



Legislation Text

File #: 20-3696, **Version:** 3

Ordinance - Third and Final Reading to Consider a Historic Landmark Overlay District Classification for the 1924 High School and the 1940 Rock Gym at 605 E. Broad Street; Art Wright, City Historic Preservation Officer, on behalf of the Mansfield Independent School District, owner (ZC#20-011)

To consider the proposed Historic Landmark Overlay District classification.

The Historic Landmark Commission held a public hearing on August 13, 2020, and voted 4 to 0 to recommend approval.

The Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing on August 17, 2020 and voted 6 to 0 to recommend approval.

Staff recommends approval.

Existing Use: MISD Administration Complex

Existing Zoning: SF-7.5/12, Single-Family Residential District

Surrounding Land Use & Zoning:

North - Office/Retail, C-2

South - Single-family residential, SF-7.5/12 and commercial, C-2

East - Office/Retail and church, C-2

West - Single-family residential, SF-7.5/12

Comments and Considerations

The Mansfield Independent School District (MISD) owns two public buildings that are important to the City's history at 605 E. Broad Street: the old Mansfield High School (1924) and the Old Rock Gym (1940). These educational facilities are now part of MISD's administration complex.

MISD consented to designate the 1924 High School and the Old Rock Gym as Mansfield historic landmarks. Normally, the Historic Landmark Overlay District would apply to the entire property. In this case, only the two buildings will be included in the Overlay District to avoid disrupting any future plans for the development of the administration complex.

These buildings are listed in the *Historic Resources Survey Update, 1998*, as Selected Medium priorities. Selected Medium priority resources have less architectural and physical integrity and possibly less historic significance than properties in the High classification, but they are unusual property types or architectural styles, use unusual construction methods, or for some other reason indicate a potentially significant history in relation to development patterns.

Designation Considerations

The Historic Landmark Overlay District designation should be considered in light of the following:

1. *Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen.*

The Rock Gym utilized rare stone construction for historic Mansfield buildings. The sandstone gymnasium was built by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1937-40 and used rock quarried in the nearby Bisbee community (now part of Mansfield).

The 1924 Mansfield High School is a two-story brick block with symmetrical massing and fenestration and a modest, classically inspired entry. The brick, Romanesque Revival influenced school was designed by W.G. Clarkson & Company of Fort Worth and built by James T. Taylor.

Together, the 1924 High School and 1940 Rock Gym represent examples of early to mid-20th century architecture that are unusual among the City's other historic buildings.

2. *Exemplification of the cultural, economic, social, ethnic, or historical heritage of the City, State, or United States.*

The 1940 Rock Gym reflects high quality craftsmanship associated with the Federal Depression-era WPA relief program.

3. *A building, structure, or place that because of its location has become of historic or cultural value to a neighborhood or community.*

The 1924 High School and 1940 Rock Gym were erected on land that has been the site of successive Mansfield schools, beginning with the Mansfield Male and Female College, c. 1870 - 1877. The Mansfield Academy was located on the site c. 1901 - 1909, and that building became MISD's first school when the newly created District purchased the building. The 1924 High School was the District's first major construction project.

The buildings are described in the *Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey, 1983*, as follows:

Old Mansfield High School, 1924

Schools have stood on this site continuously since 1867, when the Mansfield Male and Female College, one of the first co-educational institutions in Texas, was founded by Dr. John C. Collier. In 1873, the land was deeded by Julian Feild to Dr. Collier "...for school purposes [forever]...." The Mansfield Academy, which opened in 1901, was housed in a substantial two-story red-brick structure on this site. With the creation of the Mansfield Independent School District in 1909, the Academy building was purchased to house Mansfield's public school. In 1924, bonds were sold for construction of Mansfield High School. Designed by W.G. Clarkson & Co. of Fort Worth, and built by James T. Taylor, it housed Mansfield's high school until 1963.

Old Mansfield High School Gymnasium "Old Rock Gym", 1940

Built as the gym for the old Mansfield High School, this 1940 structure is the only known building constructed by the W.P.A. in the Mansfield area. The attractive ochre sandstone came from Bisbee. The workmanship - by Luke Lynn, Bethel "Slim" Murray, Owen Metcalf and Ed Nelson - is excellent.

Art Wright, Planner II/HPO

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