

**CITY OF WILDWOOD**  
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**RECOMMENDATION REPORT for HISTORIC REGISTRY**  
**January 28, 2009**  
**"Planning Tomorrow Today"**

Petition No.: H.R. 1-08  
Petitioner: James R. Bowlin  
Request: Add the Gimble/St. Onge Log Cabin to the City's Historic Registry  
Location: 2165 Timberline Valley Drive  
Tract Size: 7.4 acres  
Locator No.: 28Z610101  
Public Hearing  
Date: October 23, 2008  
Report: Attachment A  
Plot Plan: Attachment B  
Background  
Information and  
Photographs: Attachment C  
School District: Rockwood  
Fire District: Eureka  
Ward: Six  
Date and Vote: December 9, 2008/Approval - 5 to 0  
Final Vote and Date  
On Letter of  
Recommendation: January 28, 2009/ Approval - 5 to 0 (Rosener, Barth, Long, Fremuith, and Martin)

**Recommendation Rationales:**

The subject structure is known as the "Joseph Gimble/St. Onge Cabin" and its name is reflective of the Gimble and St. Onge Families, who inhabited the land surrounding Ossenfort Road and Highway T starting in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The 1878 Atlas of St. Louis County indicates forty (40) acres were owned by Joseph Gimble, just south of the two hundred (230) acre farm of C. Fred Ossenfort. However, the 1909, St. Louis County Census Map depicts this property as fifty (50) acres owned by F. St. Onge. Fredrick St. Onge's parents, Theodorec and Kundigunde, emigrated from Canada. Most of the information known regarding this cabin comes from Frederick's son, Norman St. Onge, who lived on the family homestead and cabin continuously until 1996. As an older adult Fredrick St. Onge Jr., who had become an engineer and moved to St. Louis, returned to the cabin to live with his brother, Norman, who was seventeen (17) years his junior. Neither of the St. Onge brothers married in their lifetimes and they spent years on the family homestead collecting primitive farming equipment and antiques. This extensive collection was donated to the James Foundation, which owns and operates Maramec Spring Park and is housed there in an agricultural museum.

This particular log cabin, which is being considered for the City's Historic Registry, is believed to have been constructed by Joseph Gimble in 1873 on the central portion of their property. After Joseph's death in 1889, Fred and Mathilda St. Onge purchased the property and expanded the living space. The use of the building was as a dwelling from 1873 to 1996.

This cabin was completely restored in 2008 by the current owner, James Bowlin, and was moved to a 7.4 acre tract of land that is located at 2165 Timberline Valley Drive. The structural components of this cabin were restored with the original logs. The logs used here are larger than those types typically found in most cabins constructed during this

era and the intricate notching demonstrates the analysis used by the builders in the log placement. The construction also shows the builders' inventive method to reduce the effects of rainwater. Overall, this cabin represents an excellent example of this type of construction that was underway in the Wildwood Community throughout much of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

The 7.4 tract of land, where the cabin is now situated, is currently being used for residential purposes. The property has one (1) single family dwelling located upon it, which the petitioner completed construction on in 2006. Except for the level area around the single-family dwelling, the property is heavily wooded and slopes towards Timberline Valley Road. At Timberline Valley Road, the petitioner has one (1) access point onto this private driveway.

**Current Request:**

The petitioner, James Bowlin, is requesting the Commission's favorable consideration of his request to place this log cabin structure on the City's Historic Registry. It is important to note that, in this case, the petitioner is not seeking any type of land use or other incentive package from the City of Wildwood's Historic Preservation Commission that typically accompanies these types of requests. The purpose of his request is to make the City aware of this historic asset that has already been meticulously restored for preservation purposes and ensure it is protected and maintained for years to come.

**Thirteen (13) Criteria for Consideration of Property:**

The City's Historic Preservation Ordinance establishes thirteen (13) items that are to be utilized in determining the appropriateness of a nomination under criteria created by the United States Department of Interior's National Park Service. Only one (1) of these thirteen (13) items must be met for favorable consideration of a requested nomination to the registry. In the case of the restored Gimble/St. Onge Log Cabin the Commission has determined that by Items # 1, 5, 6, 11, 12, and 13 meet this required compliance.

1. **Its character, interest or value is part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the community, County, State or country;**
2. Its overall setting is part of a collection of buildings, structures or objects where the overall collection forms a unit;
3. It has the potential to be returned to an accurate historic appearance regardless of alterations or insensitive treatment that can be demonstrated to be reversible;
4. Its location is the site of a significant local, County, State or national event;
5. **It is identified with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the community, County, State or country;**
6. **It embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type valuable for the study of period, type, method of construction or use of indigenous materials;**
7. It is identified as the work of a master builder, designer, architect or landscape architect whose individual work has influenced the development of the community, State or country;
8. It embodies design, detailing, materials or craftsmanship that render it architecturally significant;
9. It embodies design that makes it structurally or architecturally innovative;
10. It has a unique location or singular physical characteristic that makes it an established or familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City;
11. **Its character is a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian structure including, but not limited to, farmhouses, gas stations, or other commercial structures, with a high level of integrity or architectural significance;**
12. **It is suitable for preservation or restoration; and**
13. **It has potential to yield information important to history or prehistory.**

**Rationales for Support for this Registry Nomination:**

In considering this action, the Historic Preservation Commission agrees the property is appropriate for consideration to the City's Historic Registry for a number of reasons. These reasons include the following:

1. The requirements of the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance are met by this property;
2. The preservation of this structure will guarantee its retention and provide a mechanism for the City to create a partnership for its long-term protection;
3. The approval of this request for this structure's placement on the City's Historic Registry is further evidence of the growing support and importance these types of preservation activities hold in Wildwood; and
4. The inclusion of this property onto the registry benefits all parties.
5. The care and quality of the restoration is an outstanding representation and example for others to emulate.

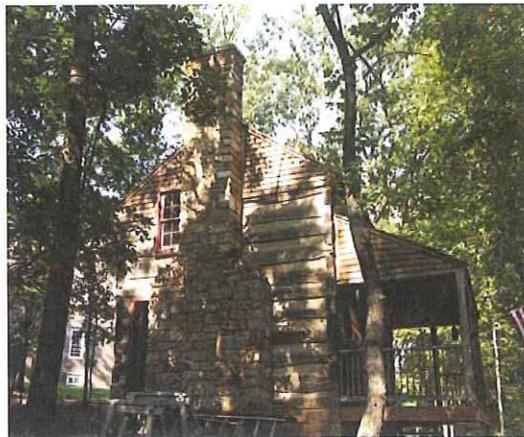
**Areas for Certificate of Appropriateness:**

The Historic Preservation Commission is recommending a two-tiered level of review according to the relative importance of this historic asset within the community, if alterations, modifications, or changes were to be made to the building. These two (2) tiers of review involve both the exterior - primary elevations on all four (4) sides (South, West, North, and East - Figures 1 through 4) - and the interior of the structure as well.

**Figure 1 - South Elevation**



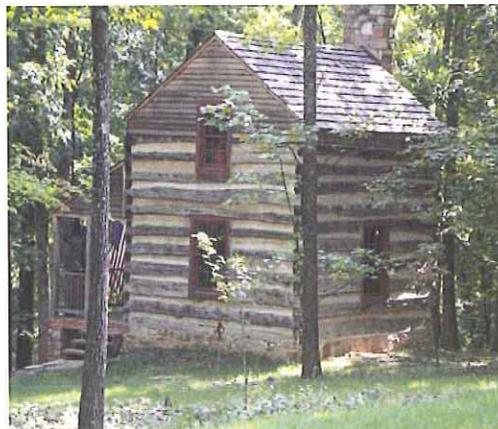
**Figure 2 - West Elevation**



**Figure 3 - North Elevation**



**Figure 4 - East Elevation**



With the cabin's placement on the City's Historic Registry, and the Commission's review authority authorized to include certain exterior and interior alterations, those activities requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness would include the following:

1. Any construction, alteration, or removal requiring a building permit from the City;
2. Any demolition, in whole or part, requiring a permit from the City;
3. Any construction, alteration, demolition or removal affecting a significant exterior or interior architectural feature or appearance, as specified in the ordinance designating the historic property;
4. Any construction, alteration or removal involving earth-disturbing activities that might affect the immediate area around the foundation of the cabin (immediate area is a circle with a radius of fifty (50) feet); and
5. Any addition or modification to the exterior or interior of the cabin or its improvements that would alter its function and/or character.

**Specific Items Initiating Review:**

- ✓ Roof Repairs or Replacements
- ✓ Painting of Exterior of the Building
- ✓ Repair or Replacement of Exterior Logs and Chinking
- ✓ Installation or Removal of Windows
- ✓ Repair or Replacement of Doors
- ✓ Structural Modifications to Porch or Building
- ✓ Replacement of flooring with the interior of the structure
- ✓ Work on the electrical, plumbing, mechanical, or structural component within the interior of the building requiring a permit
- ✓ Additions or Modifications of a Non-Structural Nature, such as replacement or repair of gutters, downspouts, trim boards, chimney, or other key architectural elements of the exterior
- ✓ Site Modifications governed by the NU Non-Urban Residence District, including, but not limited to, land disturbance, tree removal, and erection of fences or other barriers.

**Design Criteria to be applied to Certificate of Appropriateness Review Process:**

In considering an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness under the requirements noted above, the Historic Preservation Commission shall be guided in principal by the Secretary of the Interior's standards as follows:

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and exterior spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding non-authentic or architectural features of other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities

and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
9. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired. (Ordinance No. 547 §1, 8-9-99)

#### **Standards for Review Process:**

Design guidelines for applying the criteria for review of Certificate of Appropriateness shall, at minimum, consider the following architectural criteria:

1. **Height.** The height of any proposed alteration or construction should be compatible with the style and character of the historic property.
2. **Proportions of windows and doors.** The proportions and relationships between doors and windows should be compatible with the architectural style and character of the historic property.
3. **Relationship of building masses and spaces.** The setback and relationship of the historic property to the open space between it and adjoining structures should be compatible.
4. **Roof shape.** The design of the roof should be compatible with the architectural style and character of the historic property.
5. **Landscaping.** Landscaping should be compatible with the architectural character and appeal of the historic properties.
6. **Scale.** The scale of the structure after alteration, construction, or partial demolition should be compatible with its architectural style and character and with surrounding historic properties.
7. **Directional expression.** Facades of historic properties should blend with other structures with regard to directional expression. Historic properties should be compatible with the dominant horizontal or vertical expression of surrounding structures. The directional expression of a historic property after alteration, construction or partial demolition should be compatible with its original architectural style and character.
8. **Architectural details.** Architectural details including materials, colors and textures should be treated so as to make a historic property compatible with its original architectural style and character and to preserve and enhance the architectural style or character of a historic property.
9. **Signage.** The character of signs should be in keeping with the historic architectural character of a historic property. Character of a sign includes the number, size, area, location, type, (e.g., off-site advertising signs and on-site business signs), letter size or style, and intensity and type of illumination.
10. **Minimum maintenance.** Significant exterior architectural features should be kept in a condition of good repair and maintenance. All structural and mechanical systems should be maintained in a condition and state of repair that will prevent decay, deterioration or damage to significant architectural features or otherwise adversely affect the historic property. (Ordinance No. 547 §1, 8-9-99)

**Summary and Recommendation:**

The Historic Preservation Commission has determined the subject structure complies with the minimum level of items identified in the enabling legislation for this purpose to be considered for acceptance onto the City's Historic Registry and, with its addition, will allow for its preservation well into the future. The items triggering the Certificate of Appropriateness review by the Historic Preservation Commission are reasonable and allow for the protection of the building's exterior and interior and property's character, while not encumbering the owner with a lengthy review process for simple changes or preventative maintenance. The petitioner, as part of the presentation for this property's consideration for historic status, has noted he is not seeking any incentives in placing this structure on the City's Registry. In conclusion, the Commission appreciates and supports the restoration project that has taken place relating to this cabin and believes it is a wonderful asset to the Wildwood Community in terms of an illustrative example of its history and the value of historic preservation, as a way to enrich a property's character and respect past architectural and engineering forms.

Respectfully submitted,  
CITY OF WILDWOOD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Lynne Martin, Chair

ATTEST:

Joe Vujnich, Director  
Department of Planning

Cc: The Honorable Timothy Woerther, Mayor  
Daniel E. Dubruiel, City Administrator  
Rob Golterman, City Attorney  
James Bowlin, Property Owner  
Liz McKernan, Planner

**Figure 5 - Generalized Site Map**

