



**CITY OF BOULDER
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**

MEETING DATE: August 3, 2023

AGENDA TITLE

Second reading and consideration of a motion to adopt Ordinance 8580 designating the property at 830 14th St., City of Boulder, Colorado, to be known as the Powers House, as an individual landmark under Chapter 9-11, "Historic Preservation," B.R.C. 1981; and setting forth related details.

Owner / Applicant: Roxane Ruggles and Stephen Morgan

PRESENTERS

Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, City Manager
Brad Mueller, Director of Planning and Development Services
Kristofer Johnson, Comprehensive Planning Senior Manager
Lucas Markley, Assistant City Attorney, City Attorney's Office
Marcy Gerwing, Principal Historic Preservation Planner
Clare Brandt, Historic Preservation Planner

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is for City Council to consider second reading of an ordinance designating the property at 830 14th St. as an individual landmark under the city's Historic Preservation Ordinance. The council must determine whether the proposed individual landmark designation of the property meets the purposes and standards of the Historic Preservation Ordinance (*Sections 9-11-1 and 9-11-2, B.R.C. 1981*). This includes that the landmark designation:

- 1. Will promote the public health, safety, and welfare by protecting, enhancing, and perpetuating buildings, sites, and areas of the city reminiscent of past eras, events, and persons important in local, state, or national history or providing significant examples of architectural styles of the past.*

2. *Will develop and maintain appropriate settings and environments for such buildings, sites, and areas to enhance property values, stabilize neighborhoods, promote tourist trade and interest, and foster knowledge of the city's living heritage.*

3. *Will draw a reasonable balance between private property rights and the public interest in preserving the city's cultural, historic, and architectural heritage by ensuring that demolition of buildings and structures important to that heritage will be carefully weighed with other alternatives and that alterations to such buildings and structures and new construction will respect the character of each such setting, not by imitating surrounding structures, but by being compatible with them.*

The property owners are in support of the designation. The property is already designated as part of the University Place Historic District. However, the owner would like to recognize the building individually. If approved, this ordinance (see **Attachment A**), would result in the designation of the property as an individual landmark. The findings are included in the ordinance. This second reading for this designation is a quasi-judicial public hearing.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Suggested Motion Language:
 Staff requests council consideration of this matter and action in the form of the following motion:

Motion to adopt Ordinance 8580 designating the property at 830 14th St., City of Boulder, Colorado, to be known as the Powers House, as an individual landmark under the City of Boulder Historic Preservation Ordinance.

COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENTS AND IMPACTS

- Economic - Studies have found that historic preservation adds to economic vitality and tourism. Exterior changes to individually landmarked buildings require a Landmark Alteration Certificate, issued by the Planning Department at no charge. The additional review process for landmarked buildings may, however, add time and design expense to a project.
- Environmental - The preservation of historic buildings is inherently sustainable. Owners of individually landmarked buildings are encouraged to reuse and repair as much of the original building as possible when making exterior alterations, thereby reducing the amount of building material waste deposited in landfills. City staff assists architects, contractors and homeowners with design and material selections and sources that are environmentally friendly. Also, the Historic Preservation website provides information on improving the energy efficiency of older buildings.

- Social - The Historic Preservation Ordinance was adopted to “...enhance property values, stabilize neighborhoods, promote tourist trade and interest, and foster knowledge of the city’s living heritage.” Section 9-11-1 (a), B.R.C., 1981. The primary beneficiaries of historic designation are the property owners of a historic landmark and adjacent neighbors, who are ensured that the character of the immediate area will be protected through the design review process. The greater community also benefits from the preservation of the community’s character and history.

OTHER IMPACTS

- Fiscal - The designation of individual historic landmarks is an anticipated and ongoing function of the Historic Preservation Program.
- Staff time - This designation application is within the staff work plan.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL AGENDA COMMITTEE

LANDMARKS BOARD ACTIONS & FEEDBACK

On May 3, 2023, the Landmarks Board voted (4-0) to recommend that the City Council designate the property as a local historic landmark, finding that it meets the standards for individual landmark designations in sections 9-11-1 and 9-11-2, B.R.C. 1981, and is consistent with the criteria specified in section 9-11-5(c), B.R.C. 1981.

PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Prior to the May 3, 2023, Landmarks Board Designation Hearing one person wrote to support the designation and additionally spoke at the hearing. One additional member of the public spoke at the hearing.

ANALYSIS

Code Criteria for Review

Section 9-11-6(b) *Council Ordinance Designating Landmark or Historic District*, of the historic preservation ordinance specifies that in its review of an application for local landmark designation, the council must consider “whether the designation meets the purposes and standards in Subsections 9-11-1(a) and Section 9-11-2, *City Council May Designate Landmarks and Historic Districts*, B.R.C. 1981, in balance with the goals and policies of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan.” The City Council shall approve by ordinance, modify and approve by ordinance, or disapprove the proposed designation.

9-11-1, *Legislative Intent*, B.R.C. 1981 states:

- (a) The purpose of this chapter is to promote the public health, safety, and welfare by protecting, enhancing, and perpetuating buildings, sites, and areas of the city reminiscent of past eras, events, and persons important in local, state, or national history or providing significant examples of architectural styles of the past. It is also the purpose of this chapter to develop and maintain appropriate settings and environments for such buildings, sites, and areas to enhance property values, stabilize neighborhoods, promote tourist trade and interest, and foster knowledge of the city’s living heritage.

- (b) The City Council does not intend by this chapter to preserve every old building in the city but instead to draw a reasonable balance between private property rights and the public interest in preserving the city's cultural, historic, and architectural heritage by ensuring that demolition of buildings and structures important to that heritage will be carefully weighed with other alternatives and that alterations to such buildings and structures and new construction will respect the character of each such setting, not by imitating surrounding structures, but by being compatible with them.

- (c) The City Council intends that in reviewing applications for alterations to and new construction on landmarks or structures in a historic district, the Landmarks Board shall follow relevant city policies, including, without limitation, energy-efficient design, access for the disabled, and creative approaches to renovation.

9-11-2, *City Council may Designate Landmarks and Historic Districts, B.R.C. 1981*
states:

- (a) Pursuant to the procedures in this chapter the City Council may by ordinance:
 - (1) Designate as a landmark an individual building or other feature or an integrated group of structures or features on a single lot or site having a special character and historical, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value and designate a landmark site for each landmark;
 - (2) Designate as a historic district a contiguous area containing a number of sites, buildings, structures or features having a special character and historical, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value and constituting a distinct section of the city;
 - (3) Designate as a discontinuous historic district a collection of sites, buildings, structures, or features which are contained in two or more geographically separate areas, having a special character and historical, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value that are united together by historical, architectural, or aesthetic characteristics; and
 - (4) Amend designations to add features or property to or from the site or district.

Upon designation, the property included in any such designation is subject to all the requirements of this code and other ordinances of the city.



Figure 1. 830 14th St., west elevation (façade), 2023.



Figure 2. Tax Assessor Photograph, 830 14th St., c.1929. Carnegie Library for Local History.

Summary of Significance

To assist in the interpretation of the historic preservation ordinance, the Landmarks Board adopted an administrative regulation in 1975 establishing [Significance Criteria for Individual Landmarks](#) (link). For additional information on the history of the property, please see the [May 3, 2023 Landmarks Board Memorandum](#) (link).

ANALYSIS:

A. Would the designation protect, enhance, and perpetuate a property reminiscent of a past era(s), event(s), and person(s) important in local, state, or national history in Boulder or provide a significant example of architecture of the past?

Staff considers, and the Landmarks Board found, that the proposed designation will protect, enhance, and perpetuate a building and site reminiscent of a past era, past events, and persons important in local history and preserve an important example of Boulder's historic architecture.

B. Does the proposed application develop and maintain appropriate settings and environments for such buildings, sites, and areas to enhance property values, stabilize neighborhoods, promote tourist trade and interest, and foster knowledge of the City's living heritage?

Staff considers, and the Landmarks Board found, that the proposed designation will maintain an appropriate setting and environment for the buildings and sites, and enhance property values, stabilize the neighborhood, promote tourist trade and interest, and foster knowledge of the city's living heritage.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE:

Summary: The house located at 830 14th St. meets the following historic significance criteria:

1. Date of Construction: 1920

Elaboration: The house was built during the second phase of development of the University Place Historic District.

2. Association with Persons or Events: Associated with Katherine "Kate" Agnes Mayhoffer Powers and Patrick "Pat" Powers and family. Patrick Powers was owner and operator of the Shamrock Mine in Weld County and was considered "one of Colorado's most successful mining men."

3. Development of the Community: University Place Historic District

Elaboration: The area was developed due to the proximity of both the streetcar line and the University. The area attracted professionals who worked at the University as well as working class residents who saw the benefit for their children to have easy access to the State Prep School (on the streetcar line) and the University.

4. Recognition by Authorities: Identified as a contributing resource in the University Place Historic District (2006); Front Range Research Associates (1991); Kathryn Howes Barth AIA, Ramsey Planning and Preservation (2002).

Elaboration: Although staff identified that the 830 14th Street historic building inventory record and University Place Historic District designation contained incorrect information about the residents of the house, the corrected history supports the historic significance of the house.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Summary: The house at 830 14th St. meets the following architectural significance criteria.

- 1. Recognized Period or Style:** The house at 830 14th St. meets the following architectural significance criteria.

Elaboration: From *History Colorado*: “Following closely the philosophy of utility and simplicity which characterized the Arts and Crafts movement, the Bungalow became its physical manifestation. As the most common expression of Craftsman style architecture, the residential Bungalow spread quickly across the country during the early 20th century. In Colorado, this type of architecture was popular from 1900 to around 1930 and is evident in practically every city and town statewide.”

- 2. Architect or Builder of Prominence:** Unknown

Elaboration: It is unknown what role Alonzo Denham played in the construction of the house (builder, or a real estate developer/investor). Denham owned the property at 830 14th St. during the two years before the house was constructed. Denham owned two other properties in the University Place Historic District (Denham is attributed as the likely builder of 776 14th St.) and at least three others in the wider neighborhood, within a few years of their construction.

- 3. Artistic Merit:** Craftsman detailing demonstrates masonry and vernacular design skill.

Elaboration: The Craftsman style stressed “comfort and utility through the use of natural materials and a lack of pretension. Exposed rafter ends, overhanging eaves, clipped gables, and large porch columns replaced the more delicate and intricate detailing of the Victorian period.”

- 4. Example of the Uncommon:** None observed.

- 5. Indigenous Qualities:** None observed.

ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Summary: The house located at 830 14th St. meets the following environmental significance criteria.

- 1. Site Characteristics:** The orientation of the house to the streetscape, the use of masonry as the exterior building material, mature street trees are all character-

defining features of the house within the context of the University Place Historic District.

2. **Compatibility with Site:** Consistent with the district, the house is one-and-a-half stories tall and is set back from the street.
3. **Geographic Importance:** The house is centrally located within the University Place Historic District, along 14th Street, which was once a major north-south thoroughfare through Boulder.
4. **Environmental Appropriateness:** None observed.
5. **Area Integrity:** The property is located in the University Place Historic District.
Elaboration: The house contributes to the character of the University Place Historic District as a well-preserved enclave of early to mid-twentieth century architecture within the University Hill neighborhood.

Landmark Name

Staff recommends the property be known as the **Powers House** to recognize the longest owners, Katherine “Kate” Agnes Mayhoffer Powers and Patrick “Pat” Powers, who lived at the house from the time it was constructed until 1949. This is consistent with the Landmark Board’s Guidelines for Names of Landmarked Structures and Sites (1988) and the National Register of Historic Places Guidelines for Designation. See [Guidelines for Names of Landmarked Structures and Sites](#) (link).

Boundary Analysis

Staff and the Landmarks Board recommend that the boundary be established to follow the property lines of the lot, which is the boundary proposed by the applicant and is consistent with current and past practices and the National Register Guidelines for establishing landmark boundaries.

Alternatives

Modify the Application: The City Council may modify the landmark boundary and landmark name.

Deny the Application: If the City Council finds the application does not meet the criteria for landmark designation, it would vote to deny the application.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Ordinance 8580

Attachment B – [Significance Criteria for Individual Landmarks](#) (1975) (link)

Attachment C – [May 3, 2023 Landmarks Board Memorandum](#) (link)

ORDINANCE 8580

AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE PROPERTY AT 830 14TH ST., CITY OF BOULDER, COLORADO, ALSO KNOWN AS THE POWERS HOUSE, A LANDMARK UNDER CHAPTER 9-11, "HISTORIC PRESERVATION," B.R.C. 1981, AND SETTING FORTH RELATED DETAILS.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BOULDER, COLORADO:

Section 1. The City Council enacts this ordinance pursuant to its authority under Chapter 9-11, "Historic Preservation," B.R.C. 1981, to designate as a landmark a property having a special character or special historic, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value.

Section 2. The City Council finds that: 1) on March 1, 2023, the property owners submitted a landmark designation application for the property; 2) the Landmarks Board held a public hearing on the proposed designation on May 3, 2023, and recommended that the City Council approve the proposed designation.

Section 3. The City Council also finds that upon public notice required by law, the City Council held a public hearing on the proposed designation on August 3, 2023, and upon the basis of the presentations at that hearing finds that the property at 830 14th St. possesses special historic and architectural value warranting its designation as a landmark.

Section 4. The characteristics of the subject property that justify its designation as a landmark are: 1) its historic significance for its date of construction of 1920 during the second phase of development of the University Place Historic District; for its association with Katherine "Kate" Agnes Mayhoffer Powers and Patrick "Pat" Powers, one of Colorado's most successful mining men; and 2) its architectural significance as an example of a Craftsman Bungalow; its artistic merit representing skillful masonry construction; and 3) its environmental significance as a visual landmark

1 within the University Place Historic District; and for its compatibility with its surrounding residential
2 context.

3 Section 5. The City Council further finds that the foregoing landmark designation is
4 necessary to promote the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the city.

5 Section 6. There is hereby created as a landmark the property located at 830 14th St., also
6 known as the Powers House, whose legal landmark boundary encompasses the legal lots upon which
7 it sits:

8
9 LEGAL DESCRIPTION

10 LOTS 17-18 BLK 22 UNIVERSITY PLACE

11 as depicted in the proposed landmark boundary map, attached hereto as Exhibit A.

12 Section 7. The City Council directs that the Planning and Development Services
13 Department give prompt notice of this designation to the property owner and cause a copy of this
14 ordinance to be recorded as described in Subsection 9-11-6(d), B.R.C. 1981.

15 Section 8. The City Council deems it appropriate that this ordinance be published by title
16 only and orders that copies of this ordinance be made available in the office of the City Clerk for
17 public inspection and acquisition.

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INTRODUCED, READ ON FIRST READING, AND ORDERED PUBLISHED BY

TITLE ONLY THIS 15th day of June 2023.

Aaron Brockett,
Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

READ ON SECOND READING, PASSED AND ADOPTED, this 3rd day of August

2023.

Aaron Brockett,
Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

Exhibit A – Landmark Boundary Map for 830 14th St.

830 14th St., Boulder, Colorado
LOTS 17-18 BLK 22 UNIVERSITY PLACE



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