



City of Florence

600 West 3rd Street
 Florence, Colorado 81226
 (719) 784-4848 Fax (719) 784-0228
 Email: planning@florencecolorado.org

FLORENCE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
 Tuesday, September 30, 2025
 4:30 P.M.

Members	Present	Absent
Chair Angel	X	
Vice Chair Wintz	X	
Member Black	X	
Member McMillin		X
Member Dixon	X	
Member Kinzer	X	
Member Stuart		X
Council Representative MacKinnon		X

Staff Present	Present	Absent
Planning Director Fox	X	

I. Call to Order

Chair Angel called meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Member McMillin and Stuart absent.
 All the other members present.
 Council Representative MacKinnon absent.
 Member Kinzer arrived at 4:36 p.m.

III. Approval of minutes of the August 26, 2025 meeting

Member Wintz makes a motion to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2025 meeting.
 Second, by Member Black.

Roll Call 4 Ayes



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IV. Hearing – Local Historical Designation Application – 318 West Main Street

- Planning Director states an application for Local Historic Designation has been submitted for 318 West Main Street. The application states the building has historical significance. The Preservation Commission must review the application before a public hearing. The qualifications of historical significance for the Local Historic Registry are - has significant character, interest or value, as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City or is the site of a historic event with a significant effect upon society or exemplifies the cultural heritage of the community.
- Chair Angel inquires if there are any questions pertaining to the application.
- Member Wintz asked about the requirements for a building listed on the National Historic Registry versus a Local Historic Registry, and how those differences might relate to the CGL benefits available to each.
- The Planning Director states the requirements for establishing a historic district would be more stringent than the City's current requirements for a local designation. However, properties listed on a local, state, or national historic registry may qualify for State residential or commercial tax credits. In addition, grant opportunities are available; if the property is privately owned, the owner may partner with a non-profit organization to apply for such grants. The only incentive not available to locally or state-designated historic properties is the federal tax credit, which is reserved for properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Member Wintz inquires that local designation can be based on historic significance and not necessarily the condition of the structure.
- Planning Director confirms that it is correct.
- Member Dixon inquires about the condition of the building.
- Member Wintz stated that most of the original façade is gone. If the building's history were not known, it would not be apparent. The front of the building was largely altered due to changes made to Highway 115, which runs in front of the structure.
- Chair Angel asks the applicant to make comments about the application and project. Also states that a distinction between the building that is being considered for nomination and the old carwash building on the property needs to be documented.
- Savannah Bryant – states her and her husband Chirstopher purchased the building at 318 West Main Street in 2021 and at that time it was currently vacant. Now there is one tenant upstairs in a small apartment and more recently they have Goal Academy High School on the ground level. They have been looking for different options for the exterior of the building, so their intent in seeking this designation is to partner with Fremont Economic Development Corporation in order to qualify for a State Historical Grant. They are prepared to participate in the April 2026 grant cycle if the designation is approved. They intend to do a brick restoration on the exterior of the building and



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- are looking at different window options and trying to bring back some of the original concepts of the building. They also have looking into different opportunities for the second floor.
- Member Wintz states the building is important anchor to the City’s Historic Downtown and is one of the first buildings that people do see.
 - Chair Angel inquires if there are any additional comments or questions.

Chair Angel makes the motion that the Historic Preservation Commission accept the application for local historic designation of 318 West Main Street as complete and eligible, and forward it to a public hearing.

Second, by Member Kinzer.

Roll Call 5 Ayes

V. **Public Hearing** – Local Historical Designation – 318 West Main Street

- Chair Angel opens the public hearing.
- *No comments, concerns or questions.*
- Chair Angel closes the public hearing.
- Planning Director states the staff report was created from some of the information from the application and further historical research.
 - Property information – Building is located at 318 West Main Street.
 - Name of the Structure – St. Elmo Hotel / Woods Building
 - Year of Original Construction: 1896
 - Original Builder: Unknown
 - Original Owner: Unknown
- **Statement of Significance:** Constructed in 1896, the building was originally developed as a hotel to serve passengers and workers of the Florence and Cripple Creek Railroad - a vital short-line, narrow-gauge that connected the booming gold fields of Cripple Creek with the smelters and markets of Florence. The hotel offered lodging, dining, and social space for travelers and workers during a period of rapid economic expansion. As one of the few surviving structures directly associated with the Florence and Cripple Creek Railroad, the building embodies the community’s pivotal role in regional rail transportation and commerce at the turn of the twentieth century. Its continued presence offers an enduring connection to Florence’s railroad heritage and the industries that shaped the community’s growth.
- **Historical Background:** The building was initially known as the Willard Hotel and was later renamed the St. Elmo Hotel in 1900. It provided accommodation for travelers and



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railroad workers during one of Florence’s periods of rapid growth. Following the dissolution of the Florence and Cripple Creek railroad in 1915, the building shifted from hospitality to commercial use, mirroring the community’s own economic transition. Over the following decades, the ground floor hosted a variety of businesses that reflected Florence’s changing economy and community needs. By 1923, it had contained a barber shop and shoe store, Later, the building was occupied by Largent’s Auto Sales and Jim’s Auto Parts, marking the rise of automobile culture. Florence Feed and Fuel and a sign-painting shop followed, demonstrating the community’s shift toward service-oriented and locally based enterprises. In the latter part of the twentieth century, the building became home to an antique store, aligning with Florence’s emergence as a center for antiques and specialty retail. Today, it serves a new community function as the site of Goal Academy High School, continuing its long tradition of adaptation to meet the evolving needs of Florence.

- **Significance of the Property:** The property is significant for its direct association with the Florence and Cripple Creek Railroad, which played a pivotal role in the economic development of Florence and the surrounding region at the turn of the twentieth century. As one of the few remaining structures connected to this historic narrow gauge short line, the building provides a tangible link to the community’s railroad heritage.

Beyond its initial function as a hotel, the building’s long and varied commercial use reflects Florence’s broader economic shifts—from a railroad hub to a center for automobile services, small businesses and eventually antiques. Its continuous occupation by businesses and institutions for more than a century underscores its enduring role as a cornerstone of community life.

The property is also significant for its adaptive reuse. Across generations, its occupants—from hotels and retail shops to antique stores and, most recently, Goal Academy High School—has found new ways to use the building while preserving its historic presence in the downtown landscape. This adaptability highlights the building’s importance as both a cultural and architectural landmark that continues to shape Florence’s identity.

- **Finding of Fact:** As outline in the City’s Municipal Code 15.60.080 – this structure meets the following criteria for local historic designation:

History: The building has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development of the City of Florence.

- This building embodies a captivating history intertwined with the economic development of the area and played a pivotal role in shaping the community, thus holding significant importance and meaning within the broader narrative of the City's history.

- Chair Angel inquires if there are any additional comments or questions from the Commission.



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Chair Angel makes the motion that the Historic Preservation Commission accept the findings of fact as presented in the staff report and convey its recommendation and findings to the Florence City Council for consideration of an ordinance designating 318 West Main Street as a local historic landmark, subject to the public hearing required before City Council action.

Second, by Member Dixon.

Roll Call 5 Ayes

VI. Discussion -

a) **Florence Historical Archive Context Survey Report**

- Member Wintz discusses the Fremont County 250/150 Consortium and noted that the Archives have submitted their passport project on Railroads.
- Member Wintz mentions the public interest in the existence of the City flag and suggested that this could become a project for 2026—providing a City flag to each building on the City’s Local Historic Registry. Further discussion included the need to research whether CLG support could be obtained for this activity as a Florence Preservation Commission project. Work has already begun to identify a commercial flag maker capable of completing the task. Details regarding the presentation event, public engagement, publicity, support, and obligations will need to be addressed.

Meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

By: _____
Historic Preservation Chair

Date: _____