

## HISTORIC LANDMARK REPORT

### 116 Pecan Street Ebensberger House

#### **A. Summary**

The Applicant, Brian & Cynthia Fowler, are requesting that the City designate the Ebensberger House, exterior and land, as a Boerne Historic Landmark. The structure is listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places and the National Register District.

The initial request was to be included in the current historic district. However, after discussion among staff and the applicant it was decided that a landmark designation request was a more appropriate process. To be included in a district would have required a review all properties contiguous with the current district or to form a new district. This would have been a lengthier process and may have not proven successful.

#### **B. Historical Context**

The Ebensberger House is a Victorian structure that was the popular architectural style from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This structure is a Queen Ann Victorian which was typically designed with a mix of eclectic shapes, colors and decorative details. It was the most widely utilized style during this era. The ornamental structures were previously handmade, and a symbol of wealth was now mass produced and widely incorporated in this style.

Because of the new construction techniques Queen Anne houses contained odd shapes, layers of different shingle patterns and elaborate spindle work that framed the porches. These houses were widely publicized and became popular with the growing middle class (particularly in urban areas) that could now afford to copy the upper classes. In small towns like Boerne, these structures were scaled down but no less attractive and charming. In central Boerne, as neighborhoods expanded east of Main Street, these houses were built with a unique German-American interpretation that incorporated geography and climate of Hill Country settlements. This is seen in porch pillars, wood carving, and trim work. Also, this style was called as “stick style” Queen Ann Victorians for the pattern of wood boards which suggested structural framework beneath the clapboard skin.

#### **C. Alterations and Condition of Structures**

The building appears in excellent condition and retains much of its original appearance and details. The owners have not only maintained this home but have kept the main and associated structures true to its historical contribution.

#### **D. Criteria for Landmark Designation**

Section 8.04.001 of the Zoning Ordinance related to historic designation has no specific criteria for Landmark designations. There are criteria related to the designation of historic districts (Section 8.07.001). However, this is not applied to specific landmarks. Thus, both the Texas and National Landmark standards for landmark designation have been incorporated for this recommendation.

**Landmark Designation Criteria (See B. Historical Context Related to Designation Criteria)**

1. Be associated with important events that have contributed significantly to the broad pattern of our history;
2. Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represent the work of a master; or possess high artistic values; or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; and
3. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**E. Recommendation**

The Ebensberger House possesses historical, architectural, and cultural importance. The Ebensberger House is the representation of the grand early Twentieth Century residences in central Boerne associated with Boerne during the reconstruction since the Civil War. It represents a period of Boerne's history that coincided with the economic boom in Texas and nationally with the new wealth of the middle class. Families of growing wealth associated with the railroad, health and farming industry constructed more prominent homes to showcase their wealth. Normally associated to the upper class.

The Ebensberger House is significant in terms of historical association as part of the representation Queen Ann Style architecture in early Twentieth Century residence in central Boerne and architectural style for the unique Texas Vernacular of German – American construction.

Staff has determined that the Ebensberger House meets the Texas and National Landmark criterion for designation for structures and land. Therefore, staff recommends the designation.

As per Zoning Ordinance Section 8.04.001 the Historic Landmark Commission (HLC) may make recommendation to approve or deny.

After recommendation of the HLC to City Council (CC); the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z) will review the application for their recommendation to CC. Once both recommendations are made, Council will review the findings and either approve or deny.

The timeline for landmark is outlined below:

- 11/05 HLC – makes recommendation to CC (no public hearing)
- 12/03 P&Z – makes recommendation to CC (no public hearing)
- 12/11 CC – accepts the recommendations and adopts by Resolution (completed)

**F. Attachments**

1. *Aerial Map,*
2. *Contributing Structures Map,*
3. *Applicant Letter, and*
4. *Photographs.*