

STAFF REPORT

Ossian Anderson House

Public Hearing: April 24, 1991

Thurston County Courthouse, Building #1, Room 152
2000 Lakeridge Drive S.W., Olympia, WA 98502

Staff Report Prepared by: Shanna Stevenson

Application Number: OHR-91-3

Name of Property: Ossian Anderson House; Historic Name

Location of Property: 205 E. 25th
Olympia, WA 98501

Owner: Barbara Weeks/Kevin Hoonan
Applicant: Kathy Hartman
205 E. 25th
Olympia, WA 98501

Date Built: ca. 1926

A. Background and Historical Significance

This distinguished English Builder Style House was built ca. 1926 for Ossian Anderson one of the Anderson brothers who came from Sweden to found the Tumwater Lumber Mills pre-cut houses firm and Olympia Harbor Lumber. Ossian was the third brother and came to Seattle in 1910. He later joined his uncle Nils Anderson who was a logger. He settled in Olympia in joined with his brothers in the Tumwater Ready Cut Homes business in 1922. Ossian married Mable Anderson in 1916. Shortly after the home was built, the Andersons moved to

Bellingham to take care of the other Anderson Brothers interests in the pulp mill industry. G. I. Griffith, a local insuranceman and his wife Della purchased the house in 1940. Frank and Amy Langfitt also owned the house.

This house perhaps the largest and finest example of the English Builder Style in the city. There is a story that this house was built as a show house for the pre-cut homes.

Source: Pioneer Title Company Records.
Polk City Directories.
Pollard & Spencer, The History of Washington, 1937, pp 290-291.
Vol III.

B. Significant Historical Characteristics

These are the features that contribute to the property's historical significance and which should be preserved and maintained as it is kept up over the years. Important lost features are also listed, because owners are encouraged to consider restoring these features when rehabilitation work is planned. Replacement either by exact restoration of the original or a modern, compatible design is acceptable. Non-historic additions are also listed. The Heritage Commission may make some recommendations regarding these additions.

1. Large two and one half story wood frame house on a poured concrete foundation.
2. Offset steeply gabled roofline with shed-roofed wall dormers on second story windows.
3. Front gable extends over archway with recessed porch.
4. Bands of tall multi-paned casement windows and double-hung sash with six over one lights.
5. Tall multi-paned window above the entry is fronted by a wrought iron balcony.
6. One story enclosed porch spans the west wall.
7. Small hip roof extension on the east wall.

8. Detached double garage.

9. Shingle cladding.

Interior

1. Wood floors and circular stairway.

C. Qualifications for the Local Register

An attachment to this staff report provides general background about the Olympia Heritage Register and requirements for placement on the register. A second attachment contains the section of the Olympia Historic Preservation Ordinance which gives the criteria for designation to the register.

There are six categories of eligibility as described in the enclosures. The Ossian Anderson House relates to those eligibility requirements as follows:

1. **Significance:** The Ossian Anderson House has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the county, state or nation.

The Ossian Anderson House is an excellent example of the English Builder style with intact features which is associated with a prominent Olympia businessman.

2. **Age:** The house is 63 years old and so meets the 50 year age criterion.
3. **Possesses at least two elements of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association:** The Ossian Anderson House possesses all elements of integrity.
4. **The Ossian Anderson House is well maintained.**
5. **Specific Criteria/Associations:**

The Ossian Anderson House embodies the distinctive architectural characteristics of the English Builder type, period, style and method of design and construction and so meets criterion #2 for designation to the Olympia Heritage Register. It also is associated with the life of Ossian

Anderson and the Tumwater Ready Cut Homes business which were significant in local business history and so meets criterion #5.

D. Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends placement of the Ossian Anderson House on the Olympia Heritage Register at the Primary Level of Significance under criteria #2 and #5.

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Enclosures

STAFF REPORT ATTACHMENT

GENERAL BACKGROUND ABOUT OLYMPIA HERITAGE REGISTER

The Process for Designating Properties to the Register

The Olympia Historic Preservation Ordinance (#4438) in Section 5.B describes this process as follows: Owner approval is required for designation to the register. A public hearing must be held by the Heritage Commission with notice given to the public and the owner(s). Appeals to the Commission's designation decision may be made to City Council within 30 days.

Basis for Decision Making Regarding Designation to the Register

Criteria for determining eligibility to the Olympia Heritage Register is found in Section 5A of the Olympia Historic Preservation Ordinance. Properties may be designated if they are:

1. At least 50 years old (or lesser age if they are exceptionally important)
2. Associated with the heritage, culture and development of the City in at least one of several ways, such as:
 - a. Outstanding examples of earlier architectural styles or construction methods;
or
 - b. Associated with important historical events or with persons significant in local history; or
 - c. Comprise a district representative of an earlier period.
 - d. Archaeological sites are also eligible.

THE FULL LIST OF DESIGNATION CRITERIA FROM ORDINANCE #4438 IS ENCLOSED.

Review of Changes to Heritage Register Properties

Properties designated to the Olympia Heritage Register are subject to an advisory review process by the City's Heritage Commission when any changes are proposed to exterior architectural features, identified historic interior features of public buildings, or to any proposed demolitions or new construction on the property. The purpose of the review is to try to prevent detrimental alterations to or destruction of significant historic features of the property. Standards guiding the review are the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation 1983." Copies are available at the Olympia Historic Preservation Office or Planning Department.

Those features which the Heritage Commission will be concerned about are listed in the staff report for each property and will become part of the official register designation action. Compliance with any advice on proposed changes to the historic property is voluntary on the part of the owner or person proposing the change. If, however, changes result in the loss of the building's historic character, the Heritage Commission may remove it from the Heritage Register after public hearing. The review process for proposed changes to historic properties on the Heritage Register is to take no more than 30 days and is tied to application for other existing City permits.

In addition, a recently enacted property tax exemption for historic renovations requires binding review and approval of the renovation before the tax exemption is granted. A separate meeting to review renovation plans must be arranged for any properties wishing to claim this exemption.

CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING DESIGNATION TO THE OLYMPIA HERITAGE REGISTER

(Section 5.A. of Ordinance #4438)

Any building, structure, object, site or district may be designated for inclusion in the City Heritage Register if it has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, state or nation; is at least 50 years old, or is of lesser age and has exceptional importance; possesses at least two elements of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association; is well-maintained; and if it falls into at least one of the following categories:

1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of national, state or local history.
2. Embodies the distinctive architectural characteristics of a type, period, style or method of design or construction, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
3. Is an outstanding work of a designer, builder or architect who has made a substantial contribution to the art.
4. Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering or architectural history.
5. Is associated with the lives of persons significant in national, state or local history.
6. Has yielded or may be likely to yield archaeological information important in pre-history or history.
7. Is a religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance.
8. Is a building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event.
9. Is a birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
10. Is a cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from

association with historic events, or cultural patterns.

11. Is a reconstructed building that has been executed in a historically accurate manner, within a suitable environment and which is congruent with the City's history.
12. Is a creative and unique example of folk architecture and design created by persons not formally trained in the architectural or design professions, and which does not fit into formal architectural or historical categories.

NOTES FOR OLYMPIA HERITAGE REGISTER HEARINGS

NOMINATIONS

I. PROCESS

- A. Public Hearing--Heritage Commission
- B. Appealable to City Council within 30 days

II. BASIS FOR PLACEMENT

- A. Must be 50 years old.
- B. Must fall into at least one of 12 categories. Key ones:
 - #1 Association with historical events
 - #2 Embodies distinctive historical architectural style, type, method of construction
 - #3 Outstanding work of architect/builder
 - #4 Reflects special elements of city's history
 - #5 Association with person important in history

III. AFTER PLACEMENT ON REGISTER

- A. Changes are reviewed
- B. Advisory review--NOT ADDITIONAL NEW REGULATIONS

Purpose of Review--To aid in maintaining building's significant historic characteristics.

Significant historical features are listed at time of nomination:

- Extant . . . don't destroy
- Lost . . . bring back when can

IV. PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION WITH RENOVATION

- A. The review for this is done at a separate time.
- B. This review is NOT advisory.
- C. The list of significant features must not be destroyed if property tax exemption is to be granted.
- D. Also, buildings that have lost major features must restore them through exact restoration or modern adaptation in order to receive the tax exemption.

STAFF REPORT

ENGLISH BUILDER STYLE

BACKGROUND:

In the previous hearing for the Fant House, one of the questions that arose was about the significance of that property in relation to the English Builder style and its examples in Olympia.

The English Builder style was a derivation of the more formal English Revival and Tudor styles. Especially in the northwest, the brick and stucco were replaced by wood siding.

Characteristics of the English Builder style include:

1. Steeply pitched gable roofs.
2. Narrow-appearing silhouette
3. Front gable often with enclosed gable roofed entry.
4. Double hung sash often with multi-panes or leaded glass windows.
5. Decorative arched windows, often in the gables.

The attached information discusses the English Builder and English Revival styles.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LISTING ON ARCHITECTURAL MERIT:

1. Intact architectural features.
2. Distinctive example of the style, e.g., stands out because of outstanding craftsmanship, architectural design or associations with a noted architect.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

1. Because the English Builder Style is well-represented in Olympia architecture, its significance should be recognized by listing of some properties.