



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

**APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF ZONING**

**Request:**

The Office of Historic Preservation requests a change of zoning to add “HL” Historic Landmark designation to 215 Lowell St and to waive all related fees. *OHP staff recommends approval.*

**Case Comments:**

On August 21, 2019, the Historic and Design Review Commission (HDRC) agreed with the applicant’s request for a finding of historic significance and supported the designation of the property as a local landmark.

**Case History:**

October 1, 2019	Zoning Commission hearing
August 21, 2019	Historic & Design Review Commission (HDRC) hearing
June 26, 2019	Application for Historic Landmark Designation submitted to OHP

**Applicable Citations:**

**Note:** In accordance with the process for designation of a historic landmark, as outlined in Section 35-607 of the UDC, properties must meet three of sixteen criteria. This property meets three Criteria for Evaluation.

*Unified Development Code Sec. 35-607. – Designation Criteria for Historic Districts and Landmarks.*

- a. **Process for Considering Designation of Historic Districts and Landmarks.** Historic districts and landmarks shall be evaluated for designation using the criteria listed in subsection (b) and the criteria applied to evaluate properties for inclusion in the National Register. In order to be eligible for historic landmark designation, properties shall meet at least three (3) of the criteria listed. Historic districts shall consist of at least two (2) or more structures within a legally defined boundary that meet at least three (3) of the criteria. Additionally, all designated landmarks and districts shall demonstrate clear delineation of the legal boundaries of such designated resources.
- b. **Criteria for Evaluation.**
  3. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the community, county, state, or nation;
  5. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials;
  13. It bears an important and significant relationship to other distinctive structures, sites, or areas, either as an important collection of properties or architectural style or craftsmanship with few intrusions, or by contributing to the overall character of the area according to the plan based on architectural, historic or cultural motif.

**Findings of Fact:**

- a. The request for landmark designation was initiated by the property owner.
- b. **HISTORIC CONTEXT:** The structure at 215 Lowell St is a single-story Folk Victorian residence built c. 1908 by Henry Adolph Schoenfeld Sr. for his son. MP2 Urban Development LLC currently owns the property. Schoenfeld Sr., an immigrant from Saxony, Germany, moved to San Antonio in 1890 after living in Austin, “where he had been employed in the erection of the Driskill hotel and state capitol buildings.” In San Antonio, he “had been identified with the construction of many buildings, both public and private.” Schoenfeld Sr. purchased land from R. H. Hunstock in January

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1907, and began construction of two identical homes on a double lot in 1908, addressed 221 and 219 Lowell St (now 217 and 215 Lowell St). The twin houses still stand at 217 and 215 Lowell St. The Folk Victorian style exemplified by the home at 215 Lowell was a popular residential building typology c. 1870-1910. The steeply-pitched hipped roof with intersecting gables and nearly pyramidal form is found in southern states, but is less common elsewhere.

- c. **SITE CONTEXT:** 215 Lowell St is located in the Roosevelt Park neighborhood of City Council District 5. It is centered on the north side of Lowell St on a block bounded to the south by Lowell St, the west by Roosevelt Ave, the north by Groveton St. The neighborhood, bounded by the San Antonio River and interstates 10 and 27 is an area known as St. Cecilia, named for the presence of St. Cecilia's Catholic Church on W Whittier St, on the block southeast of the subject structure. The area has been identified by staff as an eligible historic district.
- d. **ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:** The bulk of the pier-and-beam house's form is a steeply-hipped, nearly pyramidal standing-seam metal roof with a dormer centered on the south and a front-facing closed gable protruding from the southwest side. Dutch lap siding covers all elevations. The gables have decorative shake, and the front gable has lace-like brackets surrounding an attic vent in the shape of a gothic window. Character-defining features of 215 Lowell St include decorative shake in gables, a steeply-pitched hipped roof with intersecting gables, lace-like brackets in the front-facing gable, and Dutch lap siding.
- e. **EVALUATION:** In order to be eligible for historic landmark designation, properties shall meet at least three (3) of the 16 criteria listed. Staff evaluated the structure against all 16 criteria and determined that it was consistent with UDC sec. 35-607(b):
  3. **Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the community, county, state, or nation;** the house was built by German immigrant Henry Adolph Schoenfeld Sr., who worked on the Driskill Hotel, the Texas state capitol building, and numerous local residential and commercial projects.
  5. **Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials;** as an example of a Folk Victorian residence.
  13. **It bears an important and significant relationship to other distinctive structures, sites, or areas, either as an important collection of properties or architectural style or craftsmanship with few intrusions, or by contributing to the overall character of the area according to the plan based on architectural, historic or cultural motif;** the structure is identical to and built by the same person as 217 Lowell St, just west of 215 Lowell St. Additionally, the residence is located in an area known as St. Cecilia, identified by staff as an eligible local historic district.
- f. The City offers a tax incentive for the substantial rehabilitation of historic properties because historic landmarks possess cultural and historical value and contribute to the overall quality and character of the City and its neighborhoods. If historic designation is approved, rehabilitation and restoration work may be eligible for this incentive. State and Federal tax incentives are also available for properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and provide substantial relief for rehabilitation projects.
- g. If the HDRC approves the Finding of Historic Significance, then the recommendation for designation is submitted to the zoning commission. The zoning commission will schedule a hearing and then forward its recommendation to the City Council. City Council has the ultimate authority to approve the historic designation zoning overlay.

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- h. Per UDC Sec. 35-453, once the commission makes a recommendation for designation, property owners must receive a written approval (a Certificate of Appropriateness) for any exterior work until the City Council makes their final decision.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

HDRC recommendation

HDRC published exhibits