



Legislation Text

File #: HL17-0001, Version: 1

**Planning Report
HL17-0001 / O'Neil Ford Civic Complex
City Council District 1
Planning & Zoning Commission
May 24, 2017**

REQUEST:

Hold a public hearing and consider making a recommendation to the City Council regarding designating the O'Neil Ford Civic Complex as a Local Historic Landmark. The O'Neil Ford Complex is bounded by Withers Street on the north, Bell Avenue on the east, McKinney Street on the south and Austin and Oakland Streets on the west. (HL17-0001, O'Neil Ford Civic Complex, Roman McAllen)

BACKGROUND

O'Neil Ford designed many buildings in Denton, his adopted hometown. Among them are the City of Denton Civic Center (1966) and the City Hall (1967). O'Neil Ford and his firm also designed additions to the Emily Fowler Public Library in 1969 and again in 1980. Also designed by the O'Neil Ford firm in 1965 is the City of Denton Municipal Swimming Pool, though only a few elements still remain of the original design. Acclaimed architecture critic, David Dillon, wrote that O'Neil Ford (1905-1982) was the most influential Texas architect of the twentieth century. Few would venture to argue otherwise.

In July of 1992 the City of Denton officially designated the area, bounded by Withers Street on the north, Bell Avenue on the east, McKinney Street on the south and Austin and Oakland Streets on the west, as the O'Neil Ford Civic Complex. In July 1993, the City Council installed and dedicated a Local Historic Landmark marker in the courtyard on the south side of the City Hall; however, the Planning Division has been unsuccessful in locating the ordinance that would have officially designated the Complex as a Local Historic Landmark. The item before you is to consider making a recommendation to the City Council for the adoption of an ordinance formalizing designation of the complex. On April 10, 2017, the Historic Landmark Commission voted (8-0) recommending approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission to formally designate the O'Neil Civic Complex as a Historic Landmark.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The designation of an historic resource in the City of Denton falls within Element 4, Community Character & Urban Design of the Denton Plan 2030. Element 4 was developed to identify, preserve, maintain, and create character areas within the city. Designations also fall within Element 7, Housing and Neighborhoods. Element 7 calls for being proactive in neighborhood conservation and using historic district designations as a defense mechanism to prevent spillover impacts from adjacent corridor and center development, and from capital investments such as road widening.

CONSIDERATIONS

1. The O'Neil Ford Civic Complex is formally defined by Resolution Number R92-040. The Resolution formally adopted names of certain city facilities.

2. City Hall is 50 years old this year and the other buildings located in the Complex have recently reached this milestone.
3. The criteria for Historic Landmark Designations are provided in Section 35.7.6.4 of the DDC.
4. In making the designations, City Council shall consider but shall not be limited to one (1) or more of the following criteria:
 1. Character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, state or the United States;
 2. Recognition as a recorded state historic landmark, a national historic landmark or entered into the National Register of Historic Places;
 3. Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen;
 4. Identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city;
 5. Embodiment of elements of architectural design, detail, material or craftsmanship which represent a significant architectural innovation;
 6. Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites or areas which are eligible for preservation according to a plan based on architectural, historic or cultural motif;
 7. Portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an area of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style;
 8. Archeological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories of historic or prehistoric interest;
 9. Exemplification of the cultural, economic, social, ethnic or historical heritage of the city, state, or United States;
 10. Location as the site of a significant historic event;
 11. Identification with a person who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city, state or United States;
 12. A building or structure that because of its location has become of value to a neighborhood, community area or the city;
 13. Value as an aspect of community sentiment or public pride.

5. This property meets criteria number 4:

Mike Cochran, former Chairman of the Historic Landmark Commission, and author of a small catalogue titled, O'Neil Ford Architect - A Catalogue of the Works of O'Neil Ford in Denton, Texas, wrote "O'Neil Ford is arguably the most prominent architect to have come from Texas. In his long and distinguished career, he achieved both popular and critical success, yet retained a strong life-long link to his hometown of Denton."

OPTIONS

1. Recommend approval as submitted
2. Recommend approval subject to conditions
3. Recommend denial
4. Continue the item

RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Landmark Commission recommends approval (8-0).

Staff recommends that the O'Neil Ford Civic Complex be formally designated a Local Historic Landmark. This designation is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Denton Plan 2030 and meets the criteria for Historic Landmark Designations as outlined in the Denton Development Code.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION:

To comply with the public hearing notice requirements, 45 notices were sent to property owners within 200 feet of the subject property, 215 courtesy notices were sent to physical addresses within 500 feet of the subject property, a notice was published in the Denton Record Chronicle, and signs were placed on the property.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (Council, Boards, Commissions)

April 10, 2017 - Historic Landmark Commission Meeting

EXHIBITS

1. Resolution R92-040
2. Image of Marker installed on July 21, 1993
3. Denton Record Chronicle Article on O'Neil Ford, January 1993
4. May 10, 1993, HLC Minutes - Consideration of Wording of Marker
5. Letter from City Manager agreeing that Complex should be designated
6. Letter from Attorney for Woman's Club to consider inclusion of that building in the complex
7. October 5, 1993, Memo to HLC regarding options for review
8. 1993 O'Neil Ford Civic Complex Map
9. October 11, 1993, HLC Minutes
10. August 17, 1993, Designation of Complex Memo
11. Current Map of the area
12. Responses to notice

Respectfully submitted:
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