



## Legislation Text

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File #: ID-290-18, Version: 1

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### *Department of Community Development*

Reference: Adams County Co-Op Store Historic Designation

To: Mayor Kenneth J. Kreutzer and Members of City Council

Through: Philip A. Rodriguez - City Manager

Marv Falconburg, AICP - Assistant City Manager

Holly Prather, AICP - Community Development Director

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Date Prepared: August 14, 2018

### **PURPOSE**

In order to proceed with the designation of this property as a historic landmark, the City Council shall review the nomination and application for designation as a historic landmark, conduct a public hearing, and approve an Ordinance of designation at first reading. The applicant and owner of this application is Carolyn Corogin, representative of C2 Studio US LLC and she has consented to the nomination of this structure to be listed as a historic landmark.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS AREAS**

Recognizable and Well-Planned Community  
Strong Regional Relationships and Partnerships

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **Historic Summary:**

In 1923, the Cooperative Marketing Act provided that farmers and other producers could form their own Co-Op stores, warehouses and other facilities to provide direct sales to retail buyers. The establishment of a Co-Op allowed a group of local businessmen to unite, eliminate the middle-man and mark-ups commonly observed in high transportation costs of goods. Brighton found themselves in a similar situation with exceedingly high costs of oil charged by companies outside of the region. On April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1935, Mr. Fred Monson gathered a group of people to hold the first meeting of the Adams County Consumer Cooperative Association. They initially ran the Co-Op business out of the Green Fargo Oil Co. garage located on North Main Street, but as the Co-Op grew a new station was constructed on the northwest corner of Skeel Street and South Main Street in 1939. Despite the Co-Op's initial struggles to get started, sales had increased \$12,584 and membership of the Co-Op had grown to 388 members by 1946. Needing more space, the Co-Op then made an addition to their existing garage, and demolished two houses on the south side of Skeel Street to build a store for selling local groceries, appliances and feed. Over the next several decades the Co-Op continued to provide goods to the community and peak sales hit in 1983 which exceeded \$8.6 million. Over the course of the 50-year operation, the Co-Op provided an estimated total of \$91.6 million in goods to its members. As the Co-Op grew and acquired more buildings, the store on South Main Street closed its doors and was sold to the Salvation Army in 1980. Ten years later, in 1990, it became Robb's Grocery Store until the property was sold to its current owner.

#### **Architectural Summary:**

The Adams County Co-Op Store is a twentieth century commercial building with a barrel roof.

The walls are constructed of a blonde/light colored brick and trimmed with a single course of red brick along the top of the parapet, at the base of window openings, around door openings and topping the four buttresses spread evenly along each of the north and south sides of the building. The building has a concrete foundation with walls that extend

approximately two feet above the ground on the front of the building. However, the building is constructed on a hill, so the height of the concrete wall increases as the building extends down the sloping hill towards the west. There is a variety of original and newer windows and doors on all elevations of the structure, and some window openings have been bricked or blocked in. No additions have been made to the building. The site is primarily covered in hardscape, however, the foundation of the grain silo remains on the southeast corner of the property.

### **CRITERIA BY WHICH COUNCIL MUST CONSIDER THE ITEM**

#### **Historic Landmark Eligibility:**

Section 17-52-40 of the *Land Use and Development Code* states that an individual structure may be designated as a historic landmark if it is at least fifty (50) years old and possesses historic and/or architectural significance. The finding of historic and/or architectural significance requires that the property meets at least one (1) of the Eligibility Categories. To meet an Eligibility Category, at least one (1) of the criteria must be satisfied. In order to find that a property possesses exceptional historic and/or architectural significance, it must meet at least two (2) of the following Eligibility Categories. A full list of the Eligibility Categories and their criteria is listed in the attached Historic Preservation Commission Memorandum.

#### **Staff Analysis:**

The Adams County Co-Op Store is a physical representation of the region's agricultural community and commercial activity and architecture in the 1940's. The store represents the built environment of the Cooperative movement around the nation and more specifically the economic needs of Brighton consumers during this time. Additionally, it's location within the Brighton Subdivision is important in identifying context as residential buildings were demolished and commercial "blue-collar" businesses were constructed. In consideration of the history listed above, staff finds the application for designation is meeting the following criteria (*justification has been provided in italics below each criteria*):

Section 17-52-30(a)(2): Social and Historic Category: In order to be considered significant in the Social and Historic Category, the following criteria have been met:

**b. exemplifies cultural, political, economic or social heritage of the community; or**

*Staff Analysis: The structure is an established representation of Brighton's agricultural community and commercial activity in the 40's.*

**c. represents a built environment of a group of people in an era of history; or**

*Staff Analysis: The store represents a national movement for smaller communities to form now-legal cooperatives to acquire and sell goods to their local community at lower prices.*

Section 17-52-30(a)(3): Geographic and Environmental Category: In order to be considered significant in the Geographic and Environmental Category, the following criteria have been met:

**b. by being part of, or related to, a square, park or other distinctive area which should be developed or preserved according to a plan based on an historic, cultural, or architectural motif;**

*Staff Analysis: The demolition of two original homes within the subdivision for construction of a blue collar "affordable goods" business is representative of the transition of Brighton's earliest neighborhood into an auto-dependent community and a growing downtown.*

As listed above, staff finds that the significance of this structure is primarily met through the Social and Historic Category. However, it's location with the Brighton Subdivision also provides significance under the Geographic and Environmental Category. In order to retain significance, care to preserve the exterior historic materials and details, the original windows and doors which remain, and roof form (material exempted) is essential. If feasible, the location of the grain elevator foundation to the rear of the structure should be preserved or memorialized. Additionally, restoration of the original window openings would help the structure reclaim its original architectural significance as an iconic late 40's commercial building.

#### **Historic Preservation Commission:**

A public hearing to review the Adams County Co-Op Store nomination was held on August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018 by the Historic Preservation Commission. After the public hearing was held, the commission made a unanimous recommendation of approval for the application to the City Council. A copy of the approved resolution has been attached for reference.

#### **Public Comment:**

Notice of the City Council public hearing to review the Adams County Co-Op Store was published in the *Brighton*

*Standard Blade* on August 15, 2018, which is no less than the fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the public hearing as required by the code. Additionally, a sign was placed on the property on August 16, 2018 which also meets the minimum fifteen (15) day notice requirement. As of the date of this report, no formal comments have been received by staff.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Due to meeting the review criteria of Section 17-52-40 of the *Land Use and Development Code*, staff recommends approval of the Historic Landmark Designation of the Adams County Co-Op Store. A draft ordinance has been provided to the Council should it decide to proceed with the application as presented.

### **OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION**

The City Council has four options when reviewing this Historic Landmark Designation application.

- 1) The City Council can approve the designation application at first reading.
- 2) The City Council can approve the designation application with specific changes to the Ordinance.
- 3) The City Council can deny the designation application, and ask staff to draft an Ordinance with specific reasons for denial.
- 4) The City Council can continue the application to be heard at a later, specified date.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- Aerial Map
- Draft Ordinance
- Historic Preservation Commission Memorandum
- Historic Preservation Commission Resolution
- Notice as Advertised in *Brighton Blade*
- Draft Presentation Slides

<sup>i</sup> Bureau of Land Management, "Hard Times: 1920-1940; Land of Contrast: A History of Southeast Colorado" Bureau of Land Management, August 2, 2018, [https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/bim/co/17chap12.htm](https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/bim/co/17chap12.htm).

<sup>ii</sup> Brighton Genealogical Society, *The History of Brighton, Colorado and Surrounding Area* (Brighton, CO: Brighton Historic Preservation Commission, 2006), 149-150.