

**CITY OF DES MOINES LANDMARK REVIEW BOARD**  
**STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**  
**Tuesday, October 3, 2023**

**AGENDA ITEM #1**

**CAHP-2023-000098**

**Applicant:** Temple Partners, LP (owner), represented by Nathan Mills (applicant).

**Location:** 1011 Locust Street.

**Requested Action:** Certificate of Appropriateness to allow construction of a six-foot-tall black ornamental fence and gate in the rear of the property.

## **I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

The subject property is located on the north side of Locust Street at the northwest corner of the intersection of Locust Street and 10th Street. The building is known as the Masonic Temple, and was designated as a local landmark in 2002.

According to the 1997 National Register of Historic Places Registration application, the five-storied red brick building was constructed in 1913 by Iowa's foremost architectural firm in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson. Built in a Chicago School tradition, the primary façade fronts Locust Street, and features a secondary façade along 10<sup>th</sup> street. Despite featuring two lodge rooms, a banqueting room, and ample commercial and office space, the building was designed to blend into its urban environment. The site was originally constructed for use as a Masonic Temple, though today is occupied by several different organizations and businesses.

The Landmark Review Board is charged with reviewing proposed alterations to the exterior of locally designated landmarks and makes recommendations to the City Council. All Certificates of Appropriateness for local landmarks that are not located in a local historic district are issued by the City Council.

## **II. CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**

In reviewing COA requests, the Landmark Review Board shall consider standards for rehabilitation promulgated by the Secretary of the Interior. The Secretary's Standard's for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings consist of the following:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alterations of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

*The applicant is proposing to install a new fence to enclose the north service area of the building. With vehicle access on the east side, and a pedestrian entrance on the west, this subject area on the north side of the parcel is currently used for trash collection, delivery loading/unloading, and as secondary fire egress for the upper floors. There is no general public use of this area.*

*The intent of the fence is increased security and screening within an area that is already mostly enclosed by a concrete wall. The applicant proposes installing two 3-foot-wide gates, two 6-foot-wide access gates, posts, and 4-inch-wide tubing around the existing screening on the egress stairwell. The gates and posts would all be 6-foot-tall black*

*ornamental fencing. The 4-inch-wide tubing will match the design and color of the existing egress stairwell and screening.*

*Standards #9 and #10 are most relevant to the proposed scope of work. As proposed, no changes would be made to the Masonic Temple itself. The new fencing utilizes the existing concrete wall and fire egress structure as much as possible to integrate the new fencing, and the proposed design will not directly attach to the Masonic Temple building at any point. Staff supports the introduction of fencing around the service area, but does have concerns that the new fencing and gate design will not appropriately integrate with the adjacent existing screening and egress stair.*

*Specifically, the fencing and gates on the east side of the restricted area (adjacent to and visible from 10<sup>th</sup> Street) intend to run parallel to and utilize the fire egress structure. As such, staff believes a fence/gate design that matches the existing fire egress stairs and screening in design, materials, and height would be most appropriate for this location. Such a design would be compatible with existing structures and increase overall screening on a street-facing façade. Additionally, this design would allow more flexibility to accommodate any necessary adjustments in gate width to accommodate building and fire codes for egress from the upper floors.*

*Another concern for staff is the building and fire code requirements related to emergency egress. As proposed, all forms of secondary fire egress utilize the area proposed to be enclosed by the fence. The applicant has indicated that panic hardware would be installed on the inside of the fence to allow movement in case of emergency. However, staff notes that the overall capacity, number of egress points, and total occupancy of events within the building, among other factors, can have an impact on the minimum required gate size necessary to comply with building and fire codes. To account for necessary accommodation in gate widths required to comply with building and/or fire codes, staff recommends the final review and approval of the fence design by the Planning and Urban Design Administrator. This would be achieved through review of the required fence permit with building staff in the City of Des Moines Permit and Development Center.*

*On the west side, all new fencing would be limited to a small, approximately 3-foot 6-inch-wide opening between the northwest corner of the Masonic Temple and the west terminus of the concrete wall that is not visible from Locust Street. On this side, staff supports use of black ornamental fencing, but would add a condition that the fencing, posts, or any other related infrastructure does not directly attach to the Masonic Temple to avoid unnecessary damage to the building. As recommended, staff finds the new fencing would meet the intent of Standards #9 and #10.*

### **III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval of the requested Certificate of Appropriateness subject to the following conditions:

1. Fencing along the east entrance shall match the existing fire egress screening in design, materials, height, and color to the extent possible.
2. Fencing along the west entrance shall not attach directly to the Masonic Temple building.
3. Compliance with all applicable Building and Fire Codes as necessary with the issuance of a fence permit from the Permit & Development Center.
4. Review and approval of the finalized design and materials by the Planning and Urban Design Administrator.

The Landmark Review Board's recommendation on the Certificate of Appropriateness will be forwarded to the City Council for review in accordance with Section 58-62 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance. The Board is a recommending body in this process. The decision to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is made by the City Council.