

 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Council Communication</b> Office of the City Manager</p>	<b>Date:</b>	November 20, 2017
	<b>Agenda Item No.</b>	<b>54</b>
	<b>Roll Call No.</b>	[ _____ ]
	<b>Communication No.</b>	<b><u>17-810</u></b>
	<b>Submitted by:</b>	<b>Phillip Delafield, Community Development Director</b>

**AGENDA HEADING:**

Consideration of proposal to demolish three (3) City-owned buildings at Fort Des Moines known as Buildings 135, 308, and 309 pursuant to Section 58-70 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Choose Alternative A or B.

(A) Determination that the proposed demolition of the buildings shall be referred to the Landmark Review Board (LRB).

(B) Determination that the proposed demolition of the buildings shall not be referred to the LRB.

**SYNOPSIS:**

On October 2, 2017, the City Council reviewed the condition and status of Buildings 135, 308 and 309 at the Fort Des Moines National Historic Landmark site during a workshop session. The City Council directed staff to begin the City’s Demolition Review Process included in Chapter 58 of the Municipal Code and to follow through with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on any separate requirements included in executed Memorandums of Agreement or Deed Restrictions.

On November 3, 2017, a written request was submitted to begin the 90-day review process with SHPO per deed restrictions approved by City Council on October 19, 1998 by Roll Call No. 98-3218 and filed in the Office of the Polk County Recorder on November 17, 1999. In accordance with Section 58-70 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, staff has reviewed the site and determined that the buildings meets the criteria for local landmark designation set forth in Section 58-58. Section 58-70(d) requires the City Council to determine if a request should be referred to the LRB for further study or not if staff determines a building or site is eligible for local landmark designation. Staff recommends the item be referred to the LRB for further analysis to be completed within the 90-day SHPO comment period.

**FISCAL IMPACT: NONE**

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

- Fort Des Moines was established in 1903 as a cavalry post and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1974.
- According to the National Park Service webpage “National Historic Landmarks are nationally significant historic places designated by the Secretary of the Interior because they possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States.”

- Contributing to its landmark status are three (3) historically significant periods:
  - In 1917 it became the site of the Provisional Army Officer Training School, which was the U.S. Army's first extensive attempt to train African American men for military leadership.
  - During World War I the Fort was recognized for the contributions of Hospital #26 for servicing injured veterans, of note were its specialties in orthopedic surgery.
  - During World War II, it was home to the first Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, where more than 72,000 women completed training to assist the military.
- Building 135 was completed in 1904 and was originally constructed as a granary storehouse.
- Buildings 308 and 309 were completed in 1942 and were originally constructed as mess halls.
- Staff recommends the item be referred to the City's LRB for further analysis and public dialog to be conducted concurrently with the 90-day comment period the City is required to provide the SHPO.
- An optional tour for LRB members would be provided and the information from the City Council workshop would be presented at a LRB meeting.
- The City Council would be advised of any comments or recommendations received from the LRB and the SHPO.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S): NONE**

**BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE**

**ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:**

Receive and file communications from the State Historic Preservation Office and the LRB.

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