



STAFF REPORT

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING DATE: 10/28/15

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING

ITEM DESCRIPTION: Report by Department of Planning regarding an application for historic designation for 600 East Charleston Boulevard as a Historic Landmark on the city of Las Vegas Historic Property Register, (APN 162-03-501-001), P-R (Professional Office and Parking) Zone, Ward 3 (Coffin)

BACKGROUND

No relevant case history.

ANALYSIS

Attached is the draft nomination of the Wengert House to the City of Las Vegas Historic Property Register as a Historic Landmark. The Commission has 42 days to review the draft. A public hearing will be scheduled for the December 9, 2015 HPC meeting.

The following documents will be submitted for the December 9, 2015 HPC meeting:

- Current property owner letter of consent (the property is currently in escrow).
- Statement of Financial Interest.
- Deed and Legal Description.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

NO ACTION REQUIRED.

BACKUP DOCUMENTS

Draft nomination of the Wengert House to the City of Las Vegas Historic Property Register.



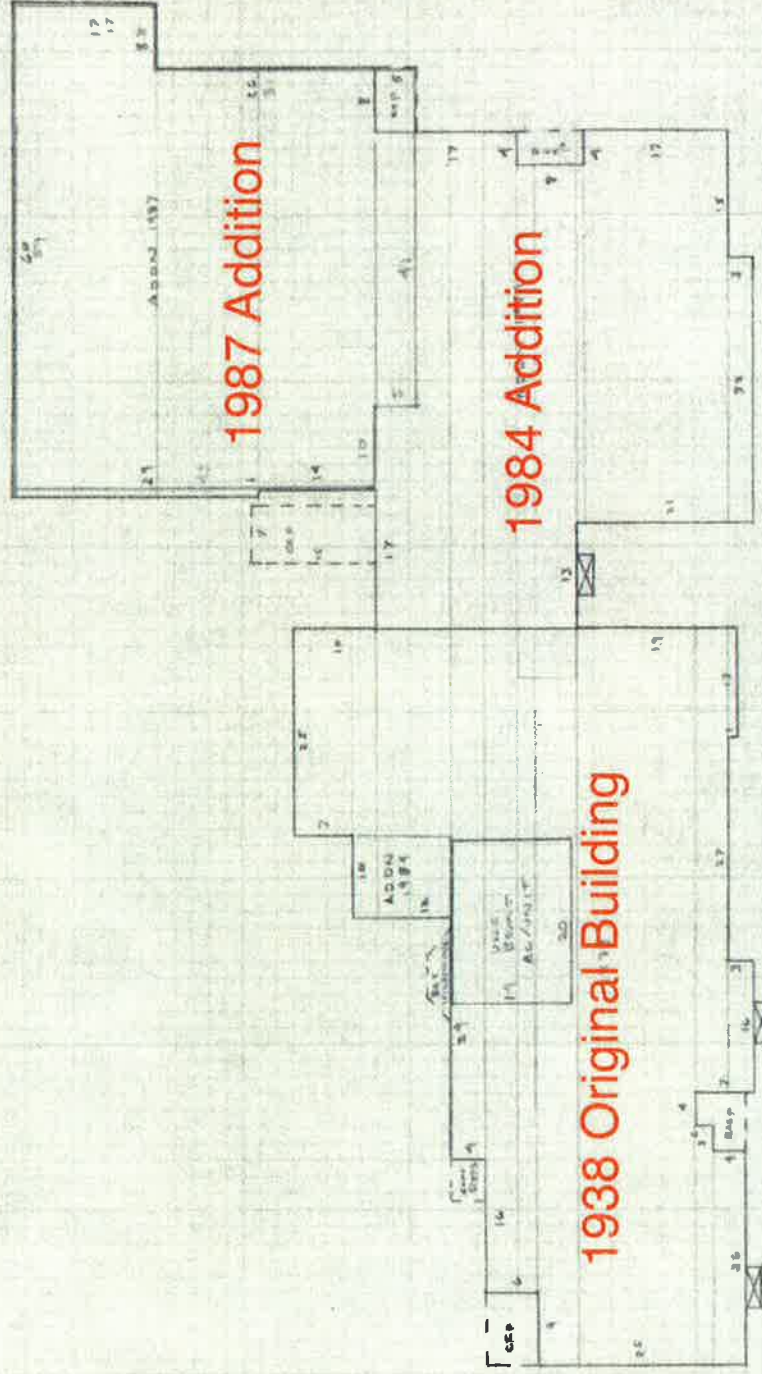


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162-03-501-001

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DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

Application for City of Las Vegas Historic Designation

Name of Property State Bar of Nevada Building - (originally known as the Wengert Residence)

Address (Location) 600 E. Charleston Blvd.

Type of Designation (check one) Building ☒ District ☐ Site ☐ Structure ☐

Assessor's Parcel #(s) 162-03-501-001

Current Zoning Designation Professional And Business Services

Additional Information

APPLICANT/

REPRESENTATIVE Heidi Swank

Address 620 S. 11th Street, Suite 110

City Las Vegas

E-mail heidi.swank@nevadapreservation.org

	Yes	No
Property Owner?	☐	☒
Phone <u>7023716217</u>	Fax:	
State <u>NV</u>	Zip	<u>89101</u>

Required Submittal Material

FOR STAFF USE ONLY

Statement of Eligibility and Appropriateness for designation.....☐

Photographs.....☐

Letter of Property Owner Consent (if property owner is not the applicant).....☐

Statement of Financial Interest.....☐

Letter of Request for Action (if designation is for a district).....☐

Deed/Legal Description.....☐

Signature of Property Owner or Authorized Representative of the City of Las Vegas

Kimberly Farmer
Print Name Kimberly Farmer

Subscribed and sworn before me

This 14th day of October, 2015

Notary Public in and for
said County and State



FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY

Case #

Meeting Date:

Date Accepted:

Accepted By:

Statement of Eligibility

Wengert Residence 600 E. Charleston Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada

Summary

600 East Charleston Avenue (henceforth, the Wengert Residence) is being nominated to the City of Las Vegas Register of Historic Places because a significant portion of the building is at least forty years old; it is reflective of Las Vegas' social and economic past; and it is associated with a person significant in local and state history. The period of significance begins in 1938 when the Wengert Residence was built and Cyril and Lottie Wengert moved their family into their new home. The period of significance ends in 1968 with the death of Lottie Wengert, Cyril had preceded her in death in 1965. The home then passed to their son Ward Wengert who retained it only until 1972, when the home passed out of the possession of the Wengert family. Cyril Wengert was one of a handful of prominent businessmen who built many of the large commercial institutions that still endure today in Las Vegas. In particular, Mr. Wengert was instrumental in the development of what is known today as NV Energy. He figured prominently in our early banking industry and contributed significantly to local social institutions and the nascent Las Vegas Catholic community.

The Wengert Residence

When the home was originally constructed in 1938, its address was listed as 1001 South Sixth Street. By 1972, the address had been reassigned as 600 East Charleston Avenue. Its location places it across the street from the Park Place Addition that was platted by John and William Park in the late 1920s. This pre-World War II tract contains several Period Revival homes. The Wengert Residence is one of the few Period Revivals on the east side of Sixth Street.

This Tudor Revival style home shares many of the characteristics of other Period Revivals in this area, namely a steeply pitched roof, half timbering, a high chimney, and pillared front porch. Tudor Revival homes were meant to replicate modest country houses often found in Europe.

However, the Wengert Residence was anything but modest in 1938. It was among the largest homes in Las Vegas at that time. It was a four bedroom, three bathroom two-story home that also included a dressing suite, maid's quarters, large living room, small office, sitting room/library, dining room, kitchen with breakfast nook, and even a small cellar.

The home was designed by architect H. Clifford Nordstrom and was built by the Hampton brothers. There is little that is known about Nordstrom. We do know that he was part of the firm Warner and Nordstrom from about 1929 through 1932. The firm also designed another Period Revival at 624 South Sixth Street for Artemis W. Ham and his wife. The Ham and Wengert families traveled in the same social circles, with one of the

Wengert daughters marrying a Ham son. It is feasible that the Hams recommended Nordstrom when Cyril was looking for an architect to design his home. Apart from a few Period Revival private homes, Warner and Nordstrom designed several commercial buildings. After the dissolution of the partnership, Nordstrom continued to design commercial buildings in Las Vegas. However, little could be found on Nordstrom beyond the 1930s.

The Wengert Residence itself has maintained much of its historic integrity over the past almost 80 years. The original building has all but one of its original windows, and retains the half timbering, front door, and other features. Some changes have been made to the original home, including the conversion of a backdoor to stained glass window. Overall, the original portion of the building has generally maintained its historic integrity.

When the home passed out of the Wengert family in the early 1970s, its zoning changed from residential to professional and business services. It functioned as a law office and eventually became the home of the State Bar of Nevada. There were several additions made to the rear of the home between 1984 and 1988. Two of the additions added significant square footage to the original footprint. In 1984, a 2,512 square foot addition was added, and in 1987 a 4,892 square foot addition was also adjoined. In addition, parking spaces were added at the back of the home as well as a trash enclosure and carport covers.

The additions to the building that were made in 1984 and 1987 were in the Tudor Revival style. Like the original home, the additions also include the steeply pitched roofs, modest half timbering, and a matching stucco exterior. While these are clearly additions, they were thoughtfully done and generally maintain continuity with the original home. These additions are an excellent example of adaptive reuse that allows for the retention of the building through thoughtful design.

Cyril Wengert

Cyril Wengert was the son of German immigrants Frank and Ella Wengert. Born in Austin, Minnesota, he moved to Las Vegas in 1907 at the age of 18 with his mother and brothers and sisters. His father Frank had arrived in Las Vegas in 1905 to supervise the building of a refrigeration plant for Armour Car Lines Company. As a young man, Cyril worked in various jobs from icing refrigerator cars for Armour, driving an ice delivery wagon, and working as an oiler for the railroad.

In 1909, Cyril left Las Vegas for Seattle where he worked as a longshoreman for a short time before attending business school. There are several stories about how he ended up in business school. However, it is generally agreed that he suffered some injury to a foot while working as a longshoreman. This brought him to the decision to attend and graduate from business college.

It was Cyril's degree in business that qualified him to work in the banking industry in Las Vegas. However, it was his penmanship that Mr. John S. Park - owner of the First State

Bank - first noted. Mr. Park happened to see a check that Cyril had written and brought into the bank to be cashed. He was so impressed that he brought Cyril on as a teller and bookkeeper in 1911.

Mr. Wengert worked his way up at First State Bank. In 1916, he was promoted to assistant cashier. Then in 1924, he moved up to full cashier. In 1937, when First State Bank merged with First National Bank, Cyril became the manager and a director with the newly expanded institution. He had married Lottie Ward, a Las Vegas schoolteacher, in 1921 and had started a family. With his promotion to a bank executive, Cyril and Lottie had the Wengert Residence built and took up residence. They remained in this home until they passed away some thirty years later.

When Cyril had originally been hired at First State Bank, Mr. Park had suggested that Cyril attend to the books for the utility and telephone company that had just been formed. The name of this company was Southern Nevada Power and Telephone Company and with his promotion to full cashier in 1929, he took the opportunity to become an incorporator of this new utility.

Cyril remained at First National Bank for 35 years. When he left in 1946, his departure from banking was front-page news. He took a position with the Southern Nevada Power and Telephone Company as a vice president and general commercial manager. When in 1954 the company split into power and telephone companies, Cyril remained with what became Nevada Power Company.

Mr. Wengert was not your average executive. In fact, when Nevada Power Company decided to bring the company under one roof, the building was named the Cyril S. Wengert Building. Located at 230 North Fourth Street in downtown Las Vegas (no longer in existence), the building was designed by locally renowned architects Zick and Sharp with collaboration by Welton Becket of Los Angeles. The booklet created for the building's opening included the following description of Mr. Wengert:

"The indispensable contributions made by Cyril S. Wengert to the progress of our Company are being recognized, in part, by naming this building in his honor. Mr. Wengert was one of the incorporators of Nevada Power Company in 1929. During the period he has served the Company our investment has grown from \$172,000 to \$50,000,000 while the number of customers served by us has increased from 1,485 to more than 43,000. This building is also a testimony to Mr. Wengert's important contributions to the civic business and cultural lives of the community during the last fifty years."

Cyril remained with Nevada Power Company for five more years until his death from brain cancer in February of 1965. Clearly, Mr. Wengert was a key figure in the creation of what today we know as NV Energy. His importance to both the business and civic life of Las Vegas was echoed by the Las Vegas Sun upon his death, "Cyril Wengert is considered one of the leading citizens of Las Vegas."

The Nevada Power Company building on Fourth Street was not the only building named after Cyril S. Wengert. In 1971, an elementary school was also named for Mr. Wengert. Cyril S. Wengert elementary school is located at 2001 Winterwood Boulevard near the intersection of Nellis Boulevard and Sahara Avenue.

Mr. Wengert did as much for Las Vegas in his professional life as he did through his community involvement. As attested in the first quote above, Cyril did much to enrich the cultural life of our community. His involvement in early Las Vegas is noted by his frequent appearances in society pages that mention the time and money he gave to many organizations. He was a charter member of the Rotary Club and figured prominently in the Las Vegas Council of the Knights of Columbus, the Elks Lodge, the Southern Nevada Industrial Foundation, and the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce. He also served on the Las Vegas Planning Board and was the president of the local Community Chest. As a World War I veteran, he was involved with the Las Vegas American Legion. Moreover, he was financially generous to the local Catholic Church. In particular, he was very supportive of Saint Anne's Church, located on the corner of Maryland Parkway and St. Louis Avenue. The Wengerts donated the marble - mined in Tonopah - for Saint Anne's original altar. His ongoing church involvement stemmed from his parents' role in establishing the Catholic Church in Las Vegas. Before there was a Catholic Church in town, Frank and Ella Wengert held the first Catholic masses in their home.

Cyril's wife Lottie was also very involved in the community. Like Cyril, Mrs. Wengert appears frequently in the society pages even after her husband's death. Over the years she was involved in the Mesquite Club as well as various charity and political organizations including the Alpha Delta Pi sorority alumni and Volunteers for Nixon.

In addition to Cyril's professional and public lives, Cyril had a full family life, too. Cyril and Lottie had six children: James, Shirley, Marilyn, Robert, Ward, and Janet. Only four of their children survived to adulthood, with Janet passing away after only seven months and James (Jimmy) passing away at the age of six due to complications from surgery. There are many pictures of Cyril and Lottie with their children in UNLV's Special Collections. In particular, the *Boulder City Journal* had a full-page spread in 1950 highlighting four fathers and daughters. Cyril with his daughter Shirley are shown playing ping-pong in the backyard of the Wengert Residence.

The Wengert Residence even before it was historic was identified as an important home in the Las Vegas community. In 1951, the Review Journal highlighted a photo spread that was titled "Beautiful Homes Found in Las Vegas Residential Area." It included interior and exterior photos of four remarkable Las Vegas homes. Among these homes was the Wengert Residence. It was marked with the title "Gracious Formality" and included remarks on the Wengert family and the many community gatherings that had been held at the home.

Conclusions

During the period of significance, 1938 - 1968, the Wengert Residence was home to a leading figure in the development of modern Las Vegas. Cyril S. Wengert was an incorporator of NV Energy, namesake for NV Energy's first building downtown as well as an elementary school. He was also integral to the development of many of Las Vegas' civic organizations and the growth of the local Catholic community. It was in this home that Cyril S. Wengert achieved renown and resided until his death, making the Wengert Residence historically significant as a mnemonic for the important contributions he made to the development of Las Vegas.

Major Bibliographic References

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1990. Las Vegas High School Neighborhood Historic District. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. 19 December.

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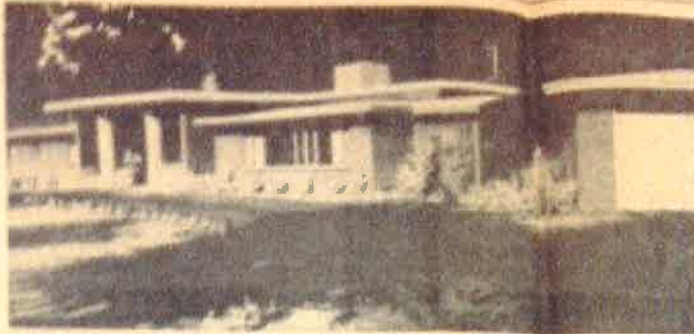
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Beautiful Homes Found in Vegas Residential Area



THE BEAUTIFUL, modern home in the west section of Las Vegas is one of the most modern homes in the city. It is a single-story house with a flat roof and large windows. The house is built on a hill and has a large lawn in front.



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WORKS AT HOME—This open plan, wide glass exposure, and its, who have one of the widest in the north side; Linda Brown, and Deborah Moore.

GRACIOUS FORMALITY—One of the long-established homes in Las Vegas is that of Mr. and Mrs. C. S. Wright, 1701 South Main Street, where has been the scene of many social events in Las Vegas. The living room, featuring fireplace and bay window, are shown above. Traditional furnishings are used throughout the home, which is spacious and well appointed.