

**NORMAN PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**

SEPTEMBER 8, 2016

The Planning Commission of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Council Chambers of the Norman Municipal Building, 201 West Gray Street, on the 8th day of September, 2016. Notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Norman Municipal Building and online at <http://www.normanok.gov/content/boards-commissions> at least twenty-four hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Chairman Andy Sherrer called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

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Item No. 1, being:

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Sandy Bahan
Roberta Pailles
Andy Sherrer
Lark Zink
Dave Boeck
Tom Knotts
Neil Robinson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Erin Williford
Chris Lewis

A quorum was present.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Susan Connors, Director, Planning &
Community Development
Jane Hudson, Principal Planner
Janay Greenlee, Planner II
Andi's Starr, Planner II
Roné Tromble, Recording Secretary
Rick Hoffstatter, GIS Analyst I
Jeanne Snider, Asst. City Attorney
Ken Danner, Subdivision Development
Manager
Drew Norlin, Asst. Development Coordinator
Terry Floyd, Development Coordinator

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Item No. 7, being:

O-1617-8 – SOUTHRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD REQUESTS A HISTORIC DISTRICT OVERLAY FOR PROPERTY GENERALLY BOUNDED BY OKLAHOMA AVENUE ON THE EAST AND CLASSEN BOULEVARD ON THE WEST, THE NORTH SIDE OF MACY STREET ON THE NORTH, AND THE SOUTH SIDE OF SHAWNEE STREET ON THE SOUTH.

ITEMS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:

1. Location Map
2. Staff Report
3. Map A – Proposed Southridge Historical District
4. Map B – Southridge Historical Survey Project Area
5. Map C – Proposed Southridge Historical District: Property Owners Supporting
6. Map D – Proposed Southridge Historical District: Structures & Parcels Contributing
7. Memo re Documentation

PRESENTATION BY STAFF:

1. Anaïs Starr – I am one of the Planners in the Planning Department and I act as the Historic Preservation Officer for the two current historic districts – Miller and Chautauqua. The proposed Southridge Historic District is located one mile south of downtown and a quarter mile east of the OU campus. Neighbors within the proposed historic district have pursued the steps necessary for requesting an historic district designation. Those steps include an architectural survey, the gathering of signatures of at least 51% of the land area property owners, and submission of a zoning application as required by other zoning requests. The City of Norman, in September of 2014, contracted to have an intensive level survey done of the Southridge neighborhood, and that can be seen on Map B. After the neighborhood had gathered signatures, they have proposed a smaller area than is seen in this survey map because of the number of signatures they were able to get. The submitted application for the proposed Southridge district has 77.9% of the land area in support of the designation, as seen on Map C. And 82 of the parcels signed in support out of 103, and 61 of the parcels are historically contributing parcels, which you can see on Map D.

The Southridge Addition was platted in 1922 by local real estate developers interested in meeting the housing demand from the University of Oklahoma staff, professors, and students. Southridge construction spanned four decades, and is one of the only neighborhoods in Norman to consistently see construction during the 1930s. According to the 2014 Southridge Neighborhood Intensive Level Survey report, the proposed Southridge Historic District contains one of the only privately built multi-family structures to be constructed during World War II in Norman. It fulfilled some of the much-needed housing demand created by the opening U.S. Navy training facility in Norman, which flooded the town with many military personnel as well as their families.

The period of significance for the proposed Southridge neighborhood is 1922 to 1950, and that is based upon the beginning and conclusion of significant construction activity in the neighborhood.

The Historic District Commission met September 6, this last Tuesday night, and reviewed this. They used a set of criteria that is listed in the Zoning Ordinance as part of their review. That criteria included 1[a] out of Zoning Ordinance Section 429.3.6, which says: has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the locality. The Southridge Neighborhood Intensive Level Survey found that the Southridge Addition contributed to the development of Norman as a university city by providing much-needed housing over the course of three decades from 1922 to 1950. Criteria 1[c]: exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historic heritage of the community. Again, the Southridge Intensive Level Survey report found that it did exemplify the economic, social, and historic heritage of the Norman community from the 1920s to the 1950s. Finally, criteria 2[a]: portrays the environment in the era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style. Again, the 2014 Southridge Neighborhood Intensive Level Survey found that the addition was architecturally significant as good representation of popular architectural styles during the middle decades of the 20th Century. The prominent architectural styles of the Southridge

Addition include Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, Classical Revival, and Modern Movement Minimal Traditional. I have included some pictures of that. This one is the University Falls there on the corner of Classen and Boyd. These are just some of the homes. You can see some different styles of the homes in this neighborhood. They're quite the variety and very well-maintained. This is the one house that the survey report suggested need further study as possibly being eligible for National Registry designation due to the fact that it was designed by a famous architect Harold Gimeno. Just a few more different styles.

At the Historic District Commission meeting, the Commissioners recommended approval of the Historic District designation, based upon the above criteria that I had listed and staff analysis of the criteria indicates that the Southridge Historic District is an appropriate historic district boundary. I would be happy to answer any questions from the Commission.

2. Mr. Boeck – The criteria for houses that weren't significant in this, what was the criteria on that?

3. Ms. Starr – We hired a consultant to do the Southridge Intensive Level Survey and different things make it non-contributing or contributing. One thing that would bump you out of being contributing would be the age of the house. So she found that the period of significance was from 1920 to 1950s, so some of the houses are a little bit older than that. The other way that you could be non-contributing was that if you'd had so much renovation done to your house that you had removed some of the important architectural elements that were significant to that house, then that would make your house non-contributing.

4. Mr. Robinson – I see from the map of the study area, the study area extended beyond to the west of Classen and then south of Brooks, but the boundaries of the district now are along Classen and then north of Brooks half a block. What was the reason for the shrinkage?

5. Ms. Starr – Well, that really had to do with the support that the neighborhood was able to get. After the survey was done, they went out to canvass the neighborhood and see who was interested in being in the historic district, and after they had gathered signatures it became apparent to them that neighbors on the west side were not interested, nor were the neighbors interested south of Brooks. So they concentrated on just getting signatures in the proposed area that they eventually came up with.

PRESENTATION BY THE APPLICANT:

1. Paul I. Johnston, 511 Shawnee Street – I have lived in Southridge for 36 years. I am the one standing here tonight talking to you, but I'm speaking for dozens and dozens of our neighbors and friends in Southridge at the culmination of really two and a half years of work as we put this together as we've contacted all of our neighbors about the possibility of creating a new historic district, the first one Norman has seen in nearly a quarter century. Southridge is one of those beautiful places where you can go that's not far from the middle of Norman, that when you drive down the streets under those great big trees and see the wonderful variety of the architectural styles featured in the streets that we're talking about, you are rejuvenated actually and you can feel hope for the future because you have experienced the best of what Norman used to be in the past.

Southridge was home for many influential Norman leaders over the years. They drank their morning coffee, they ate their scrambled eggs, they mowed the grass, built their houses and lived in them for decades of the 20th Century. A large number of Norman's important early-day civic leaders and University of Oklahoma professors have in this neighborhood, including: Savoie Lottinville, Rhodes scholar, Oxford University graduate, who for 30 years was director of the University of Oklahoma Press. He was also longtime Regents Professor of History at OU. Due to a chance encounter on a train trip right before the war, Mr. Lottinville made the suggestion that the U.S. Navy consider coming to Norman and opening North and South Base. It was a very fortuitous meeting as it turned out.

Horton Grisso, for many years Executive Vice President of Security National Bank and Trust Company of Norman. He was a Norman community leader for three decades. Up until his retirement in 1967 Mr. Grisso wore many hats in Norman, serving as Past President of the OU Alumni Association, the Norman Chamber of Commerce, the Norman Lions Club, even the Central Oklahoma Master Conservancy District for Lake Thunderbird.

Maurice Crownover, former Superintendent of the City of Norman's Line Maintenance Division and later longtime Vice President of the First National Bank and Trust Company of Norman.

Fred Tarman, publisher of the Norman Transcript from 1922 until his retirement in 1969. He also lived in the Southridge Addition. Tarman was one of the original three people asked to serve on the University of Oklahoma Foundation. Tarman Tower residence hall on the OU Campus, as well as Tarman Circle in east Norman, were named in his honor in recognizing his lifetime achievement as a civic leader.

Fred Shellabarger, who taught in the School of Architecture at OU from 1955 until he retired in 1979. He is the architect who designed the modern brick terminal at Max Westheimer Airport. He also designed St. Michael's Episcopal Church on the south side of Highway 9 at Imhoff Road that you've driven by many times and admired its great modern and bold statement.

Southridge also was home to distinguished professor of music composition Spencer Norton, translator of librettos which today are preserved as part of the Western History Collections at OU. He was a teacher of music theory on the campus. Even today his legacy lives on in both the Norton Artist Series and the Norton Lecture Series on campus, which are well-attended events each academic year.

Although he didn't live in the Southridge Addition, renowned Norman architect Harold Gimeno designed a magnificent Spanish Colonial Revival home that sits on the corner of Okmulgee Street which stands today as one of his true masterworks. Gimeno is the architect who designed the Sooner Theater on West Main Street in our downtown. He designed churches, commercial buildings, and homes during the 1920s in the Spanish Renaissance style. Some would argue that Gimeno's home on Okmulgee is his most beautiful residential work.

Finally, Southridge is home to what many believe is the only surviving example of housing built by a private company to house OU students and military personnel during World War II, the H.M. Murray Company apartment buildings on the corner of Classen and Boyd across from The Mont. These apartments survive in nearly their original condition and appearance from their construction in 1943. They are among the most historic structures in Norman dating from the war years, when Norman was still a small town of 18,000 people.

It is our hope that the Planning Commission will look favorably upon our request to form a new historic district in our city here which will preserve and help to take care of the beauty and the integrity and the architectural variety which exists in the Southridge Addition, as well as help preserve some of the social and educational history of early-day Norman. All of us who live in Southridge thank you for considering our request.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

None

DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION:

1. Ms. Pailles – And another famous person that lived there was George Sutton of Sutton Hall and zoology and ornithology fame.
2. Mr. Boeck – This is exciting.

*Dave Boeck moved to recommend approval of Ordinance No. O-1617-8 to the City Council.
Neil Robinson seconded the motion.*

There being no further discussion, a vote on the motion was taken with the following result:

YEAS	Sandy Bahan, Roberta Pailes, Andy Sherrer, Lark Zink, Dave Boeck, Tom Knotts, Neil Robinson
NAYES	None
MEMBERS ABSENT	Erin Williford, Chris Lewis

Ms. Tromble announced that the motion, to recommend approval of Ordinance No. O-1617-8 to the City Council, passed by a vote of 7-0.

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