

AKRON CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING OF MAY 10, 2024 - 9:00 A.M.

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, THIRD FLOOR, MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 166 S. HIGH STREET

(1) CORRECTION and APPROVAL of Minutes of April 12, 2024.

(2) PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. Approval of sales of property and/or development plans in Urban Renewal and Community Development projects and assorted matters necessary to promote the Urban Renewal and Community Development Plans.

(1) **NO NEW BUSINESS**

B **PC-2024-07-HP** – Akron historic landmark designation for the Homeier-Universal Building at 816 E. Market Street.






C. **PC-2024-12-HP** – Akron historic landmark designation for the Brown family home at 242 Lake Street.

(3) RENEWALS

KJ/emd

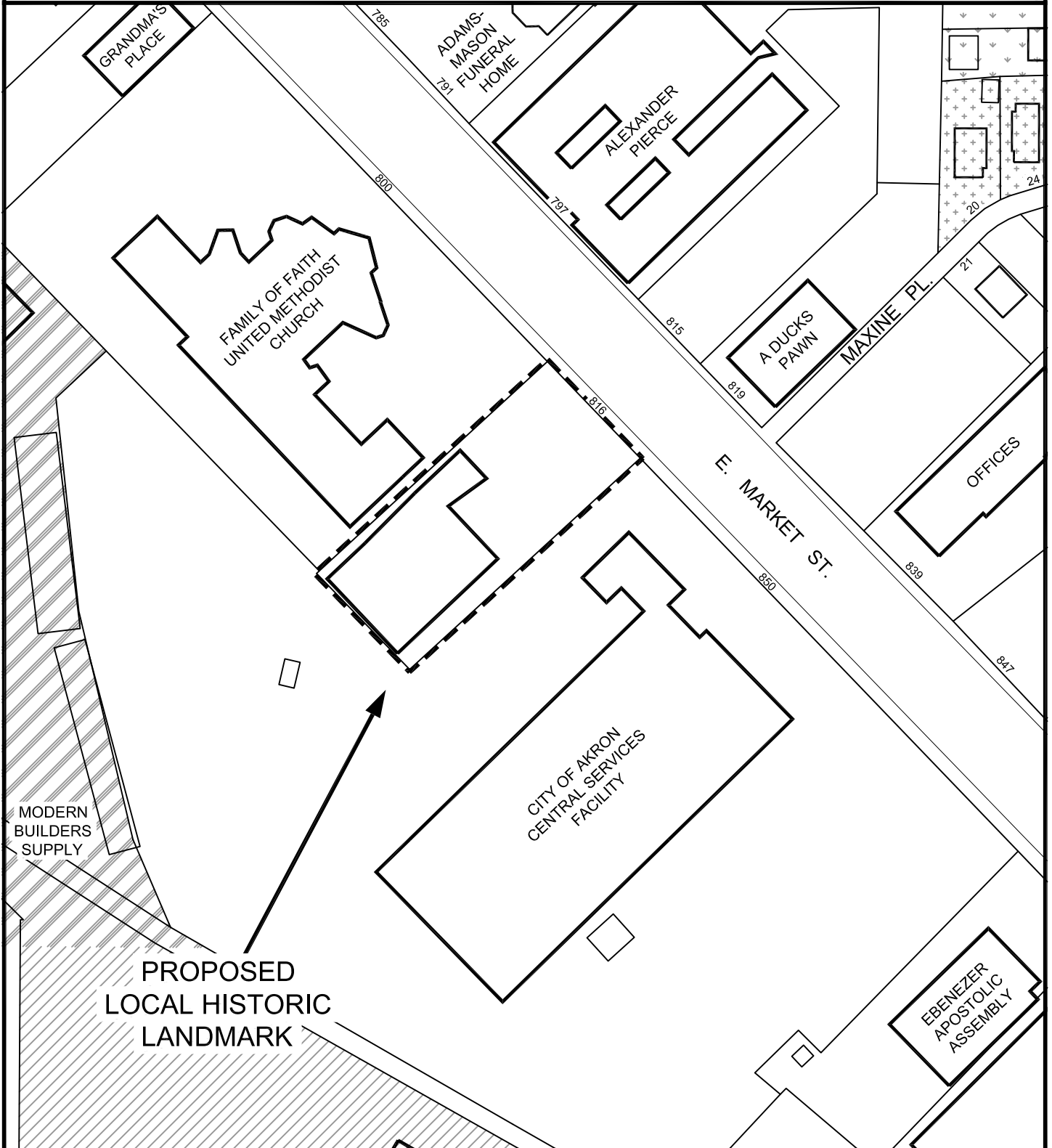
PC-2024-07-HP

Akron Historic Landmark designation
for the Homeier-Universal Building at
816 E. Market Street

-  U1 Single Family Residential
-  U1 Two Family Residential
-  U3 Retail Business
-  U4 Commercial
-  U5 Ordinary Industry



0 100'
Created 02/26/2024 jwh
Revised 02/26/2024 jwh



MEMORANDUM

TO: AKRON CITY PLANNING COMMISSION **ITEM # 2B**
PC-2024-07-HP

FROM: DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT

DATE: MAY 10, 2024 **WARD:** 10
COUNCILPERSON: Connor

SUBJECT: **PC-2024-07-HP** – Akron historic landmark status for the Homeier –
Universal Building located at 816 E. Market Street.

GENERAL LOCATION: South side of E. Exchange Street, west of Arlington Street.

LAND USE OF THIS PROPERTY: Vacant commercial structure

LAND USE IN THE SURROUNDING AREA:

NORTH SIDE: Retail, Office, Commercial and Residential
SOUTH SIDE: Retail and Residential
EAST SIDE: Commercial and Retail
WEST SIDE: Retail and Commercial

ZONED: U3 Retail Business District (U3, H4, A5) and East Market Street Urban
Overlay District

SIZE OF LOT & AREA: Contains approximately 0.5010 acres

COMMENTS:

The Homeier – Universal Building was constructed in 1919 as a large three-story shop with an attached showroom for a Ford automobile dealership. It is a concrete frame building with a large elevator for moving vehicles up three floors. The building is a simple open plan warehouse with exposed masonry walls and a cast-in-place concrete structural system. The building was constructed as a fireproof building and likely utilized a unique “floretyle” construction technique.

At one time, the Homeier – Universal Company was the largest operating Ford dealership in Akron. An Akron Beacon Journal article from 1934 states that “26 years of experience as authorized Ford dealers was combined in 1932 to form Homeier – Universal Motor, Inc. with headquarters at 816-822 E. Market Street. It was a combination of the Homeier Motor Co. headed by A. L. Homeier and

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Universal Motor Co. of which John A. McAlonan was president.” The article goes on to state that Homeier – Universal also operated a downtown store at 116 – 118 S. Main Street, a new and used car store at 1100 S. Main, a super service station at Dodge and W. Exchange streets, along with four other companies. According to the application, the Homeier – Universal Company initiated innovative practices such as a “warranted” overhaul program for used cars and a training school for salesman.

The existing building is in deteriorated condition and used primarily for storage. The sales building, which originally extended all the way out to E. Exchange Street, was mostly demoed, with only about 1/3 of the original building remaining. All of the windows in the sales building have been replaced. The exterior surface of the large warehouse structure is deteriorated in specific areas to the point that the interior rebar supporting materials are exposed. Original windows are still in place, but many are broken. The original exterior doors have been replaced. Signage for Carroll Upholstering is still in place. There is no evidence of the old painted advertising for Homeier – Universal Motor, Inc. on the north face of the warehouse facing E. Exchange Street. The historic integrity of the structure is compromised due to alterations and neglect.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

- A. Consistent with the City of Akron Ord. 388-1997, the Department of Planning and Urban Development has determined that the application for Historic Landmark Designation for the Homeier – Universal Building is complete.
- B. If designated, any activity affecting the exterior of the Homeier – Universal Building not covered under an agreement with the State of Ohio Historic Preservation Office will require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from the City of Akron Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission. Any demolition of the existing structure or additions or additional entranceways will require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Before issuing the Certificate of Appropriateness, the Commission will review the proposed activity for consistency with the Secretary of the Interior’s “Standards for Rehabilitation” and “Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings”. Routine repairs and maintenance utilizing appropriate materials will not require a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- C. After review, the Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission has found that the property meets two (2) of the criteria outlined in the City of Akron Urban Design and Historic Preservation Ordinance to define a Historic Landmark (Ord. 388-1997). The criteria are as follows:

1. *Exemplifies the area, property or site of the cultural, political, economic, social or historic heritage of the city, state or nation; and*

The structure stands on its original site.

2. *Contains elements of design, details, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant architectural or structural innovation.*

The building likely utilized a unique Truscon Floretype construction technique.

The Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission reviewed the designation on March 5, 2024, and recommends approval of the designation of the Homeier – Universal Building as a City of Akron Landmark.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Staff recommends **APPROVAL** of the Designation Application and Report for the Homeier – Universal Building and the designation of the Homeier – Universal Building located at 816 E. Market Street as a City of Akron Landmark.

KM/emd

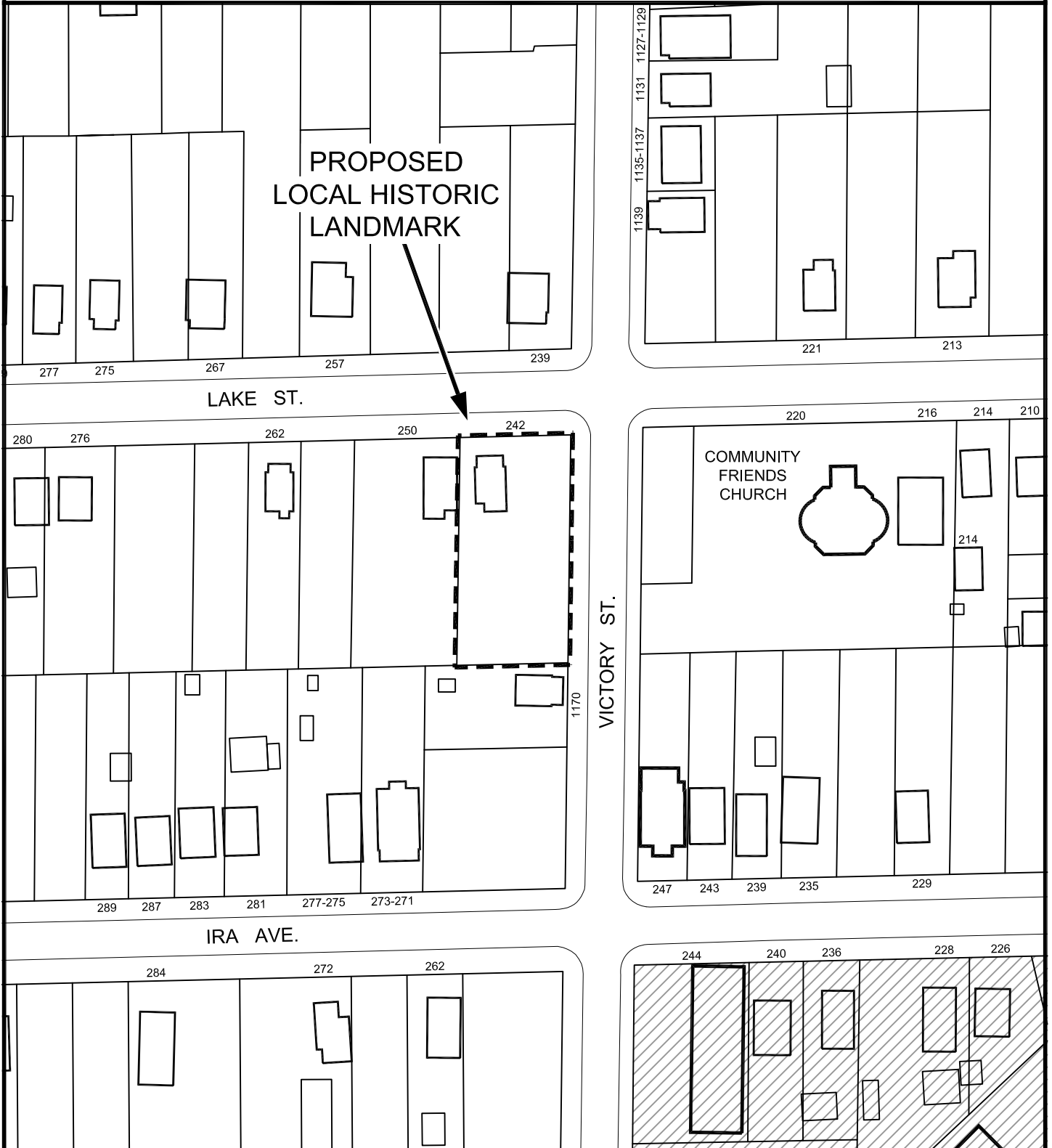
PC-2024-12-HP

Akron Historic Landmark designation for the Brown family house at 242 Lake Street

-  U1 Single Family Residential
-  U4 Commercial



0 100'
Created 04/22/2024 jwh
Revised 04/22/2024 jwh



MEMORANDUM

TO: AKRON CITY PLANNING COMMISSION **ITEM # 2C**
PC-2024-12-HP

FROM: DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT

DATE: MAY 10, 2024 **WARD: 3**
COUNCILPERSON: Sommerville

SUBJECT: PC-2024-12-HP – Akron historic landmark status for the Brown Family Home at 242 Lake Street.

GENERAL LOCATION: South side of Lake Street, west of Victory Street.

LAND USE OF THIS PROPERTY: Single-Family Residential

LAND USE IN THE SURROUNDING AREA: All sides Residential

ZONED: U1 Single-Family Residential

SIZE OF LOT & AREA: 76' in width by 163' in length for 12,388 sq. ft. of area

COMMENTS:

The subject property is a two-story home located at 242 Lake Street. According to the Summit County Auditor's Office, the single-family residence located at 242 Lake Street was constructed in 1913. This was during the ten-year period when Akron's population exploded from 69,000 in 1910 to 208,000 in 1920, making Akron the United States fastest growing City during that time period. The home is located in Akron's Summit Lake neighborhood. Through the 1950's, the Summit Lake neighborhood extended north uninterrupted to Bartges Street and the B.F. Goodrich plant. Summit Beach Amusement Park opened along the east edge of Summit Lake in 1917. The park closed in 1958. In 1965, Summit Lake Homes was built along the eastern edge of the lake by the Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority. In the 1960's, the construction of Interstate 76 split the neighborhood in half, north to south. The quality of the homes in the neighborhood gradually declined due to disinvestment and lack of maintenance. By the 1980's and into the 1990's and 2000's, the City of Akron bought and demolished many of the deteriorating homes in the neighborhood, land-banking the parcels for future new residential construction.

In 1966, James Allen Brown Sr. and Johnnie Elaine Brown-Foster purchased the home in a historically redlined area at 242 Lake Street, moving into the home with their five children. A sixth daughter was born later in the home. James and Johnnie Elaine had both graduated from Akron Garfield High School and married as teenage sweethearts. The Brown's family story traces back to Georgia for their mother and Oklahoma for their father. James and Johnnie Elaine were both born in Akron in February 1939 after both of their families had moved to Akron as part of the great migration of over six million African Americans from the southern United States to the Northeast, Midwest, and West between 1910 and 1970. Johnnie Elaine Brown recalled the fun she had at Summit Beach Amusement Park in the 1950's riding the Ferris Wheel and playing at the beach. She recalled that Blacks and Whites were segregated at the beach, and some days were specific *Whites Only* days.

The close bond of this family and their ties to the community are evident in the application. The application for designation has been submitted by the Brown family after the passing of their parents. Their father worked for both Chrysler and the Babcock & Wilcox Company. Their mother was initially a stay-at-home mom and PTA President for Lincoln Elementary School. She eventually took on a part-time job at Swenson's Drive-in restaurant, where she became a manager. Later, she worked as a paraprofessional at the Akron Public Schools, which fulfilled her desire to work with children. Her children's admission into college led her to register and attend classes at the University of Akron. All six children attended college, and they credit this to their parents.

The application goes into a great amount of detail to document growing up in the community by Summit Lake. With six children, the Brown residence was a focal point of the block, and Johnnie Elaine was the "Mom of the Neighborhood." The kids were king of the court at the community center for pickup basketball games. The home became known for its annual Christmas show of holiday decorations and lights, and every year, there were 4th of July celebrations and cookouts. The Brown's family history in this home and neighborhood exemplifies the story of many African-American families in Akron and across the United States in the 1960's.

The home itself is built in the Akron Vernacular II style. Popular between 1900 and 1920, this house style is numerous and seen in variations throughout the older sections of Akron. It is a predominant housetype in Summit Lake. The most distinctive features of this housetype are a shingle ornamented gable area with some type of ornamental window and a hip-roofed porch extending the full width of the house front. Except for the shingled gable, siding on this type of house is usually thin, horizontal wood siding. The Brown house is sided, and the ornamental gabled area is covered with vertical siding. The original windows and doors have been replaced. The porch columns maintain their original ornamentation. The

home is in very good condition with a well-maintained corner side yard enclosed with a chain-link fence.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

- A. Consistent with the City of Akron Ord. 388-1997, the Department of Planning and Urban Development has determined that the application for Historic Landmark Designation for the Brown Family Home is complete.
- B. If designated, any demolition of the existing structure or additions or additional entranceways will require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Before issuing the Certificate of Appropriateness, the Commission will review the proposed activity for consistency with the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation" and "Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings". Routine repairs and maintenance utilizing appropriate materials will not require a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- C. After review, the Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission decided that the property meets the following criteria outlined in the City of Akron Urban Design and Historic Preservation Ordinance to define a Historic Landmark (Ord. 388-1997):
 - 1. *has significant character, interest or value, as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, state or nation; and*
 - 2. *is associated with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city, state or nation; and*
 - 3. *is the site of an historic event with a significant effect on society; and*

The Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission reviewed the designation on April 2, 2024, and unanimously recommended approval of the designation of the Brown Family Home as a City of Akron Landmark.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Staff recommends **APPROVAL** of the Designation Application and Report for the Brown Family Home and the designation of the Brown Family Home located at 242 Lake Street as a City of Akron Landmark.

KM/emd