

CITY OF WILDWOOD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION REPORT for HISTORIC REGISTRY
August 26, 2009
"Planning Tomorrow Today"

Petition No.: H.R. 1-09
Petitioners: Bar Z, L.L.C., Dennis Elze, Elizabeth Elze, and Dave Long
Request: Add Stovall's Grove to the City's Historic Registry
Location: 18720 Stovall Lane
Tract Size: 1.0 acres
Locator No.: 26Y630131
Public Hearing
Date: June 24, 2009
Report: Attachment A
Background
Information, including
photographs: Attachment B
School District: Rockwood
Fire District: Metro West
Ward: Six
Vote: 7 to 0 for approval August 26, 2009

Background:

The subject property is known as 'Stovall's Grove' and its name is reflective of the Stovall Family, who purchased the land in 1930 from a local attorney, Mr. Ossenfort. George Stovall was a farmer, who worked on the St. Alban Farm, and his wife, Mollie, ran a small tavern, dance hall, general store, and post office at this location. It is also believed this site was the location of a wagon train stop between 1845 and 1904. The original tavern building caught fire in 1958 and the dance hall became what is now the primary building on the site, which houses the current uses, i.e. tavern and dance hall, with the grove area adjacent to it for outdoor seating and concerts. The current building has undergone alterations and additions, most notably, two (2) wings were added on either side of the original dance hall.

Over the years, Stovall's Grove has had a rich history and link to 'Hillbilly Music', most notably, the Missouri Valley Boys, which included Delmar and Delbert Stovall (twin sons of George and Mollie Stovall), and is known as the oldest running County-Western Show in Missouri. The Stovall's sons began playing music at this location in the 1930s and, when they returned from WWII, they formed the Missouri Valley Boys, who continue to perform at Stovall's Grove today, now with different members. Interestingly, Delmar Stovall, who is eighty-five (85) years old, still plays with the band on certain Saturday nights. Delmar and Delbert Stovall live in the houses next door to Stovall's Grove and Delmar's wife, Norma, also continues to work at the establishment, evidence of the rich history and family connection to this site.

The Stovall's sold the property to Dennis and Liz Elze and Dave Long in 2007. The current owners have maintained the look and feel of the old tavern, while completing some interior renovations. The interior of the tavern/dance hall has an extensive collection of vintage Americana bar items and the bandstand has remained unchanged since the 1950s, which includes decorative wagon wheels from the early 1900s. The current

owners are committed to preserving this musical connection to the past by ensuring this establishment is successful and operational for years to come.

The approximately one (1) acre tract of land, where the tavern/dance hall is situated, is a level site, with an informal parking area to the north and a shaded outdoor seating area (grove) to the east. The property is heavily wooded along its rear property line and slopes towards the creek. At Highway 100, the petitioners have one (1) access point from Stovall Lane.

Current Request:

The petitioners, Dennis and Liz Elze and Dave Long, are requesting the Commission's favorable consideration of their request to place this dance hall/tavern building and grove area on the City's Historic Registry. The petitioners were not originally seeking any type of land use or other incentive package from the City of Wildwood's Historic Preservation Commission, but after discussion at the public hearing, they would like to preserve and maintain the commercial use on the property, so as to ensure the activity remains a part of this community 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, Stovall's Grove, the Commission has determined that by Items 1, 10, 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 property, and building, will guarantee their 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 property'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 past role of this historic asset in the community reaches through many generations and continues to provide an active link to the past in this changing area.

Areas for Certificate of Appropriateness:

The Historic Preservation Commission is recommending a single level of development 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: Exterior only - building - primary elevations on all four (4) sides (North, West, East, and South, including the grove - Figures 1 through 4).

Figure 1. - North Elevation



Figure 2. - West Elevation



Figure 3. - East Elevation ↓



Figure 4. - East Elevation (Grove) ↓



With the dance hall/tavern structure's placement on the City's Historic Registry, and limiting the Commission's review authority to exterior alterations, certain activities by the owner will require a Certificate of Appropriateness include:

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 architectural feature or its appearance, as specified in the ordinance designating the historic property; and
4. Any construction, alteration or removal involving earth-disturbing activities that might affect the immediate area around the foundation of the building or within the grove
5. Any addition or modification to the site or its improvements altering its function and/or character.

Specific Items Initiating Review:

- ✓ Roof Repairs or Replacements
- ✓ Painting of Exterior of the Building
- ✓ Repair or Replacement of Exterior Siding
- ✓ Installation or Removal of Windows
- ✓ Repair or Replacement of Doors
- ✓ Structural Modifications to Porch or Building
- ✓ 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)

Incentives:

Although the petitioners' did not initiate this process for the placement of this asset (Stovall's Grove) on the City's Historic Registry seeking certain incentives, it was apparent from the discussion at the public hearing on this item, such an action might be

beneficial to the long-term vitality of the property and its retention. Given Stovall's Grove has been part of the community long before St. Louis County's zoning action in 1965 to designate the property NU Non-Urban District, it remains a legal non-conforming use under the City of Wildwood's Zoning Ordinance. This situation allows the business to operate in this residential district, but under certain limitations regarding expansions, alterations, and other activities of a similar nature. In principle, the City's Zoning Ordinance regulations governing non-conformities actually seeks to see them brought into compliance with the current district designation in place or eliminate them altogether. Given zoning law in this regard, the petitioners could benefit from an incentive package offered in association with this registry request.

To this end, the Historic Preservation Commission is recommending the City Council allow the activity, Stovall's Grove Music Hall and Tavern, to be considered as a use by right under the current zoning district designation and remove its non-conforming status associated with it. However, this use by right of the current activity is limited to the dance hall/tavern and outdoor grove area, not the two (2) existing single-family dwellings. Along with this determination (undertaken by ordinance), the Historic Preservation Commission believes any incentive action by the City Council should include the following items:

1. Any expansion, alternation, or change to the building constituting no more than a fifty (50) percent increase in its gross floor area be allowed by right.
2. Any additional parking requested for the site be authorized, as long as compliance to the Parking Regulations of the Zoning Ordinance are achieved in its design and construction (use C-1 Neighborhood Business District standards, where applicable).
3. Any damage to the building that exceeds more than sixty (60) percent of its replacement value would not preclude its immediate reconstruction to its former condition, without the need of a Board of Adjustment action.
4. Any requirements relating to the Grading Code and Tree Preservation and Restoration Code that may be applied to changes to the site or its utility network would be waived, under appropriate circumstances.
5. Any requests relating to additional signage adhere to the City of Wildwood's Sign Regulations, Section 415.400 (specifically, use C-1 Neighborhood Business District standards, where applicable, and Section 415.420 Sign Regulations for all "C" and "M" Districts).

Although this set of incentives would allow this commercial activity to co-exist in an established residential neighborhood, the balance between the two (2) differing land use patterns seems to have been reached and can be considered appropriate here. The Commission would again state that such a set of incentives will guarantee the retention of the use at this location, much in its current condition for future generations of Wildwood residents and visitors, who enjoy a true Country-Western music experience.

Summary and Recommendation:

The Historic Preservation Commission has determined the subject building and grove comply 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 their 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 and property's character, while not encumbering the owner with a lengthy review process for simple changes or preventative maintenance. The Historic Preservation Commission has determined a limited package of incentives should be offered to the petitioners, as a means to perpetuate this activity at this location and not cause this historic site to be lost to issues relating to zoning laws for non-conformities.

In conclusion, the Commission appreciates and supports the fact the petitioners have been able to maintain this historic asset and use that has been in place for many years and believes it is a wonderful example to the Wildwood community of this area's history and the value of historic preservation, as a way to enrich a community's character and respect its past.

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
- Dennis and Liz Elze and Dave Long, Property Owners
- Liz Montalbano, Planner

Figure 6. - Generalized Site Map

