STAFF REPORT

Council Meeting Date: April 14, 2020

Subject: Local Historic Landmark Designation - Lewie Muller Griffith House (65 Woodland Road)

Staff Resource(s): Todd Okolichany, AICP, LEED AP ND, Planning & Urban Design Director
Shannon Tuch, Principal Planner
Alex Cole, Urban Planner II

Action Requested: Adoption of an ordinance designating the property known as the Lewie Muller Griffith House (Griffith House), located at 65 Woodland Road, as a local historic landmark.

Project Location and Contacts:

- The designation site consists of a 0.99 acre parcel located at 65 Woodland Road (PIN 9649.75-5465) that is owned by Doris-Marie C. Martin.
- Petitioners: Doris-Marie C. Martin, Josi Ward.

Summary of Petition:

- The subject property consists of a 0.99 acre lot located on Woodland Road within the Grove Park National Register Historic District.
- The property contains a single family residential two-story historic structure, known as the Griffith House, and a one story non-historic accessory structure.
- The subject property is listed as a “contributing” resource in the Grove Park National Register Historic District.
- The Griffith House, constructed in 1926, is significant architecturally as a highly intact example of a French Eclectic style dwelling.
- The Griffith House is also significant for being the work of master architect, Ronald Greene, who designed many of Asheville’s most well-known buildings.
- The designation includes the entire exterior and interior of the house, the accessory structure and the 0.99 acre lot on which the structures are located, including planting beds, open front lawn and rose garden in the rear yard as shown on the original landscape plan.

Comprehensive Plan Consistency:

- This action aligns with Goal 7 (Celebrate the Unique Identify of Neighborhoods Through Creative Placemaking) and Goal 8 (Elevate the Arts and Cultural Sectors to Strengthen and Preserve Heritage and History) of the Living Asheville Comprehensive Plan by continuing to support stewardship and preservation of historic properties and by celebrating and honoring the city’s cultural and historic resources.
- This proposal also aligns with the 2036 Council Vision in the “Well-Planned and Livable Community” area. The local historic landmark designation would preserve a historic structure that contributes to Asheville’s unique character.

Compatibility Analysis:

- The property is listed as a “contributing” resource in the Grove Park National Register District, and preservation of the property will aid in maintaining the historic character of the surrounding neighborhood.
- When a property is designated as a local historic landmark, design restrictions are placed on the property and any modification to the land or structures must receive a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Resources Commission; thus, the historic character of the building(s) and site will be preserved.

Fiscal Impact:

- Designation of a site as a local historic landmark makes the property eligible for a 50% annual reduction in local property taxes. Currently, the tax appraisal for the property included in the proposed designation is $490,900. If the property is designated as a local landmark the potential

tax savings for the property owner, including city, county and school taxes, would be $2,645 per year.

Council Goal(s):

- A Well-Planned and Livable Community

Committee(s):

- Historic Resources Commission - February 12, 2020 - recommended approval (10-0)

Staff Recommendation:

- Staff finds that the proposed local historic landmark designation is compatible with the Living Asheville Comprehensive Plan and the Historic Preservation Master Plan. The Historic Resources Commission reviewed this proposed designation on February 12, 2020.
- The Commission voted 10-0 in favor of the landmark designation and recommended Asheville City Council approval of this local historic landmark designation application.

Suggested Motion to Approve:

- Move to adopt the ordinance designating the Lewie Muller Griffith House as a local historic landmark.

Attachment(s)

(1) Ordinance
(2) Exhibit A Map
(3) Local Historic Landmark Designation Report
(4) Excerpt of HRC Minutes with Findings

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING PROPERTY KNOWN AS THE LEWIE MULLER GRIFFITH HOUSE, LOCATED AT 65 WOODLAND ROAD IN ASHEVILLE, NC AS A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

WHEREAS, pursuant to N. C. Gen. Stat. Secs. 160A-400.5 and 160A-400.6, and Chapter 8, sections 8-3 and 8-4 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Asheville, the City has the authority for designation of a local historic landmark; and

WHEREAS, the Historic Resources Commission of Asheville and Buncombe County has caused to be made an investigation and report on the historic, architectural, and cultural significance of the above referenced structure and property proposed for landmark designation, and the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources has been provided the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed designation; and

WHEREAS, the Lewie Muller Griffith House was built in 1926. It is a highly intact residential dwelling designed in the French Eclectic style by Ronald Greene. The Lewie Muller Griffith House has a period of significance of 1926, and is significant for its architecture, as well as for being the work of a master architect; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing on the designation of the Lewie Muller Griffith House as a local historic landmark was held by the Historic Resources Commission of Asheville and Buncombe County on February 12, 2020 and the Commission found that the property is deemed to be of special significance in terms of its historical, prehistorical, architectural, or cultural importance, and to possess integrity of design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and/or association as outlined in the designation report and is therefore,eligible for designation; and

WHEREAS, on March 24, 2020, the Asheville City Council held a public hearing on the designation of the the Lewie Muller Griffith as a local historic landmark, taking into full consideration all statements and information presented at the public hearing and the recommendation of the Historic Resources Commission of Asheville and Buncombe County made after its public hearing held on February 12, 2020; and

WHEREAS, all the prerequisites to the adoption of this ordinance prescribed in Part 3C, Article I9, Chapter I60A of the North Carolina General Statutes have been met;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

Section 1. he property known as the **Lewie Muller Griffith House**, located at 65 Woodland Road in Asheville, North Carolina and more particularly described in **Exhibit A** attached hereto and incorporated herein, and owned by Doris-Marie C. Martin, is hereby designated as a local historic landmark pursuant to Part 3C of Article 19 of Chapter 160A of the North Carolina General Statutes and Chapter 8 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Asheville, and is subject to the conditions and restrictions set forth therein and below.

Section 2. Those features of the property that are integral to its architectural and cultural significance shall be understood to include the following:

> The entire exterior and interior of the house, the accessory structure and the 0.99 acre lot on which the structure is located, including planting beds, open front lawn and rose garden in rear yard as shown on original landscape plan, as described in Deed Book 1353 at Page 72 of the Buncombe County Register of Deeds.

Section 3. The significant features of the structure located on said property may not be demolished, materially altered, restored, or removed, nor any new structure built upon the lot without a Certificate of Appropriateness issued by the Historic Resources Commission of Asheville and Buncombe County. Any application for the demolition of this property shall require a 365 day waiting period as currently set forth in Part 3C of Article l9 of Chapter l60A of the North Carolina General Statutes (or any other period of time required by said statute as it may be amended hereafter).

Section 4. A suitable sign or plaque shall be posted indicating the said property has been designated as a local historic landmark and containing any other appropriate information. If the owner consents, the sign or plaque shall be placed upon the building or property. If the owner objects, a sign shall be placed on nearby public rights-of-way.

Section 5. The Historic Resources Commission via the City's Planning Director shall cause this ordinance to be filed and recorded as provided in Chapter 8 of the City Code.

Section 6. That if any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance is, for any reason, held to be invalid; such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance. The City Council hereby declares that it would have passed this ordinance, and each section, subsection, sentence, clauses, or phrases be declared invalid.

Section 7. That all ordinances and clauses of ordinances in conflict herewith be and are repealed, to the extent of such conflict.

Section 8. That this ordinance shall be in force and effect on the date of adoption.

Section 9. Violation of this ordinance shall be subject to the remedies set forth in Article XVIll of Chapter 7 of the City Code of the City of Asheville, in addition to other remedies provided by law.

Read, approved and adopted this the 14th day of April, 2020.

_____ _____

CITY CLERK MAYOR

Approved as to form:

_____

CITY ATTORNEY

The undersigned hereby certifies that it is the record property owner for the property described in the City of Asheville Ordinance, and hereby consents to review of the exterior and interior features and site described herein by the Historic Resources Commission of Asheville and Buncombe County.

_____
Doris-Marie C. Martin

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF _____

I, _____, a Notary Public of the County and State aforesaid certify that Doris-Marie C. Martin, Owner of said property, personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged the due execution of the foregoing instrument.

Witness my hand and notarial seal this ____ day of _____, 2020.

_____
Notary Public
Printed Notary Public Name: _____
My Commission Expires: _____