

Date August 26, 2013

RESOLUTION APPROVING URBAN RENEWAL AGREEMENT
FOR SALE OF LAND FOR PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT TO
425 EAST GRAND, LLC TO DEVELOP DISPOSITION PARCEL NO. 02-02A
(425 E. GRAND AVENUE) IN METRO CENTER URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT

WHEREAS, on March 30, 2000 by Roll Call Nos. 00-788 and 00-789, the City Council of the City of Des Moines approved the Urban Renewal Plan for the Metro Center Urban Renewal Project (hereinafter referred to as "Plan"); and

WHEREAS, 425 East Grand, LLC, an Iowa limited liability company, ("Developer") has presented to the City a developer-initiated proposal ("Proposal") to purchase and redevelop Disposition Parcel 02-02A, 425 E. Grand Avenue, located south of East Grand Avenue and west of East Fifth Street ("Property"), which Proposal is on file in the Office of the City Clerk; and

WHEREAS, the Proposal and the proposed Urban Renewal Agreement for Sale of Land for Private Redevelopment ("Development Agreement") incorporated therein, executed by the Developer, proposes that Developer take title to the Property for relocation of a two-story row house building on a new full basement devoted for commercial retail, office or restaurant uses; and

WHEREAS, by Roll Call No. 13-1237, dated July 29, 2013, the City Council accepted the Proposal and authorized publication of notice of intent to enter into the Development Agreement at public hearing if no competing proposals were received by the City by August 23, 2013; and

WHEREAS, the public notice was published in the Des Moines Register on July 31, 2013; and

WHEREAS, the City received no competing proposals for the purchase and development of the Property; and

WHEREAS, the development of the Property, according to the terms of the Development Agreement, furthers the objectives of the Plan to preserve and create an environment which will protect the health, safety and general welfare of City residents and maintain taxable values within the Urban Renewal Project area, to support the maintenance and rehabilitation of sound existing structures and the preservation of properties of architectural and historic merit, to encourage intensive and coordinated the mixed-use development of commercial and residential improvements, to provide for the orderly expansion of downtown Des Moines as a retail, financial and business center of the metropolitan area, and to encourage the coordinated development of parcels and structures to achieve efficient building design; and

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WHEREAS, the economic development incentives for the proposed development to be provided by the City to Developer pursuant to the Urban Renewal Law and Chapter 15A of the Code of Iowa and Developer's obligations under the Development Agreement to relocate and construct the development will generate the following public gains and benefits: (i) it will advance the improvement and redevelopment of the East Village area in accordance with the Plan; (ii) it will encourage further private investment and will attract and retain residents and businesses in the Urban Renewal Project area to reverse the pattern of disinvestment and declining resident population; and, (iii) it will further the City's efforts to create and retain job opportunities within the Urban Renewal Project area which might otherwise be lost; and,

WHEREAS, the relocation and construction of the proposed development is a speculative venture and the public gains and benefits from the relocation and construction and resulting commercial space and development opportunities would not occur without the proposed economic incentives provided under the terms and conditions of the Development Agreement and the public gains and benefits are warranted in comparison to the amount of economic incentives; and,

WHEREAS, City believes that the proposed development of the Property pursuant to the Proposal and Development Agreement, and the approval of and fulfillment generally of the terms and conditions of the Development Agreement, are in the vital and best interests of City and the health, safety, morals, and welfare of its residents, and in accord with the public purposes and provisions of the applicable state and local laws and requirements under which the project has been undertaken and warrant the provision of the \$225,000 economic development grant assistance set forth in the Development Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that the purchase price of \$180,000 for the Property meets the fair market value thereof for uses in accordance with the Plan taking into account the restrictions upon the Property and the covenants, conditions and obligations assumed by the Developer for relocation of a two-story row house building on a new full basement devoted for commercial retail, office or restaurant uses in accordance with the terms of the Development Agreement; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the published notice, those interested in the Proposal and the sale of the Property to Developer in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Development Agreement, have been given an opportunity to be heard with respect thereto and have presented their views to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, this Council believes the acceptance of the Proposal and sale of the Property to Developer according to the terms and conditions set out in the Development Agreement are in the best interests of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, and in furtherance of the purposes of Iowa Code Chapter 403.

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, that:

1. Upon due consideration of the facts and statements of interested persons, the hearing is hereby closed and it is determined the Urban Renewal Agreement for Sale of Land for Private Development between the City of Des Moines and 425 East Grand, LLC for the sale and development of the Property and the provision of economic development grant assistance is in the public interest of the citizens of the City of Des Moines and in furtherance of the Plan, and is hereby approved.

2. The Mayor is authorized and directed to execute the Development Agreement on behalf of the City and the City Clerk is authorized and directed to attest to said signature and to affix the seal of the City.

3. The City Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to submit the Development Agreement to the County Recorder of Polk County, Iowa, for filing and recording in the manner provided by law.

4. The City Manager or his designees are hereby directed to administer the terms of the Development Agreement on behalf of the City; monitor compliance by Developer with terms of the Development Agreement; review and determine if satisfactory Developer commitments for adequate financing to complete construction of the improvements; review the conceptual development plan and make appropriate recommendations on the plan to the City Council prior to conveyance of the Property.

Date August 26, 2013


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5. Upon determination by the City Manager and Legal Department that Developer has satisfied the conditions for payment of economic development grant installments set forth in the Development Agreement, the Finance Director is authorized to pay said installments to Developer on the dates set forth in the Development Agreement.

(Council Letter No. 13- 442 Attached)

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Moved by _____ to adopt.


 Lawrence R. McDowell
 Deputy City Attorney

COUNCIL ACTION	YEAS	NAYS	PASS	ABSENT
COWNIE				
COLEMAN				
GRIESS				
HENSLEY				
MAHAFFEY				
MEYER				
MOORE				
TOTAL				
MOTION CARRIED			APPROVED	
_____ Mayor				

CERTIFICATE

I, DIANE RAUH, City Clerk of said City hereby certify that at a meeting of the City Council of said City of Des Moines, held on the above date, among other proceedings the above was adopted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal the day and year first above written.

_____ City Clerk

August 21, 2013

48A

Honorable Mayor and City Council
City of Des Moines, Iowa

Members:

Communication from the City Plan and Zoning Commission advising that at their meeting held August 15, 2013, the following action was taken regarding a request from Jake Christensen (developer) for property located at 425 East Grand Avenue.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

After public hearing, the members voted 12-0 as follows:

Commission Action:	Yes	Nays	Pass	Absent
Dory Briles				X
JoAnne Corigliano	X			
Shirley Daniels	X			
Jacqueline Easley	X			
Tim Fitzgerald	X			
Dann Flaherty	X			
John "Jack" Hilmes	X			
Ted Irvine	X			
Greg Jones	X			
William Page	X			
Christine Pardee	X			
CJ Stephens	X			
Vicki Stogdill				X
Greg Wattier	X			

APPROVAL as amended Part A & B) of the request as Norden Hall at the new site meets the criteria for the designation of a moved building as a Landmark. The building is one of the few remaining examples of the row-house style in Des Moines. It was constructed by Samuel Green who was a leading businessman in the early development of the City. The building was owned by the Norden Singing Society for an extended period of time and was utilized as an important community center for Scandinavian immigrants. Scandinavian immigrants played a significant role in the development of the east side of the downtown.

AND

APPROVAL of Part C) to terminate the designation of 709 East Locust Street as a local Landmark upon the removal of Norden Hall from that address.



CITY PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION
ARMORY BUILDING
602 ROBERT D. RAY DRIVE
DES MOINES, IOWA 50309 -1881
(515) 283-4182

ALL-AMERICA CITY
1949, 1976, 1981
2003

STAFF RECOMMENDATION TO THE P&Z COMMISSION

Part A & B) Staff recommends approval of the request as Norden Hall at the new site meets the criteria for the designation of a moved building as a Landmark. The building is one of the few remaining examples of the row-house style in Des Moines. It was constructed by Samuel Green who was a leading businessman in the early development of the City. The building was owned by the Norden Singing Society for an extended period of time and was utilized as an important community center for Scandinavian immigrants. Scandinavian immigrants played a significant role in the development of the east side of the downtown.

Part C) Staff recommends approval of the termination of the designation of 709 East Locust Street as a local Landmark upon the removal of Norden Hall from that address.

STAFF REPORT

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1. **Purpose of Request:** On June 20, 2013, the Commission approved a motion to support the nomination of "Norden Hall" as a local Landmark at a new location in the East Village. The original proposal included the construction of a rear addition. The addition is no longer proposed. The project must be reconsidered by the Landmark Review Board and the Plan and Zoning Commission given the change in scope. Staff believes Norden Hall would comply with the criteria necessary for the designation of a local Landmark at 425 East Grand Avenue independent of any proposed addition.
- 2. **Project History:** The applicant is proposing to move the building known as "Norden Hall" from its current location to the City-owned parking lot at 425 East Grand Avenue. The intended use for the building at the new site is a restaurant.

Norden Hall was designated as a Landmark by the City Council on April 17, 2000. The original nomination form states the building predates the State Capitol building (1884-86) and that it was home to three early Scandinavian groups, the Danish Brotherhood, the Danish Sisterhood and the Norden Singing Society. **The current nomination corrects this date of construction by dating it to 1894.**

The building is currently owned by the State and sits at the edge of the West Capitol Terrace. The State wishes to have the building removed to allow for the completion of the "People's Plaza." The Capitol Master Plan was adopted and the initial phases of the West Capitol Terrace Improvements were under development in late 2006. Several additional phases of the proposed West Capitol Terrace Improvements have been completed over the years.

- 3. **Size of Site:** 75 feet by 132 feet (9,914 square feet).
- 4. **Existing Zoning (site):** "C-3B" Central Business Mixed Use District, "CDO" Capitol Dominance Overlay District, Downtown Overlay District, and "GGP" Gambling Games Prohibition Overlay District.
- 5. **Existing Land Use (site):** Surface parking lot.

6. Adjacent Land Use and Zoning:

North – “C-3B”; Use is office.

South – “C-3B”; Uses are restaurant, retail and multiple-family residential.

East – “C-3B”; Uses are tavern/night club.

West – “C-3B”; Use is surface parking lot.

6. General Neighborhood/Area Land Uses: The site is located in an area that contains a mix of residential and commercial uses that is known as the East Village.

7. Applicable Recognized Neighborhood(s): The subject property is located in the Historic East Village Neighborhood. This neighborhood association was notified of the meeting by mailing of the Preliminary Agenda to all recognized neighborhood associations on July 26, 2013. A Final Agenda for the meeting was mailed to all the recognized neighborhood associations on August 9, 2013.

All agendas and notices are mailed to the primary contact person designated to the City of Des Moines Neighborhood Development Division by the recognized neighborhood association. The Historic East Village Neighborhood notices were mailed to Josh Garrett, PO Box 1782, Des Moines, IA 50305.

8. Relevant Zoning History: None.

9. 2020 Community Character Land Use Plan Designation: Downtown Retail/Office Core/Core Fringe.

II. ADDITIONAL APPLICABLE INFORMATION

1. Landmark Designation Criteria: Section 58-58 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance contains the criteria for the designation of a landmark. The building is proposed to be moved and therefore can only be designated if it is found to comply with criterion (b)(2) as follows.

Sec. 58-58. Designation criteria.

(a) For purpose of this article, a landmark or landmark site designation may be placed on any site, natural or improved, including any building, improvement or structure located thereon that possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association and that:

- (1) Is significant in American history, architecture, archaeology and culture;
- (2) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- (3) Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- (4) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- (5) Has yielded or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

(b) **Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures; properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes; structures that have been moved from their original locations; reconstructed historic buildings; properties primarily commemorative in nature; and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the landmark designation. However, such properties will qualify if they fall within the following categories:**

- (1) A religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance.
- (2) **A building or structure removed from its original location which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event.**
- (3) A birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance, if there is no appropriate site or building directly associated with his or her productive life.
- (4) 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.
- (5) A reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived.
- (6) A property primarily commemorative in nature, if design, age, tradition or symbolic value has invested it with its own historical significance.
- (7) A property achieving significance within the past 50 years, if it is of exceptional importance.

(c) The landmark review board may adopt specific operating guidelines for landmark and landmark site designations, providing such are in conformity with this article.

Included in the Commission's packet is a copy of the Landmark Nomination Form for the building at the new site as prepared by Jennifer James, Historic Preservation Consultant. Staff has reviewed the form and concurs with the find that the building at the new site meets the criteria for the designation of a moved building as a local Landmark. On August 6, 2013, the Landmark Review Board voted to recommend approval of the revised request to the Plan and Zoning Commission and the City Council.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Will Page asked that a friendly amendment be added to the general information for Item #1 at the end of the Project History the section to state. "The current nomination corrects this date of construction by dating it to 1894."

CHAIRPERSON OPENED THE PUBLIC HEARING

There was no one to speak in favor or in opposition of the applicant's request.

COMMISSION ACTION:

Greg Jones moved staff recommendation as amended Part A & B) approval of the request as Norden Hall at the new site meets the criteria for the designation of a moved building as a Landmark. The building is one of the few remaining examples of the row-house style in Des Moines. It was constructed by Samuel Green who was a leading businessman in the early development of the City. The building was owned by the Norden Singing Society for an extended period of time and was utilized as an important community center for Scandinavian immigrants. Scandinavian immigrants played a significant role in the development of the east side of the downtown.

AND

Part C) approval of the termination of the designation of 709 East Locust Street as a local Landmark upon the removal of Norden Hall from that address.

Motion passed 12-0.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Ludwig".

Michael Ludwig, AICP
Planning Administrator

MGL:clw

Attachment

IDENTIFICATION:

SITE NAME Samuel Green Rowhouse – Norden Hall

LEGAL LOCATION (description) New site: 425 E. Grand Avenue, Lot 2 and the East 15 feet of Lot 3 in Block 9, East Fort Des Moines plat, Des Moines, Iowa

OWNER(S) NAME Current owner is City of Des Moines; proposed new owner will be 425 East Grand LLC/Jake Christensen

OWNER(S) ADDRESS 506 Third Street, Des Moines, IA 50309

CATEGORY: STRUCTURAL/ARCHITECTURAL [X] LANDSCAPE [] ARCHEOLOGICAL [] (check one)

COMPONENTS Masonry rowhouse with cast-stone accents and sills.

USE (present) Vacant (past) Samuel Green Rowhouse; multifamily rental (1900-1946); Norden Hall rehearsal hall and clubhouse for Norden Singers Inc. (1949-1994); residence (1995-2006) Vacant (2006-present)

DESCRIPTION:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1894 ARCHITECT/BUILDER unknown

BUILDING TYPE: Single-family dwelling [X] Industrial [] Other institutional [] Religious [] Multiple-family dwelling [] Educational [] Public [] Agricultural [] Commercial []

EXTERIOR WALLS: clapboard [] stone [] brick [X] board and batten [] shingles [] stucco [] other [X] with cast-stone ornamentation and sills

STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: wood frame with interlocking joints [] masonry load-bearing walls [X] wood frame with light members (balloon frame) [] iron frame [] steel frame with curtain walls [] reinforced concrete [] other []

CONDITION: excellent [] good [X] fair [] deteriorated []

INTEGRITY: original site [] moved--if so, when: proposed to move in August 2013

from where from 709 E. Locust Street, three blocks to 425 E. Grand Avenue, both in the Historic East Village Neighborhood

Information on alterations, additions (with dates and architect, if known) and any other notable features of building/site:

Constructed for Samuel Green as a Romanesque Revival style red brick rowhouse in 1894; Green lived in the house until 1900 and then the family rented it out until 1946. In 1949, Norden Singers Inc, a Swedish choral and cultural group, purchased the house for a rehearsal hall and clubhouse; this new use required remodeling and structural supports. In 1995, a new owner converted the rowhouse back to a single-family dwelling, (See attached for more details.)

RELATED OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY: barn [] other farm structures [] carriage house [] garage [] privy [] other [] none []

SURROUNDINGS OF THE SITE: open land ___ woodland ___ scattered outbuildings ___ commercial ___ industrial ___ residential ___ densely built-up ___ other ___ Current site, 709 E. Locust Street, is now part of the Capitol Grounds, but historically was a mixed-use residential/commercial area. The new site, 425 E. Grand Avenue, is a mixed-use area featuring many late-19th-century and early-20th-century buildings.

Prepared by Jennifer I. James, MAHP Date June 7, 2013
Address 4209 Kingman Blvd., Des Moines Telephone (515) 250-7196
Organization On behalf of 425 East Grand LLC

SIGNIFICANCE: (Indicate all sources of information for all statements)

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Samuel Green Rowhouse–Norden Hall at 709 E. Locust Street, Des Moines, Polk County, Iowa, occupies what was once a mid-block lot on the edge of the State of Iowa Capitol Grounds, on the edge of the commercial-residential neighborhood historically known as East Fort Des Moines. The two-story rectangular building constructed in 1894 of red brick is a rowhouse in form, built as a single unit against the eastern wall of the adjoining 1892 brick house–doctor’s office at 707 E. Locust Street. The 709 E. Locust Street rowhouse features a Romanesque Revival facade that wraps the eastern side of the building several feet deep. The secondary elevations contain multiple fenestrations, some of which have been enclosed with masonry units; in response to fenestration changes, most brick on the secondary elevations was stuccoed.

The interior was adapted in 1949 from residential rental rooming house to an ethnic heritage society meeting hall by and for the Norden Singers, a long-established Swedish choral and cultural group, which used Norden Hall until 1994. During the building’s five decades as Norden Hall, other smaller Scandinavian organizations such as the Danish Brotherhood, Danish Sisterhood, and Sons of Norway also used the space for its meetings.

The building is an extremely rare surviving rowhouse that is also a very rare surviving example of Romanesque Revival architecture in Des Moines. The original owner and first occupant, Samuel Green, was an early resident of Des Moines who contributed to the city’s development via his foundry, which grew to become the city’s largest by the late 19th century. (“Samuel Green”: 479). The building’s later ethnic heritage association adds another overlay of history, and as such the rowhouse is a rare surviving structure representing the contributions of Scandinavians to the cultural heritage of the “East Side” of Des Moines, specifically to the East Side downtown neighborhood where many Scandinavian immigrants first settled and later as they moved out of the low-lying flood-prone river bottom areas the neighborhood where they returned to shop, worship, and take part in cultural activities such as Norden Singers.

Setting

The Samuel Green Rowhouse–Norden Hall is located on the built-up eastern edge of Capitol Hill, within the original East Fort Des Moines town development. This residential-commercial district occupies the sloping terrain that stretches some ten blocks from the Des Moines River east and uphill to the golden domes of the Iowa State Capitol. By the 1890s, when Samuel Green built his rowhouse, the neighborhood had largely been developed as a mixed-use, mixed-income, ethnically diverse small town step-sibling to the more populous and financially invested “West Side” of Des Moines. And whereas the topographically flat West Side tended to

follow a relatively uniform platting (and later subdividing) pattern modeled after the original Town of Fort Des Moines plat, the sloping East Side developed with competing plat plans and experienced more narrow-lot subdivisions. For the East Side, the river and bisecting rail lines attracted and serviced small- and medium-size industrial factories, mills, and lumberyards. Fourth Street formed a dividing line between low-lying flood-prone areas near the river and higher, drier, and therefore more desirable land favored for larger houses such as those built by leading business owners, retail establishments, churches, and schools. The industrial jobs and lower-rent housing in these flood-prone “bottoms” areas drew incoming immigrants and migrants, with Scandinavians one of the ethnic groups drawn by common poverty to the area. (City of Des Moines: 55)

But on both sides of Fourth Street (below and above the bluff line) existed a mix of detached houses, rowhouses, and double-houses interspersed with commercial and institutional uses; these house types were built in a variety of styles, sizes, and materials to suit the wide variety of income levels and social/ethnic backgrounds found among East Side residents. In the early 1890s, Green and his neighbor each redeveloped adjoining small frame cottages into brick rowhouses with impressive facade architecture. Green and his family occupied his rowhouse and the neighbor used his as a medical office.

Nineteenth-century housing on the near East Side has become an endangered species of building type. Over time, most freestanding housing has been demolished, replaced by commercial buildings, government offices, parking lots, and green space. The early-20th-century City Beautiful Movement expansion of government buildings and grounds (city and federal along the riverfront, state at the top of the hill) as a means of “cleaning up” the riverfront and neighborhoods ringing Capitol removed several hundred housing units. The state hired architect Emmanuel Louis Masqueray in 1913 to design and execute a landscape plan for expanding the Capitol Grounds, which then occupied a one-square-block plot. Masqueray removed rundown housing ringing the capitol building and increased the capitol grounds from about 9 acres to more than 70 acres. (Harlan: 96-114) It is worth noting that Masqueray’s plan removed housing along East Locust Street from East Ninth Street through to 715 East Locust Street, but retained the Samuel Green rowhouse and Green’s Subdivision (Lots 1-9). The expanded Capitol Grounds western boundary terminated at the north-south alley that abutted Green’s Subdivision, and this alley bordered Samuel Green’s former house (711 E. Locust Street; nonextant). Thus Green’s rowhouse was in the half-block of the 700 block of East Locust Street left standing outside of the expanded Capitol Grounds—a testament to the rowhouse as a well-built and well-maintained architecturally pleasing building.

Other planning decisions further reduced housing: The city’s first zoning code of 1926 designated the area west of the Capitol as a “light industrial district” (including the Samuel Green Rowhouse), an assignment that encouraged business expansion and housing demolition. Midcentury freeway construction (Interstate 235) removed a swath of housing, and concurrent Urban Renewal in the “River Hills” area (East Side area between Interstate 235 and Des Moines Street) removed housing for more than 700 families. (*The Des Moines Tribune*, November 13, 1962) Some nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century apartments above retail remain, now joined by new infill mixed-use multifamily residential blocks built in the last decade, bringing greater residential use back to the East Village area.

As of spring 2013, the Samuel Green Rowhouse—Norden Hall is the last intact nineteenth-century rowhouse known to exist within the near East Side, and it is one of only four known extant early rowhouse developments in Des Moines. The 709 E. Locust Street rowhouse also represents one of four remaining Swedish Ethnic

Heritage sites identified as eligible for the National Register in a 1983 citywide survey of cultural resources. (Long 1983) Despite the many changes that have occurred throughout the neighborhood, the Samuel Green Rowhouse–Norden Hall retains architectural integrity as both an 1894 Romanesque Revival rowhouse and a Scandinavian cultural heritage social hall.

Current Site: 709 E. Locust Street

The building occupies Lot 3 in Green's Subdivision of Lot 1 and the North ½ of Lot 2 in Block H in Griffith's Addition to East Fort Des Moines, within Des Moines, Polk County, Iowa. The parcel slopes westward and southward; the lot measures 21 feet (east-west) by 80 feet (north-south). The building's rectangular footprint measures 22 feet (east-west) by 50 feet (north-south), with an 8 feet by 6 feet front entry stoop. (Note that the 22-foot width of the rowhouse as compared to the 21-foot width of the lot is calculated by taking the width of the sidewall on the west side shared with 707 E. Locust Street. (Polk County Assessor; Slingshot Architecture) As of spring 2013, only two structures (plus additions) remain in the 700 block of East Locust Street.

When constructed in 1894, the rowhouse was located midblock on the south side of the 700 block of East Locust Street; Locust continued east to Ninth Street, at the foot of the state capitol. The rowhouse facade (north) fronted the public sidewalk along East Locust Street; the nearest cross street was East Seventh Street, located four lots to the west. On the west, the rowhouse shared a partial sidewall with the pre-existing brick house–doctor's office at 707 E. Locust Street, and then extended farther south beyond the shared sidewall so as to provide extra square footage of living space and windows on all four sides of the rowhouse. To the south, the rowhouse had a rear two-story covered porch with steps down to a small backyard that abutted a public alley (east-west) that ran from East Seventh Street east to a north-south public alley (where East Eighth Street should have gone but was never cut through). A few feet to the east sat Samuel Green's large two-story frame house, 711 E. Locust Street (nonextant), which Green converted to a boarding house after moving next door to the rowhouse.

The north side of the Samuel Green Rowhouse remains the primary facade and abuts a hardscaped decorative walkway that serves as a main entry into the approximately 10-acre West Capitol Terrace, the western front lawn of the capitol which includes a promenade and landscaped gardens along with open grassy spaces used for concerts, rallies, and other events. The terrace is part of the larger Capitol Grounds. In the later twentieth century, a 389-space state parking lot was created directly east of the rowhouse extending to Ninth Street, with an entrance at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and East Locust Street. (Brooks Borg Skiles: 150-159) In the early twenty-first century, the state converted the parking lot back to parkland and closed off East Locust Street at Pennsylvania Avenue/East Seventh Street.

On the west, the rowhouse still shares the brick sidewall with what is now addressed as 707-1/2 E. Locust Street (two large additions to 707 E. Locust Street resulted in changing the address). For simplicity, this building and its two additions will be referred to in this text as the historic address, 707 E. Locust Street.

The rowhouse's south elevation and rear egress stairs open to a small landscaped backyard that terminates at a metal chain-link fence surrounding a state-owned parking lot. (The east-west alley no longer exists.)

The rowhouse's east elevation is exposed following the circa-2008 demolition of the 1952 one-story brick Dania Savings & Loan office building (711 E. Locust Street, nonextant). The east sidewall now abuts a grassy lot.

Building

Structure

The building footprint measures 22 feet (east-west) by 50 feet (north-south), with an 8 feet (east-west) by 6 feet (north-south) front entry porch (currently roofless) accessed via steps from the sidewalk. The front porch is set against a public walkway; the remainder of the north facade is recessed approximately six feet from the sidewalk line and that area is paved with concrete to form the walkway to the porch steps.

The structure consists of brick structural walls over a brick foundation; interiorly, the Norden Singers Inc. altered the structure in 1949 to adapt the rowhouse into a social hall. The 1949 interior structure consists of structural steel beams added to the basement ceiling with corresponding structural steel columns, structural steel beams added to the first-floor ceiling with one corresponding structural steel column, and interior walls on the second floor. The Norden Singers also removed the original basement-to-second-floor stacked staircase located along the west wall to accommodate a steel beam; Norden Singers built a new basement-to-second-floor staircase at the north end, then added a new wood-strip floor on the first floor and (cover-up?) flooring on the second floor.

Exterior

The main exterior building materials are finished red brick with thin mortar lines on the facade and stuccoed masonry on secondary elevations. The original window openings on all four elevations had cast-stone sills; most are still in place. Wood was and is used on all elevations for window frames and some exterior doors. Wood is also used for a rear exit staircase and small deck. Metal is used for coping and two rear doors. Rubber-type membrane covers the roof.

As commissioned by Samuel Green, the building is of the Romanesque Revival architectural style and presents a unique facade. The style is embodied here by an asymmetrical facade of red brick with thin "butter joint" mortar lines, brick pilasters that project above the parapet wall, a parapet frieze embellished with decorative brickwork, rusticated cast-stone continuous lintel and sill courses, and at the base a continuous beltcourse. The brick piers frame two large rectangular window openings. The entry porch base is red brick backplastered with a cement material on the north side with concrete steps ascending the east side; the porch originally supported two large masonry arches topped with a rusticated lintel course and a flat roof. The facade wraps the east elevation by several feet. Secondary elevations were red brick with segmental-arch-top fenestrations.

North elevation: This main and primary facade features two asymmetrical bays defined by three brick pilasters that project above the parapet wall. The larger bay contains two large window openings with cast-stone sills, one on each story. The smaller bay contains the front entry door with transom above and a narrower second-story window opening with a cast-stone sill. Continuous cast-stone lintel and sill courses extend between the pilasters; the wider lintel course is rusticated to resemble rough-faced brownstone. At the rooftop, brick friezes framed by the pilasters feature a decorative repeating brick pattern of recessed rectangles in two stacked rows, which march across the facade and wrap to the east elevation. A projecting beltcourse defines the base of the building and wraps to the east

elevation; the beltcourse separates masonry above from back-plastered foundation below.

The windows and door are circa-1996 replacements, inset within the original brick openings. The two large windows were removed and bricked shut by Norden Singers in 1949 (first floor) and pre-1974 (second floor); the third smaller window may have been replaced by Norden.

The brick was laid with thin mortar joints with very straight, exact placement. The mortar appears to have been a red-tinted mortar, which is evident around the front entry door and underneath later white-mortar tuckpointing. The north elevation was painted white/cream circa 1952, as depicted in historical photographs. The paint was later removed by Norden Singers sometime between 1958 and 1974, based on historical photographs. Some brick finish has been removed, but the brick retains a smooth, even surface and overall integrity.

East elevation: The facade treatment wraps the northeastern corner by several feet, but is stuccoed over. This elevation shows two different stucco colors/coatings, one on each floor level, with a black tar line dividing the two colors/coatings and providing a visual cue that a one-story building previously attached to the eastern sidewall. The first floor contains four original window openings, all bricked shut but with original cast-stone sills. The second floor contains five original window openings, all containing circa-1996 replacement wood double-hung windows and exterior painted wood trim. The parapet roofline steps down from north to south, and includes a brick chimney projection.

In 1894, the rowhouse was built on its eastern property line, with only several feet separating it from the frame house at 711 E. Locust Street. The narrow gap between structures meant that the east elevation was largely not visible, except for the northeast front corner of the building. As such, the main facade design wrapped only the corner. Despite the close proximity of the pre-existing house, the east elevation was constructed of red brick with nine segmental-arched-top window openings, each with a cast-stone sill.

To shield Norden Hall from the boarding house next door, in the 1949 Norden Hall conversion, Norden Singers removed all first-floor windows, bricked over one window, and infilled the remaining three windows with brick below and glass block above. The second-story changes included removing at least two windows. In the basement, three glass-block windows were installed on the east wall to illuminate the bar. Due to the window changes and perhaps other repair concerns, Norden Singers applied stucco over the sidewall.

Privacy concerns and windows changed again in circa 1952, when the boarding house was replaced by a one-story Dania Savings & Loan office building. The flat-roofed brick structure was built against the rowhouse. Window openings on the first floor (and perhaps on the basement level) were bricked shut using two different brick types, demonstrating that the work was not meant to be seen.

In circa 1996, all five second-floor window openings were re-opened and wood windows placed within the openings. Wood trim was added around the window openings and below the window that is missing its original cast-stone sill.

In circa 2008, the state demolished the one-story office building at 711 E. Locust Street. The building's removal again exposed the first-floor east elevation.

South elevation: This red-brick elevation was stuccoed by the Norden Singers circa 1949, likely in response to changes made to windows. The sidewall contains two bays. The fenestration arrangement on the first floor is, from west to east: rear entry door with adjoining segmental-arch-top window in the first bay and segmental-arch top window in the second bay. The door is located within a segmental-arch-top opening; a modern transom and metal entry door infill the opening. Both windows were shortened by the Norden Singers and contained glass-block infill on the upper half; circa-1996 the glass block was removed and wood windows were inset.

On the second floor the fenestration arrangement is, from west to east: modern double French doors in the first bay and a full-length replacement wood window in the second bay. Historically, the first bay contained a segmental-arch-top window (sill and brick courses below since removed) with adjoining arch-top doorway; on the interior, the brick arches are visible above the infill doors. In circa 1996, wood window and French doors were placed within the openings. Painted wood trim has been added around the second-story fenestrations.

The basement contains a small rectangular window opening containing an unpainted wood window with a copper drip cap and "burglar bars" screwed to the exterior. On the east side is a set of concrete stairs attached to a concrete retaining wall that lead down to segmental-arch-top doorway infilled with a modern metal entry door topped by a narrow transom.

Two unpainted wood staircases provide access to the first- and second-story rear entry doors. Historically, a full-width two-story rear porch existed as of the 1901 Sanborn map; Norden Singers replaced the porch, perhaps in the 1949 remodel or sometime post-1950, the date of the last Sanborn map. The Norden Singers installed wooden stairs that attached to the south elevation and cut across two south elevation windows; the "scar" from this prior exterior staircase still exists on the stucco. (Sanborn map, 1920, revised 1950) It is interesting to note that the cast-stone sills on the south elevation are in excellent condition and show no wear, a testament to the decades they spent under porch cover.

West elevation

The rowhouse shares a sidewall with 707 E. Locust Street. Only a small portion of the rowhouse's west elevation is visible; it is the rear second-story wall that projects beyond the original footprint of 707 E. Locust Street. More than half of this exposed wall has been stuccoed, and all of this sidewall has been painted a deep orange color. The wall contains three window openings, two of which are historical segmental-arch-top windows that have been infilled with masonry block (presumed to be a Norden Singers change). The third window opening, located in the southwest corner, is a more recent addition, possibly added by Norden Singers to provide a window over the kitchen sink after the dumbwaiter was installed; a circa-1996 wood double-hung window with painted wood trim occupies the opening.

On the western side of the shared parapet wall, the exposed parapet is cloaked with a loosely draped black roofing material, assumed to be a rubber-type membrane.

On the first floor, the rowhouse's western elevation is no longer visible; a circa-1964 rear addition to 707 E. Locust Street covered the exposed sidewall next door and blocked two windows. Norden Singers had shortened these windows and installed glass block on the upper portion. The glass block is still visible, hidden behind the dumbwaiter that Norden Singers installed post-1964 to facilitate bringing up food from the commercial kitchen in the basement to the first-floor hall, and bringing up dirty dishes from the first-floor hall to the second-floor dishwashing kitchen.

Interior

The first floor and second floor each contain 1,100 square feet of space. The basement extends the full length of the building and contains an estimated 1,148 square feet of space, due to the northwestern basement corner bumping out as a basement foundation under the front entry porch.

The rowhouse was constructed by Samuel Green possibly as a single-family residence, which he and his wife occupied from 1894 to 1900; his younger son James and his wife shared the residence from circa 1894 to circa 1896, according to city directory listings. After the elder Greens' departure, the rowhouse became a rental property (with the second floor called out as a separate address in 1920s city directories) and later "furnished rooms," operated in conjunction with 711 E. Locust Street by an on-site proprietor. (City directories) It is not known what physical changes may have been made to accommodate the change in use. The Green family continued ownership of the rowhouse and the (boarding) house at 711 E. Locust Street until 1946. (Abstract of title for 709 E. Locust Street)

As mentioned above, in 1949 the Norden Singers purchased the rowhouse for use as a social club hall. At the time, several storefront buildings in the East Side downtown served as a meeting halls for cultural, social, and fraternal groups including the Masons. Conversion from multifamily dwelling to Norden Hall required new structural supports, removal of interior walls, and creation of a basement bar and commercial kitchen, among other changes detailed below.

The 1996-2000 conversion back to a single-family residence removed Norden-era plywood paneling from walls, paper acoustical-tile ceiling, and a staircase that blocked a window.

Integrity Considerations for Moving the Rowhouse to 425 E. Grand Avenue

Orientation: Both the original lot and new proposed lot are located on the west side of Capitol Hill and slope upward, from west to east. The new lot is a similarly sized urban lot located along a parallel arterial street as the original site, with rear alley as the original lot historically had. The rowhouse will be sited following the same setback and orientation as the rowhouse historically had, with front entry porch located next to the public sidewalk and the rear of the building facing the alley.

Setting: The proposed lot on East Grand Avenue is one block north and two blocks east from the current East Locust Street lot; both are considered to be within the heart of the East Side downtown and both are within view of the capitol's golden domes. Historically, both East Grand Avenue and East Locust Street both were home to nineteenth-century rowhouses. The one-block radius around both lots (current and proposed) also historically were home to larger houses built by prosperous business owners. In other words, a late-nineteenth-century rowhouse and/or a larger well-appointed house built by a business owner would not be out of place in the vicinity of East Grand Avenue and East Fifth Street. Looking at the new site in relation to the overlay of Swedish history, Grand Avenue was within the historic near East Side neighborhood occupied by and frequented by Swedish immigrants both in the late nineteenth century and twentieth century.

Environment: An important consideration is that the rowhouse at its current site is no longer part of the official city grid that existed as of 1894 and for more than century thereafter; the state has removed Locust Street in front of the 707-709 E. Locust Street miniblock and the alley no longer exists behind. The rowhouse and 707 E. Locust Street stand alone surrounded by landscaping, decorative walking paths, and

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grassy open space—with a chain-link-fenced state-owned parking lot located directly behind.

As such, the move to 425 E. Grand Avenue would again place the rowhouse within an urban neighborhood setting. Because of the shared development trends, the mix of buildings surrounding 425 E. Grand Avenue (Lot 2) are similar to those that historically surrounded 709 E. Locust Street in the mid and later twentieth century—a time when many houses had been replaced by or repurposed as commercial or light industrial uses (or parking lots).

ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Theme(s)

The Samuel Green Rowhouse—Norden Hall, 709 E. Locust Street, is locally significant under Criterion C - Architecture as well as Criterion A - Ethnic Heritage, European.

Criterion C - Architecture: The Samuel Green Rowhouse—Norden Hall is significant locally as a well-designed and extremely rare surviving rowhouse—and has been identified as the last intact rowhouse on the East Side of Des Moines, where rowhouse development flourished in the late nineteenth century. However, rowhouses became negatively associated with urban ills, which hastened removal of the once-common housing type as early as the 1890s. Samuel Green commissioned the rowhouse built in the Romanesque Revival style, a style popular in Des Moines for commercial and institutional buildings, but atypical for residences. Few Romanesque Revival buildings remain in Des Moines, so the building is also a rare surviving example of the style, in addition to being an even rarer residential example. The well-built red brick facade includes rusticated cast-stone continuous lintel and sill courses, as well as a striking brickwork pattern in the parapet frieze and a masonry front entry porch. Green lived in the two-story house with his family, and took care to create an attractive residence. The building attests to Green's status as the successful owner of the largest foundry in the city as 1890, and is the only extant house or business building associated with Samuel Green and his foundry.

Criterion A - Ethnic Heritage, European: The Samuel Green Rowhouse—Norden Hall derives local significance for its association with Ethnic Heritage due to its conversion in 1949 to a Swedish choral rehearsal hall and heritage clubhouse for the Norden Singers. It is the best building in Des Moines to represent local Swedish immigrant cultural contributions. Swedish immigrants founded the singing group in the late nineteenth century in the near East Side neighborhood where Norden Hall is located; the second generation of Norden Singers founded Norden Hall as a means of passing on to future generations Swedish choral music as well as Swedish language and culture. Norden Singers reshaped the rowhouse to meet their needs for choral practice, for hosting Swedish cultural events and meals, and for providing a welcoming meeting place where members could speak Swedish. At the organization's height of membership, in the 1950s and 1960s, Norden Hall was used up to seven days a week by hundreds of members and their families, as well as by other Scandinavian heritage groups. Norden Singers membership fell dramatically in the 1980s, as members aged and newer generations lived farther away and were fully assimilated, resulting in the dissolution of Norden Singers, Inc. in 1994. The building is recognized officially and unofficially as a local Landmark for Swedish heritage cultural contributions to Des Moines.

Architectural Significance Background: Samuel Green Rowhouse 1894-1946
Samuel Green moved to the city in 1857. He worked in the city's first foundry, located on the East Side. He later started his own business, Hawkeye Foundry, in

1869 located on Third Street on the west side of the river (nonextant). He expanded to 104-116 S. Second Street (nonextant) starting in 1875. (City directories; Sanborn maps) As each of his sons reached his early twenties, Green included them as partners. Older son Frank joined in 1883 to form S. Green & Son foundry, machine shops, and stove works. Younger son James joined in 1889 to form S. Green & Sons, manufacturers of furnaces, stove repairs, and sashweights. (City directories) The foundry was noted as the largest in the city by 1890. ("Samuel Green": 479) And an 1896 story about S. Green & Sons stated the firm employed 25 workers to conduct a large business in stove repairs, architectural iron and general founders work, and as well as hot-air furnaces. (*Saturday Review*, April 1896) As of a 1908 biographical sketch, the business was characterized as "one of the leading manufacturing industries in the city, its trade extending as far west as Colorado." (Andrews: 412)

As he grew his business, Samuel Green moved his family up Capitol Hill. He built a house near the river in the 1860s, then another house 200 East Locust Street, where they lived for more than a decade (City directories; Andrews: 411) By 1878 the family was living in a new house at 711 E. Locust Street (nonextant) within Green's new subdivision. (City directory, 1877-78) In the 1890s redevelopment occurred in the 700 block of East Locust Street, as well as elsewhere in the near East Side.

Samuel Green's rowhouse began when his neighbor, Dr. James T. Priestley (715 E. Locust Street; nonextant), replaced a small frame cottage at 707 E. Locust Street with a \$2,000 "brick house." The structure was rowhouse in style, with no apparent windows on the west side and a highly ornamental facade featuring large arched windows and projecting brick pilasters (the facade remained in place until a 1955 recladding). (City of Des Moines building permit log) After completion in 1893, Priestly announced that the building would house his medical office. (*Iowa State Register*, September 23, 1892; *Daily Iowa Capital*, January 2, 1893)

Green followed suit with his own more expensive brick rowhouse. Green took out a permit for a \$3,000 brick dwelling in March 1894. (*Daily Iowa Capital*, March 24, 1894) On the site of the small frame cottage where his older son Frank and new wife Daisy had resided after their 1885 wedding arose an impressive brick rowhouse. Green constructed his rowhouse against the eastern sidewall of 707 E. Locust Street. He included an elaborate Romanesque Revival facade, arched front entry porch that elevated the entrance above the sidewalk, and numerous windows on all four elevations (made possible by extending the rear south elevation beyond the sidewall of 707 E. Locust Street).

By late 1894, Samuel and wife Mary, along with their newlywed son James and daughter-in-law Fannie moved from their frame house at 711 E. Locust Street (nonextant) into the rowhouse. (City directories; *Iowa State Register*, June 15, 1894) By 1896, the younger couple had moved to 1445 E. Grand Avenue (nonextant). The elder Greens remained at the rowhouse, with Samuel continuing an active role in S. Green & Sons Foundry. In 1900 Samuel and Mary Green moved seven blocks east to a double-house (1401-1403 Capitol Avenue; nonextant) owned by their older son Frank and his wife Daisy. (Samuel Green retired from the foundry in 1902, at which time he split the business between his sons.

After the Greens' departure, they rented the rowhouse and retained ownership of it through successive generations until 1946. (Samuel died in 1915 and the property passed to Mary in 1921; after her death, son James became the primary owner until his death in 1940.) (Abstract of Title for 709 E. Locust Street) It is not known what physical changes may have been made to accommodate the change in use to

multifamily rental. The 1908 city directory (the first in Des Moines to include a reverse directory) lists physician Dr. Thomas F. Duhigg as operating a medical office in the rowhouse, and railroad clerk Albert C. Long residing at the address. Beginning with the 1923 city directory, “second-floor” is added as a descriptor: R.L. Miller, a chauffeur, and “second floor,” Curtis Solomon, a moulder at the Green Foundry and Furnace. The 1932 city directory lists “furnished rooms” at 709-711 E. Locust Street under the proprietorship of Mrs. Emma A. Brigham. The “furnished rooms” label is continued through the 1940 city directory.

Architectural Significance: Rowhouses in Des Moines

The rowhouse as a housing type developed in large eastern U.S. cities with long-established development patterns, higher land costs, and land shortages—especially those with industrial economies or located in close proximity to industrial centers. The housing type has its roots in Europe and was imported with immigrants across the ocean. (Deiber: 4)

In contrast to older, larger more industrial eastern cities, Des Moines did not embrace the rowhouse housing type for the long term. The rowhouse had appeared in Des Moines by the 1870s and served as one form of multifamily housing, with the structures built up into the early 1900s. Des Moines rowhouse development peaked in the 1880s in response to a population surge and corresponding housing shortage. In a 2005 scholarly study of double houses in Des Moines, historian Camilla Deiber noted: “Tenements, rowhouses, and ‘French flats’ or luxury apartments were popular solutions to the housing shortage in the 1880s. These structures were built near the streetcar lines in the center of town on Locust, Chestnut, Walnut and Mulberry Streets. Such attached forms of housing were easy to build and needed very little land, making them popular housing alternatives in the rapidly spreading city.” (Deiber: 5)

Historian John Zeller studied Sanborn fire insurance maps to determine early housing patterns and found rowhouses built exclusively in what is today’s central downtown area (both east and west sides of the river). The earliest rowhouse development Zeller documented was also the largest he found: Chestnut Row, spanning Fourth to Sixth streets along Chestnut Street (now Keosauqua Way), with seventeen units (426-514 Chestnut Street), constructed in the 1870s. (Zeller 1993; Page 1995: E-90) But what began as an upscale development rapidly fell in status. The same fate befell rowhouses built in the 1870s on Pelton Avenue and Fourth Street. (City of Des Moines 1994: 51) Study of Sanborn maps for the East Side downtown area shows rowhouses clustered all around Capitol Hill as of 1891.

In a 1995 National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation of early Des Moines suburbanization, historian William C. Page documented explored the negative associations that came to bear against rowhouses:

Although the row house provided an important portion of the city’s affordable housing stock during the third quarter of the [n]ineteenth [c]entury, this type of multi-family dwelling quickly fell into disrepute when Des Moines launched into Victorian suburbanization. In fact, the row house came to be seen as a villain.

“The house renting season is here and never before has there been such a scarcity of houses to rent. The demand has far exceeded the supply. It has been almost impossible to get good houses to rent. The old shells down town (sic), which are hardly fit to live in, are for rent and always will be. The long rows of cheap bricks are also to rent and many will never again be occupied.” (*Iowa State Register*: 1890b)

While it is true row houses were often cheaply constructed and situated in congested areas, rare surviving examples in Des Moines (1006 (sic) High Street is an outstanding example) illustrate that they could also offer an appealing alternative to the single-family dwelling. (Page 1995: E 151-152) [Note: See below for more about the rowhouse formerly located at 1106 High Street.]

Page summarized the rowhouse in Des Moines as such: “Although the number of single-family dwellings greatly dominated the number of multifamily dwellings, this latter type comprised a significant subset of the city’s housing.” (Page 1995: 90)

The Samuel Green Rowhouse–Norden Hall is the best intact rowhouse (and seemingly the only intact rowhouse) on the East Side of Des Moines. It is one of just four known rowhouse developments remaining in Des Moines. In a 2010 survey for the “Sherman Hill Historic District (Increase, Decrease, Amendment)” National Register nomination, historian William C. Page found three existing rowhouses within the near west-side area of Des Moines:

- A relocated 1883 Italianate brick rowhouse at 1614 Woodland Avenue. This relocated rowhouse was listed to the National Register of Historic Places in 2001 as the Henshie-Briggs rowhouse at its nearby original site, 1106 High Street; it was moved in 2008 to save the building from demolition due to redevelopment of the original site. Page noted in his National Register nomination for the Sherman Hill Historic District: “The building remains National Register-eligible at its relocated site, in this author’s opinion, although not yet officially listed as such.”

- An 1885 Italianate brick example that occupies 731-733-735 19th Street. (The structure containing 733-735 19th Street also has been classified as a double house, in Camilla Deiber’s 2005 scholarly study *Leading Double Lives: The History of the Double House in Des Moines.*) (Deiber: 5)

- A 1903 Classical Revival brick rowhouse at 717 20th Street that appears to have been built to accommodate additional units that were never constructed (Page 2010: 8.123-8.134)

Architectural Significance: Romanesque Revival Architecture in Des Moines

The Samuel Green Rowhouse-Norden Hall calls attention to Romanesque Revival architecture. This architectural style was popular for commercial buildings and institutions in Des Moines, was but used less frequently for residences. In their *Field Guide to American Houses*, Virginia and Lee McAlester found the occurrence of Romanesque Revival houses to be infrequent—and especially so for rowhouses. (McAlester: 301)

Romanesque Revival as a masonry style fit well with Des Moines as a “brick city.” The fireproof building material was manufactured locally by a number of clay manufacturers and used in constructing sidewalks, houses, commercial structures, and governmental buildings. (City of Des Moines 1994: 39) Some Romanesque Revival buildings of the era included East Side City Hall/Fire Engine House (409-411 East Fourth Street; nonextant); Central Fire Station/Central Police Station (200-206 Grand Avenue/412-418 Second Street, 1893; Nourse & Hallett; nonextant); East Side High School (East 12th Street and East Court Avenue; nonextant); Youngerman Block (Fifth and Mulberry streets; nonextant); Savery Hotel (Fourth and Locust streets, 1886; nonextant); Equitable Life Assurance Building (Sixth and Locust streets, 1891; nonextant); and First Baptist Church, (Eighth and High streets, 1894; nonextant). (McCue: 37-118)

As an architectural style, Romanesque Revival was designed with a heavy fortress appearance. What made it attractive in its time made it difficult to modernize, setting it up as a target later for demolition. (Grow: 87)

Given the architectural significance of this rare housing type, made all the more rare by its Romanesque Revival architectural style, moving the Samuel Green Rowhouse—Norden Hall is the best means of preserving this important remaining example of rowhouse architecture on the East Side of Des Moines.

Ethnic Heritage Significance: Norden Singers and Creation of Norden Hall

The Samuel Green Rowhouse acquired a second overlay of historical importance as the home to the Norden Singers starting in 1949 and continuing through 1994. As previously mentioned, the local significance of the Norden Singers and Norden Hall is such that the city designated the rowhouse as a local Landmark in 2000 and is now actively involved with seeing the building moved to an appropriate nearby site in order that the Landmark be retained on the East Side of Des Moines.

Des Moines Norden Singing Society grew out of a traditional Swedish singing quartet formed in the late nineteenth century by Swedish immigrants who lived in Des Moines' near East Side. Norden Hall's location on Capitol Hill is a reminder of the Swedish immigrant presence and contributions to the East Side of Des Moines. In established a historical context for Scandinavian Ethnic Heritage sites in Des Moines, historian Barbara Beving Long found that "Polk County was the center for Scandinavian settlement in the state, with Swedes dominating by far." (Long 1983a: 100) Inexpensive housing options along the flood-prone East Side river lowlands (also called the "bottoms") drew incoming immigrants and migrants, with Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes some of the ethnic groups. (City of Des Moines: 55; Nelson: 10-11) The first substantial settlement of Scandinavians occupied modest frame houses from Scott Avenue to East Court Avenue and also near Des Moines Street. Around the turn of the twentieth century, as the immigrants became more prosperous, they moved to higher ground around East Sixth and East Ninth streets. As such, Scandinavian churches and businesses clustered in the greater East Side downtown area. (Henning: 64-65)

One of the founding members of the Norden Singers quartet was Claus Carlson, who came from Sweden to Des Moines and operated a Swedish boarding house on East Second Street. (Claus Carlson is the paternal grandfather of the last president of Norden Singers, Inc., Dennis Carlson.) Two historic photographs of Norden Singers, taken in 1897 and 1928, show larger groups of Norden Singers chorus members, which also included Claus Carlson. (State Historical Society of Iowa) The organization continued with the founding generation drawing in their sons as well as other Scandinavians to promote the Swedish cultural tradition of male chorus singing and foster appreciation of Swedish music and culture. The group may have practiced at the Swedish Lutheran Church or rented quarters prior to purchasing the rowhouse. (Carlson informant interview)

Norden Singers Inc. incorporated in September 1948 and then entered into a contract to purchase the rowhouse the next month. (Abstract of Title for 709 E. Locust Street) Norden Hall as a permanent meeting space allowed Norden Singers to grow beyond just a choral group—it expanded to become a Swedish cultural heritage club that celebrated customs, foods, and language. Membership grew to as many as 400 during the peak decades of the 1950s and 1960s, and included non-Swedes who joined as friends of Swedish members. (Carlson informant interview) Norden founding member Claus Carlson's son Ralph Carlson was instrumental in acquiring the rowhouse as a permanent home for Swedish choral traditions and culture in Des Moines, a point made in a memorial tribute in the national Swedish

singing union's after his untimely death in 1952: "The Norden Clubrooms, one of his dreams, which came true in his lifetime, will no more echo his voice as it once did but his fellow singers will mourn his passing and forever imagine his rich bass leading out.... Norden will go on to finish the good work in which Ralph was so successful and to which Norden is consecrated, the work of handing these songs and culture down to succeeding generations." (Norden Singers: 1)

In converting the rowhouse into Norden Hall, the Norden Singers created an first-floor open hall for singing practice and hosting cultural events; basement bar and kitchen (with second-floor auxiliary kitchen) for daily and special event clubhouse use; and a second-floor lounge. Norden Singers club members (men) met Friday nights for a weekly meeting, followed by chorus rehearsal and socializing. Weekday evenings Norden club members gathered in the basement bar area to drink, speak Swedish, and play cards.

During fishing season, members brought back fish for Friday or Saturday night fish fries, which served as fundraisers for the organization. Quarterly Sunday afternoon smorgasbords (buffet meals featuring traditional Swedish foods prepared in the Norden Hall kitchens by Norden members and their wives) were a favorite social activity and fundraiser; several hundred people would eat in shifts, with the second-floor lounge serving as a waiting room. Norden members also hosted a St. Lucia Day party in December, as well as Christmas and New Year's parties; the festivities catered to families and included traditional Swedish choral music, foods, and drinks. Norden Singers also offered Norden Hall as a rental facility for use by the community; at least three other Scandinavian social groups used Norden Hall: Danish Brotherhood, Danish Sisterhood, and Sons of Norway. Norden members and general community members also rented the hall for wedding receptions and parties. (Carlson informant interview)

Norden Singers shared their music outside of their hall via public concerts. One such highlight from the group's performance history was hosting the Central Division of the American Union of Swedish Singers (some 15 Midwestern choruses) for a choral convention; some 500 male singers appeared as a mass chorus at the KRNT Radio Theater June 17, 1960. (Carlson informant interview; *Dayton Review*, March 3, 1960) Other public performances included singing at nursing homes and holiday parties for local companies.

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Polk County Assessor

111 Court Avenue #195
Des Moines, IA 50309-0904

(515) 288-3014 Fax (515) 288-3386
polkweb@assess.co.polk.ia.us

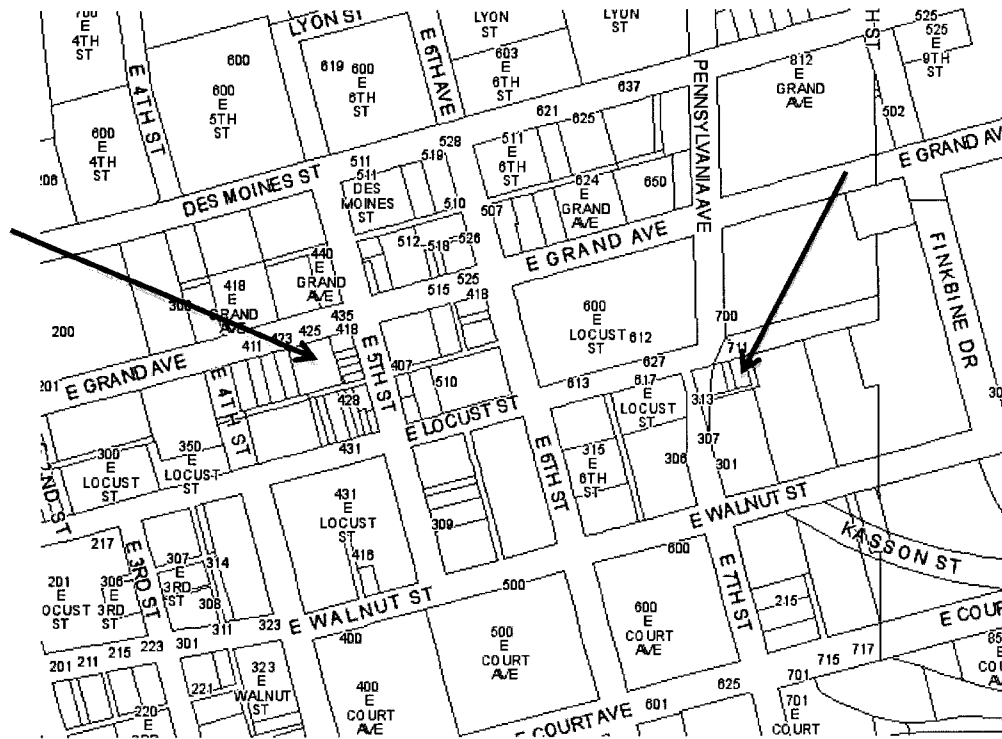
Property Search

Assessment

Taxation



Click to center and select a parcel.



Zoom to

Map Size

Aerial

Layers

Feature	Legend	Up to
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parcel Line	red	32 mi
<input type="checkbox"/> Selection	yellow	32 mi
<input type="checkbox"/> Lot Line	blue	4 mi
<input type="checkbox"/> Condo	red circle	1 mi
<input type="checkbox"/> Parcel Size	red	1/2 mi
<input type="checkbox"/> Lot Size	blue	1/2 mi
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Street Name	black	4 mi
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Address	brown	1 mi
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building#	black	1 mi

Measure
Hit Esc to 0

[Get Listing](#)

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Polk County Assessor map showing new proposed site at 425 E. Grand Avenue (left) and existing site at 709 E. Locust Street (right).

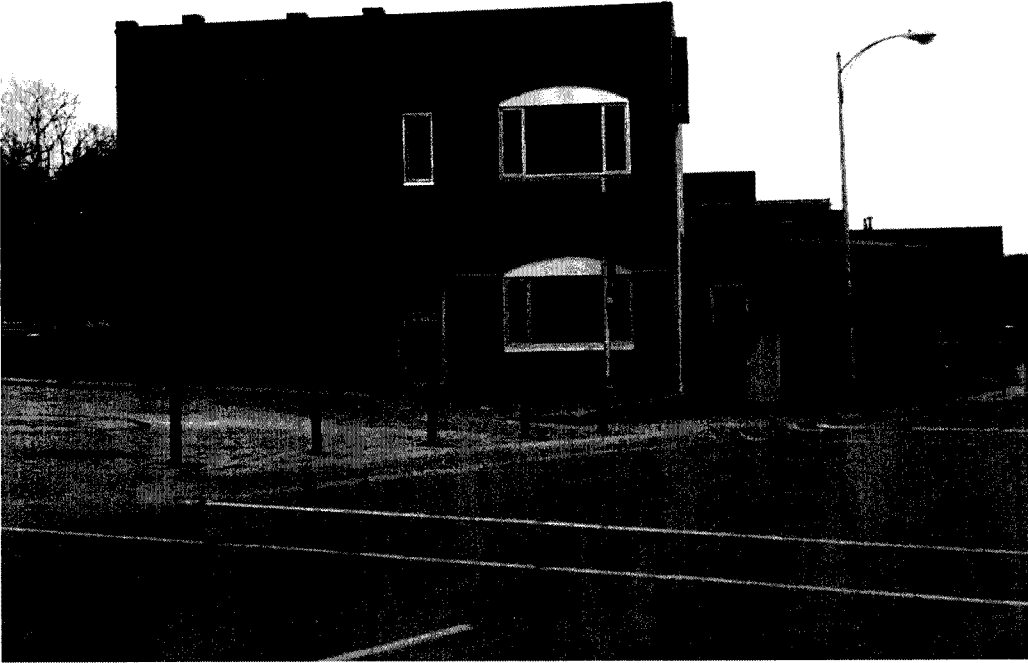


Photo 1: Samuel Green Rowhouse–Norden Hall, 709 E. Locust Street, pictured on left. To the right is 707 E. Locust Street. Photo taken from Pennsylvania Avenue looking southeast. (May 30, 2013)



Photo 2: Samuel Green Rowhouse–Norden Hall, 709 E. Locust Street, north façade and east elevation. Photo taken from Capitol Grounds / West Capitol Terrace looking southwest. (May 30, 2013)



Photo 3: Samuel Green Rowhouse–Norden Hall, east and south elevations. Photo taken from East Seventh Street state parking lot looking northwest. (May 30, 2013)



Photo 4: Samuel Green Rowhouse–Norden Hall, west and south elevations. Photo taken from East Seventh Street looking northeast. (May 30, 2013)



Photo 5: Proposed move site, 425 E. Grand Avenue. Currently a city-owned parking lot. Photo taken from East Grand Avenue looking south across lot. (May 30, 2013)



Photo 6: Proposed move site, 425 E. Grand Avenue. Photo taken from alley looking north across lot toward East Grand Avenue. (May 30, 2013)

48A

Request from Jake Christensen (developer) with regard to the following items for property located at 425 East Grand Avenue:				File #	
<p>A) For a Certificate of Appropriateness to relocate Norden Hall from 709 East Locust to 425 East Grand Avenue.</p> <p>B) To designate 425 East Grand Avenue as a local Landmark upon completion of the relocation and renovation of Norden Hall at that address.</p> <p>C) To terminate the designation of 709 East Locust Street as a local Landmark upon the removal of Norden Hall from that address.</p>					
Description of Action	<p>Approval of Part A & B) of the request as Norden Hall at the new site meets the criteria for the designation of a moved building as a Landmark. The building is one of the few remaining examples of the row-house style in Des Moines. It was constructed by Samuel Green who was a leading businessman in the early development of the City. The building was owned by the Norden Singing Society for an extended period of time and was utilized as an important community center for Scandinavian immigrants. Scandinavian immigrants played a significant role in the development of the east side of the downtown.</p> <p>and</p> <p>Approval of Part C) of the termination of the designation of 709 East Locust Street as a local Landmark upon the removal of Norden Hall from that address.</p>				
2020 Community Character Plan	Downtown Retail/Office Core/Core Fringe (current & no change proposed)				
Horizon 2035 Transportation Plan	No Planned Improvements				
Current Zoning District	"C-3B" Central Business Mixed Use District				
Proposed Zoning District	"C-3B" Central Business Mixed Use District				
Consent Card Responses	In Favor	Not In Favor	Undetermined	% Opposition	
Inside Area					
Outside Area					
Plan and Zoning Commission Action	Approval	12-0	Required 6/7 Vote of the City Council	Yes	
	Denial			No	

Norden Hall Landmark Designation -
709 East Locust Street to 425 East Grand Avenue

