



City of Phoenix
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Historic Preservation Office

Staff Report: Z-23-14-6
July 18, 2014

INTRODUCTION

Z-23-14-6 is a request to establish Historic Preservation (HP) overlay zoning for the property known as the Farmers & Stockmens Bank, located approximately 900 feet east of the southeast corner of 48th and Washington Streets [5001 East Washington Street]. Maps and photos of the subject property are attached.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that rezoning request Z-23-14-6 be approved.

BACKGROUND

Following the January 2011 release of *Midcentury Marvels: Commercial Architecture of Phoenix 1945-1975*, HP staff contacted owners whose properties were featured in the book to see if they would be interested in historic designation. The subject property was one of those featured in the book but the property owner at the time—Bank of America—did not respond to the City's letter. The following year, Bank of America closed the branch that was operating in the building and put the property up for sale.

In 2013, the property was acquired by the current owner—Stockmens Building, LLC, a limited liability company affiliated with the Jokake Companies, owner of the larger Stockyards Restaurant site. In April 2014, Jokake submitted a grant application to the HP Office, requesting funding assistance to restore the building to its 1950s appearance. Jokake intends to market the restored building for a long-term tenant lease, most likely as offices, although other uses consistent with the historic character may also be considered. The grant request was approved by the City Council on July 2, 2014, in the amount of \$140,000.

In conjunction with the grant project, Jokake has requested that the property be rezoned with an HP zoning overlay. Consistent with this request, the HP Commission initiated HP overlay zoning for the property on May 19, 2014. HP staff received a signed Proposition 207 waiver from the property owner on July 22, 2014.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The eligibility criteria for HP overlay zoning and listing on the Phoenix Historic Property Register are set forth in Section 807.D of the City of Phoenix Zoning Ordinance. To qualify, a property must demonstrate significance in local, regional, state, or national

history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture, according to one or more of the following criteria:

- A. The property is associated with the events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history;
- B. The property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represents the work of a master, possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. The property has yielded or may likely yield information integral to the understanding of our prehistory or history.

In addition to the significance requirement, the property must also be at least 50 years old or have achieved significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance. The property must also possess sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its significance.

Completed in 1951, the Farmers & Stockmens Bank meets the 50-year age requirement. It meets Criterion A for significance in the area of commerce, representing the postwar expansion of the banking industry in the Salt River Valley. The property is also potentially eligible under Criterion C because of its unique architecture. Some notable alterations have diminished the property's integrity, yet it remains sufficiently intact to convey its historical significance. The alterations will be reversed as part of the grant-funded work.

SIGNIFICANCE

Criterion A: Commerce

The 1950s saw significant expansion of the banking industry in the Salt River Valley. At the beginning of the decade, there were just three banking corporations in Phoenix—the Bank of Douglas, First National Bank of Arizona and Valley National Bank. Each company had a main office in downtown Phoenix and a small number of branches throughout the valley—the Bank of Douglas had one branch, the First National Bank of Arizona had 5 branches, and the Valley National Bank had 3 branches. By the end of the decade, the Bank of Douglas had 8 branches, the First National Bank of Arizona had 16 branches, the Valley National Bank had 13 branches, and three new banking corporations had been formed.

Among the new corporations was the Farmers & Stockmens Bank, incorporated on July 11, 1950 by P.E. Tovrea, Kemper Marley and William A. Evans. Tovrea and Marley were influential cattlemen while Evans was a prominent attorney. According to the articles of incorporation, the company was created “to engage in, carry on and conduct the business of banking in all its aspects.”

The August 1950 edition of *Arizona Builder & Contractor* announced that the newly formed bank would soon begin construction of its first building. Displaying an architect's rendering of the proposed structure, the article stated, "William L. Pereira, Los Angeles architect, has designed this attractive and unique new building for Arizona's newest banking institution—the Farmers and Stockmens Bank—which will be built adjacent to the present administration building of the Tovrea Land & Cattle Company, 5001 East Washington Street, Phoenix. Cost of the investment is estimated at \$100,000, and work on the new building is supposed to start sometime in September after bids are called and a contract let for its construction."

Six months later, a follow-up article in the February 1951 edition of *Arizona Builder & Contractor* showed a photo of the building under construction. It stated, "The Perry-Brignall Construction Company, Phoenix contractors, are building this new building for the Farmers & Stockmens Bank, at 5001 East Washington on a \$104,000 contract."

The structure was completed in time to be included in the 1951 Phoenix City Directory. The directory indicates that Roy Woodard was bank president, H.E. Fletcher was vice president and cashier, and Henry Kink was assistant cashier. By 1953, the bank had opened a second office in the Harber Building at 313 North Central Avenue. This four-story building became the bank's main office while the building at 5001 East Washington functioned as a branch office.

Despite the bank's success, its history was a short one, as the Farmers & Stockmens Bank merged with the Bank of Douglas on July 1, 1957. The 1958 Phoenix City Directory shows the building at 5001 East Washington Street as the Stockyards Branch of the Bank of Douglas. The Bank of Douglas later became the Arizona Bank; it was acquired by Security Pacific Bank in 1986, which merged with Bank of America in 1992. Bank of America occupied the subject property until 2012 then sold it the following year.

The subject property is eligible for historic designation as it represents the postwar expansion of the banking industry in the Salt River Valley. The property represents the earliest phase of expansion (1945-1951) and is one of the oldest intact bank buildings remaining in Phoenix.

Criterion C: Architecture

In addition to its significance in the area of commerce, the Farmers & Stockmens Bank is also important for its architectural character. The building was designed by California architect William Pereira and is one of only four known works by Pereira in Arizona.

Pereira graduated from the University of Illinois in 1930. He first worked for the Chicago firm of Holabird & Root and gained some of his earliest architectural experience helping to draft the master plan for the 1933 Chicago World's Fair. He moved to California in 1938 and had a brief stint as a Hollywood art director, sharing an Academy Award for Best Special Effects for the action/adventure film *Reap the Wild Wind* (1942). Pereira

was also the producer of the noir crime/drama *Johnny Angel* (1945) and the Joan Fontaine drama *From This Day Forward* (1946).

In 1949, Pereira became a professor of architecture at the University of Southern California. The following year he formed a partnership with fellow architect and former University of Illinois classmate, Charles Luckman. The firm—Pereira & Luckman—grew into one of the nation's most prolific, designing some of Los Angeles' most well-known buildings, including the "Theme Building" at Los Angeles International Airport (in collaboration with Paul Williams and Welton Becket). Other Pereira designs include the San Francisco Transamerica Pyramid, the Los Angeles CBS Television Studios, the Los Angeles County Art Museum and the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim. Pereira also created the master plan for the city of Irvine, California, which put his photograph on the cover of *Time* magazine in September 1963. He became a fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1958. Besides his buildings, Pereira's greatest legacy are the numerous respected architects who worked for his firm and studied under him at USC, including Gin Wong, William Blurock and Frank Gehry.

Pereira's design for the Farmers & Stockmens Bank was highly innovative, successfully blending Modern architecture with regional influences. The main portion of the building utilized the boxlike massing and glass curtain walls of the International style, influenced by the designs of Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe. Yet the portion of the building housing the vault was cylindrical, evoking a southwestern Native American kiva. Constructed of desert masonry, it clearly borrowed from Taliesin West and Frank Lloyd Wright. This successful blending of styles became highly influential in its own right, inspiring the designs of other branch banks constructed in Phoenix and the Valley for decades to come. Perhaps the most obvious example is the award-winning Valley National Bank branch at 4401 East Camelback Road, designed by Frank Henry, which took the hybrid concept to new heights 16 years later.

The Farmers & Stockmens Bank was featured in both *A Guide to the Architecture of Metro Phoenix*, published by the Central Arizona Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1983, and *Midcentury Marvels: Commercial Architecture of Phoenix 1945-1975*, published by the City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office in 2010.

INTEGRITY

As previously mentioned, a few notable alterations have diminished the property's integrity. Specifically, several of the glass panels have been replaced with stucco, diminishing the original design and making it more difficult to associate the building with the International style. These alterations will be reversed as part of the grant-funded work. Once the work is completed the property will be fully eligible under Criterion C. At present, the building retains sufficient integrity to be listed under Criterion A.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

Section 807.E states that, when applying the evaluation criteria in Section 807.D, the boundaries of a historic district should be drawn as carefully as possible to ensure that:

1. The district contains documented historic, architectural, archaeological or natural resources;
2. The district boundaries coincide with documented historic boundaries such as early roadways, canals, subdivision plats or property lines;
3. Other district boundaries coincide with logical physical or manmade features and reflect recognized neighborhood or area boundaries; and
4. Other non-historic resources or vacant land is included where necessary to create appropriate boundaries to assist in meeting the criteria in Section 807.D.

The proposed HP zoning boundary follows the parcel boundary and includes the bank building, associated landscape features (palms, planters, etc.) and a view corridor of the building from Washington Street. However, it purposely excludes the northwest corner of the parcel because the owner intends to construct a new one-story building in this location. The total area to be rezoned is 1.54 acres. This boundary is recommended by both staff and the property owner.

CONCLUSION

The rezoning request Z-23-14-6 to establish Historic Preservation (HP) overlay zoning for the subject property should be approved for the following reasons:

1. The property meets the significance, age, and integrity requirements for HP overlay zoning set forth in Section 807.D of the Zoning Ordinance; and
2. The proposed boundaries meet the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 807.E.

Writer

K. Weight

7/18/14

Team Leader

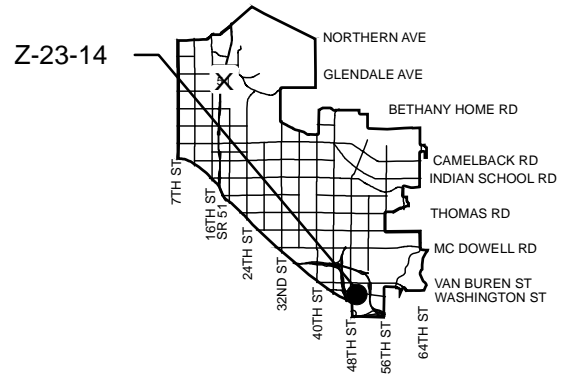
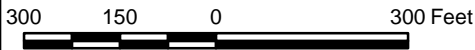
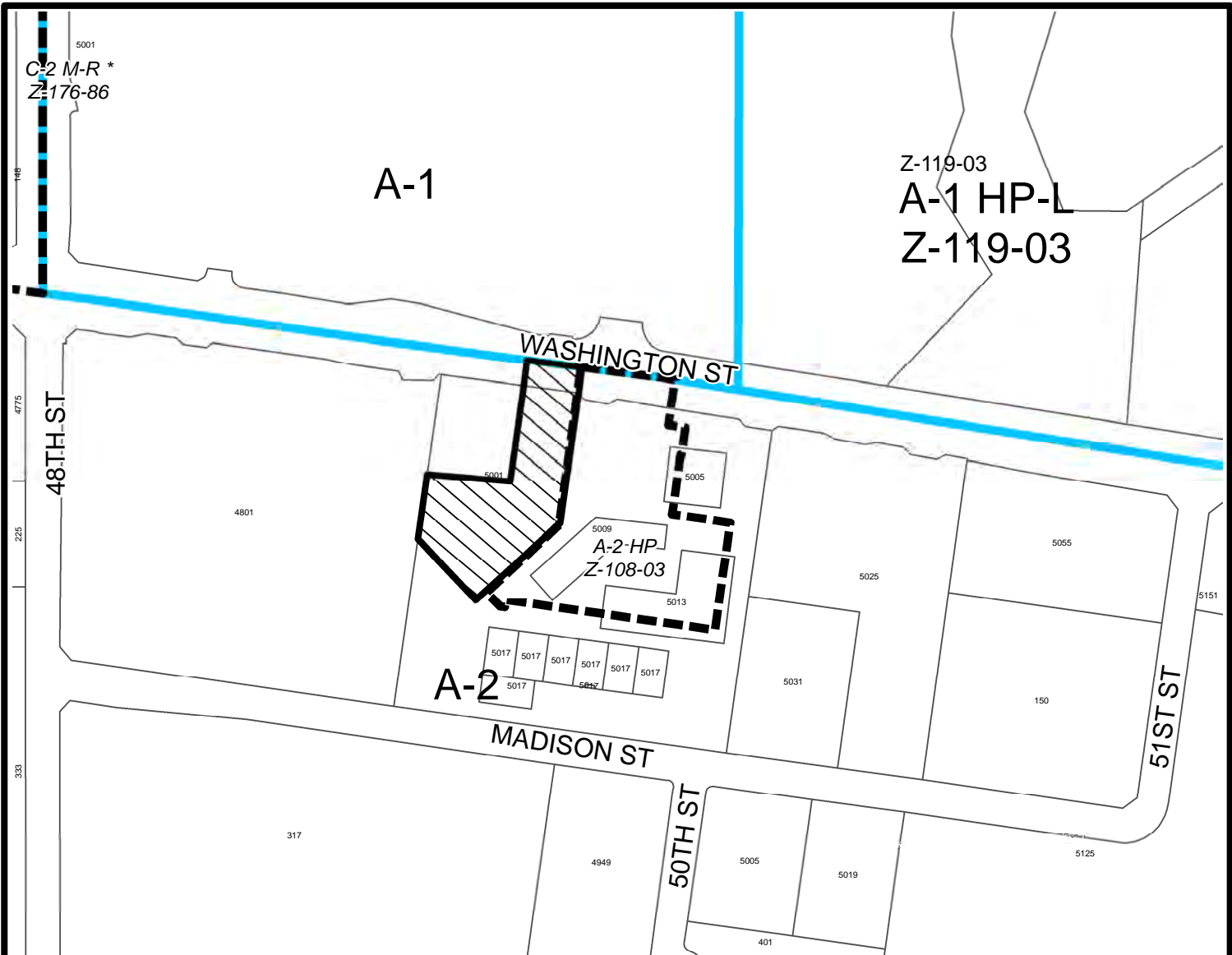
M. Dodds

Attachments

Sketch Map (1 page)

Aerial (1 page)

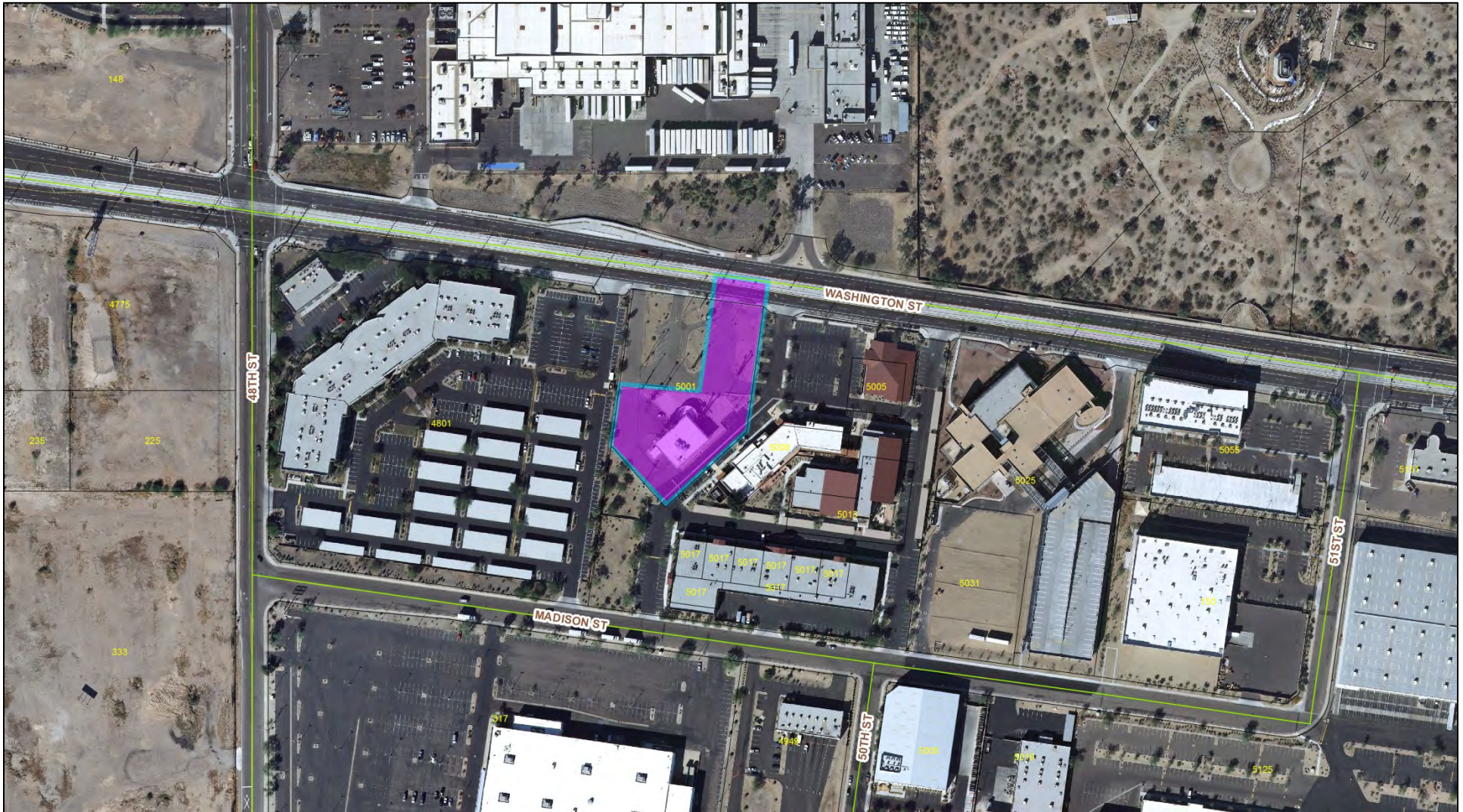
Photos (3 pages)



CITY OF PHOENIX PLANNING DEPARTMENT
CAMELBACK EAST VILLAGE
CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT: 6

APPLICANT'S NAME: City of Phoenix Hist. Pres. Commission		REQUESTED CHANGE:	
APPLICATION NO. Z-23-14		FROM: A-2, (1.54 a.c.)	
<small>GROSS AREA INCLUDING 1/2 STREET AND ALLEY DEDICATION IS APPROX.</small> 1.54 Acres		TO: A-2 HP, (1.54 a.c.)	
MULTIPLES PERMITTED		CONVENTIONAL OPTION	
* UNITS P.R.D. OPTION			

* Maximum Units Allowed with P.R.D. Bonus



Farmers & Stockmens Bank
5001 E. Washington St.
Proposed Historic Preservation Overlay Zoning
(area shaded in purple)



Prepared by the City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office
7/18/2014



Article from *Arizona Builder & Contractor*, August 1950



Farmers & Stockmens Bank, exterior, 1950s



Stockyards Building with Farmers & Stockmens Bank in background, exterior, 1950s



Farmers & Stockmens Bank, exterior, 2014



Farmers & Stockmens Bank, interior, 2013



Farmers & Stockmens Bank, interior, 2013