well known for her activist efforts during World War I and was the first female Congressman from Oklahoma. She was also the first postmistress in Muskogee.
- Carolyn Thomas Foreman – daughter of Judge John Thomas and wife of Oklahoma historian Grant Foreman, Carolyn was a historian in her own right. The Thomas-Foreman Home located at the corner of Okmulgee and 15th Street was built by Judge Thomas and occupied by the Foremans until Carolyn's death in 1967. It is a historic home museum today operated by Three Rivers Museum.

How to Use the Strategic Plan

As already established, the City of Muskogee has a rich heritage, which includes cultural resources, historic buildings, and established historic districts cherished by both residents and tourists. This plan provides a framework for the preservation of important places to provide current and future generations with the knowledge of local history and heritage. The planning process employed strategies to engage, educate, and connect with all the groups that make up Muskogee's unique history, with a particular emphasis on traditionally underrepresented groups and Native American heritage. Through an inclusive process of the Muskogee Historic Preservation Commission, goals and strategies were developed to capitalize on Muskogee's unique identity, educate the public on the values of historic preservation, promote best practices, and guide policy and preservation.

Plan Purpose & Goals

Historic preservation is an activity that preserves historic resources and uses the resources to tell a story of heritage and culture. It includes the identification, evaluation, designation, protection and retention of significant architectural, historic, and cultural resources in the built and natural environments. Resources range from buildings and structures, to sites and districts, to iconic view corridors, to landscapes and streetscapes. By protecting the historic character and fabric of the community, preservation enables the people of today and tomorrow to connect with the people and events that underlie their past. The value and impact of historic preservation is strengthened when there is a focus on healthy living and green building practices to support the retention of older buildings, leading to a strong and unique sense of place, and enhancing the quality of life in a community.

Three fundamental functions of historic preservation include: 1) identifying, evaluating and designating historic resources, 2) preserving and protecting designated historic resources, such as locally designated landmarks and historic districts, and 3) preserving undesignated areas with unique architectural, urban and spatial characteristics that enhance the character of the built environment, such as properties and districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places that do not possess the protections provided by local designation.

The Muskogee Historic Preservation Plan is developed to celebrate and preserve the places that represent the city's collective histories. It provides guidance for development proposals, capital improvements, and implementation to ensure preservation is integrated into both long-range planning and current development projects.

The Plan recommends strategies and tools to 1) providing educational materials and resources, both online and digitally, education to commissioners, city leadership and to the general public, both residents and business owners of historic properties and neighborhoods; 2) implement procedures to identification of additional historic properties and neighborhoods within the city; 3) utilize existing land use, zoning, and development standards to support preservation in or around historic districts for evaluation and implementation of district overlays;

This plan identifies policies, resources, training, and other strategies to make preservation feasible and valued. The Historic Preservation Plan should be reviewed every 10 years, in conjunction with the City's Comprehensive Plan update. Since this is the first preservation plan ever designed for the city, we are recommending that it be updated in 5 years.

Goals and Objectives

Goal #1 – Education

Over the last few years the commission has worked diligently to produce educational materials for the public. During the next five years it intends to continue to develop and update informational brochures regarding owning property in the historic districts, walking tours of historic neighborhoods, design guidelines based on the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Preservation and Rehabilitation, scavenger hunts for historic landmarks, development of social media presence, and other educational projects.

Commissioners and city staff will also be trained in the Standards and historic preservation protocols for determining Certificates of Appropriateness and other procedures.

Planning and hosting a historic preservation conference is also a goal of the commission. This will involve local preservationists and collaboration with the historic districts and Main Street Muskogee.

The establishment and approval of this strategic plan is also an educational goal, as it is the first plan of its kind undertaken by the commission and can serve as a document to educate the city.

Goal #2 – Identify historic properties to recognize

Moving into the 21st century necessitates looking at mid-century modern structures that are now more than fifty years old. Identifying important architects who contributed to these significant homes or buildings should be a priority. An example is the home of Frederick Zaroor on Honor Heights Drive. Its unique architectural features and his accomplishments as the architect of several Muskogee schools, including Manual Training High School, indicate historical significance.

Likewise, we have not identified all the historic houses, neighborhoods and landmarks in Muskogee. There are others that need to be added to the list. Recommendations include Capital/Terrace neighborhood; the home of Charles Haskell, first governor of Oklahoma; and homes located near old Franklin Elementary (now Muskogee Early Childhood Center) at 9th St and Emporia built by African Americans at the turn of the last century.

Goal #3 – Further utilize historic district overlay codes

While unified design guidelines for the historic district neighborhoods were approved by city council in 2020 and the Historic Preservation Commission has existed since 1988, little attention has been given to maintaining the historic character of the neighborhoods, the very foundation of historic preservation. Consideration of improving enforcement of historic district overlay codes is a worthy goal, as well as establishing stricter standards for things such as appropriate historic fencing in front yards of properties.

Also, infill design such as advocated in the OU Urban Design Studio Pattern Book created for Founders' Place should be considered during the Muskogee Forward Placemaking 4.4 project, as well as included in the forthcoming updated City Land Use Comprehensive Plan.

Conclusion

As place economics professional Donovan Rypkema has observed, "A city hoping to become a world city needs historic preservation as part of its strategy."

It is clear that our city desires to move forward with development of all its resources to attract business and industry to our area and retain our ranking in the state. Historic preservation is a proven economic development strategy. The Main Street approach to revitalization of downtown includes quality design development using historic commercial buildings. The city's support of National Register residential districts helps ensure our history will be preserved for future generations.

The goals of the Historic Preservation Strategic Plan will help educate the public about Muskogee's beautiful architecture and important history. We hope that this strategy will be a catalyst for pride and further investment in our community.

Historic Preservation Commission

10.

Meeting Date: 03/21/2023

Initiator: Robin Orman, Office Administrator

AGENDA ITEM TITLE:

New Business

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

BACKGROUND:

RECOMMENDED STAFF ACTION:

Fiscal Impact

Attachments

No file(s) attached.
