

Handout by Pat Fowler

Columbia Historic Preservation Commission

May 17, 2018

Mayor Brian N. Treece
City of Columbia
701 East Broadway
Columbia MO 65201

Re: Council Bill 72-18

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

Our City of Columbia Historic Preservation Commission is pleased to submit this letter in response to your request of April 16, 2018 that we review the structures known at 910 and 912 East Walnut prior to your consideration of CB 72-18 regarding the purchase of land currently owned by the Hallie Holland Living Trust. We expressly take no position on your decision to purchase the property for the stated reason, instead offering you our recommendation should the city take ownership of the historic home and attached structure on the north side of the parcel.

On Saturday April 28, 2018, three members of the commission (Amanda Staley-Harrison, Mark Wahrenbrock, and me), Chris Campbell, Executive Director of the Boone County Historical Society, and David Sorrell, City of Columbia Public Works reviewed the inside and the outside of the home and small commercial building with Justin Waigandt, property manager for, and grandson of, Hallie Holland. Justin's parents own other properties in the immediate vicinity. With permission of the property manager, we took photos of the interior and exterior and shared them with Deb Sheals who was out of town and unable to participate in our walk through.

From my reading of the appraisal dated January 8, 2018 (appraisal having taken place on December 18-21, 2017 despite a typo indicating it was 2018) and performed at the request of the City of Columbia, we understand the home was built in 1910, the smaller, commercial, structure constructed in 1948. Combined the two structures represent 3 residential apartments and 1 commercial space.

One of the residential apartments is currently leased as an organizing office for several state-wide petition efforts. Each of the spaces are currently rented for \$500 to \$550, with the larger first floor residential (currently used as commercial) rented at a higher rate. The rental fees for each of the units does include heat and hot water (boiler provides heat and hot water from a single system) but not electricity.

The property had previously been on the market by the prior owner for \$750,000 with no offers. The appraisal estimates that when the property was purchased in June of 2016 as part of a group transaction of several properties, the sale price of \$580,000 was allocated for the purchase of the buildings and lot located at 910-912. We recommend that you ask for, and review, the first 17 pages of the Moore and Shyrock LLC appraisal as we have.



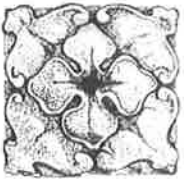
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City rental property inspections show citations and corrective action at the time the Hallie Holland Trust took over possession and management of both the residential and commercial space in the summer and fall of 2016. One of the residential tenants, who works downtown has resided at this address for more than 12 years and is currently paying a modest rent of \$550 a month.

What we found inside the home at 910 was a spacious and largely intact two story structure with few modifications (mostly to awkwardly provide closets for the tenants and to reach the second floor of the small commercial building adjacent) and now used as two residential apartments attached to a third apartment over the small commercial structure next door. Upstairs rooms in both apartments have been minimally modified to include galley kitchens. Downstairs a lean-to porch had been added off the original kitchen (evident by examination of the roof line) in order to provide a downstairs bathroom. There are indications that as a single family home, the first floor living space may have included pocket doors between the front room and the dining room, at least one if not two butler pantries, perhaps a music room or parlor at the end of the entry hall, and a second story with large rooms and the original bathroom configuration. The trim around the doors and windows, picture rail and baseboards throughout appear to be original in the style indicative of the interior design elements found in other homes of this age. The large front room contains a fireplace complete with a decorative grill cover indicating that at one time it burned coal as one means to heat the home. Chris Campbell summarized it best, this is a handsome house built by people of economic means and indicative of family living in the first half of the 20th century.

The front hall shows water damage to the plaster directly above the baseboards. There are other signs of wear and tear over the intervening 108 years. There is an awkward step down from the larger home to the second floor apartment over 912. The upstairs hallway has been enclosed in order to provide a second floor apartment. At least one exterior window to the east, with curved brick arches and a rusticated stone lintel beneath, has been enclosed presumably to allow for a wall to enclose the second floor small apartment next door. The indication of that window is evident in the bathroom of the small apartment where you can still access the stone lintel beneath the window and see the shape of the curved brick arch. Perhaps that window is still present beneath the wall surface waiting for potential uncovering.

As additional research, I reviewed both Ancestry.com and the City Directories at both the State Historical Society Research Room and the DBRL Reference Area. They tell, among other stories, the family history of Cecil Fuller Crane, born in August 1895, raised on a Boone County family farm, drafted into military service in World War I, owner of an auto repair business located first on N 9th Street later on N 7th Street, married to Lena, owning and living in their home at 910 East Walnut in the mid 1920's and raising their 2 small children in it. There are records indicating that Cecil, with Lena, purchased another home a few years later for their growing family at 146 N Glenwood. Cecil was drafted into the US military at age 46 during World War II, presumably served and returned home and later died in Boone County in 1960. Other families and individuals have resided in the home. During the Great Depression and war years it appears to have become a rooming house for working individuals. Those residential uses continue to this day as affordable downtown housing for workers and students.



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The vertical street file at the State Historical Society contains a photo which indicates that the home, First Christian Church across the street, and the former Athens Hotel survived a tornado that touched down nearby in May of 1925.

Our research is by no means exhaustive, yet it indicates that this home is representative of the personal history of many Boone County individuals, raised on the family farm, who learned their first skill sets as farm workers and then took that knowledge with them to town to start small businesses that improved their lives economically and the lives of the employees who worked for them.

Given its largely intact interior design elements and its ability to tell the story of many Boone County rural families turned Columbia citizens, the Historic Preservation Commission makes the following recommendation. Should the City Council vote to acquire the home located at 910 East Walnut and the accompanying small commercial building at 912 East Walnut through its purchase of this parcel we strongly recommend that Council direct City Staff to nominate and seek to place the home at 910 East Walnut, with the commercial structure attached, on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register of Historic Places for Boone County has 50 listings including the former McClain Furniture Store, 916 East Walnut, immediately adjacent to the 910 East Walnut Street home. The process for such nomination is well known to city staff and its consultants and the timetable for subdividing the parcel would provide sufficient time for completing the application process prior to any subsequent sale of the home and small commercial structure to a third party.

Once again we appreciate the opportunity to be of service to the City Council as you make this decision. We expressly take no position on your decision to purchase the property for the stated reason, instead offering to you our recommendation should the city take ownership of the historic home and attached structure on the north side of the parcel.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Fowler
Chair

Cc:
Mike Matthes, City Manager
Sheela Amin, City Clerk
David Sorrell, City of Columbia Public Works
Chris Campbell, Boone County Historical Society
Scott Wilson, Chair of the Downtown Columbia Leadership Council
Rusty Palmer, City of Columbia Community Development Department
City of Columbia Historic Preservation Commission Members