

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION  
STAFF REPORT

**Petition 470-07-45 Church Light of the World  
Legalization**

Located at 352 East 300 South, First Church of Christ  
Scientist, a Landmark Site  
February 20, 2008



Planning and Zoning  
Division  
Department of Community  
Development

**Applicant:** Church Light of the World, represented by Solomon Lugo

**Staff:** Nick Norris at 535-6173 or nick.norris@slcgov.com

**Tax ID:** 16-06-254-002

**Current Zone:** R-MU Residential/Mixed Use

**Master Plan Designation:**  
High Mixed Use (Central Community Master Plan)

**Council District:** Council District 4; Luke Garrott

**Acreage:** 0.5 acres

**Current Use:**  
Place of Worship

**Applicable Land Use Regulations:**

- 21A.34.020 (G)

**Attachments:**

- A. Historic Photos of Structure
- B. National Register Nomination
- C. Current Photos of Structure
- D. Beall Report

**REQUEST**

The applicant is requesting that the Historic Landmark Commission legalize the painting of the exterior of the building on the subject property. A portion of the building was recently painted white. A Certificate of Appropriateness was not issued prior to the structure being painted. The property is listed on the Salt Lake City Register of Cultural Resources.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

A notice was mailed on February 5, 2008 to all property owners within 85 feet of the subject property which meets the 14 day notice requirement. In addition, a notice was mailed to all interested parties that have signed up to receive public notice through the Planning Division List Serve.

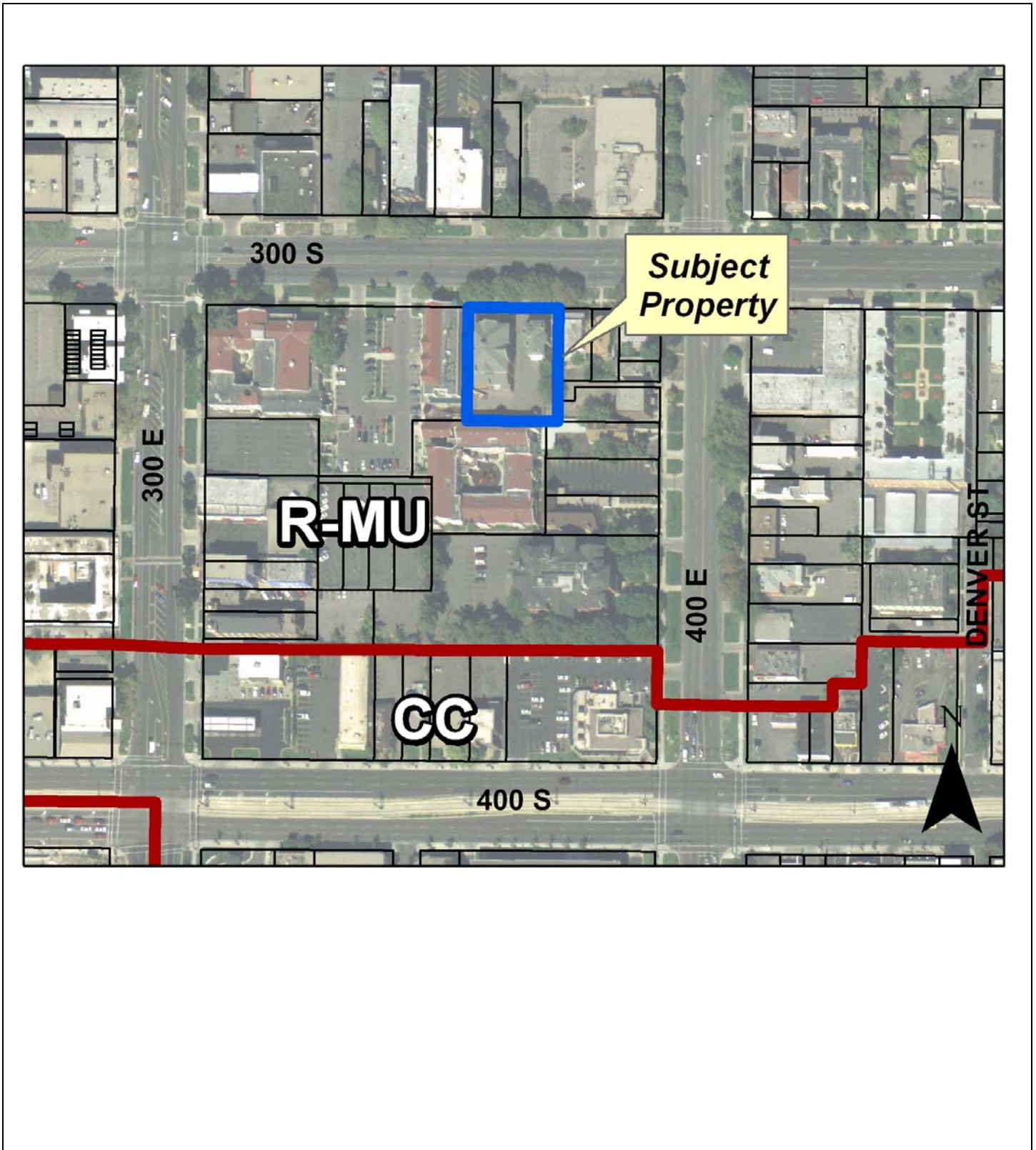
**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Historic Landmark Commission continue the request to legalize the painting of the building located at 352 East 300 South (that was done without a Certificate of Appropriateness) to allow a qualified professional to perform an existing condition report on the exterior building materials, including a review of removing the paint. Once that report is done, it shall be submitted to the Historic Landmark Commission for their review.

**OPTIONS:**

1. The Historic Landmark Commission can legalize the painting of the structure upon creating findings that indicate that the painting of the structure substantially complies with the applicable standards and is in the best interest of the City as stated in Zoning Ordinance Section 21A.34.020.G Standards for Certificate of Appropriateness For Alterations to a Landmark Site or Contributing Structure;
2. The Historic Landmark Commission may determine that the petition cannot be approved as proposed and make a motion to deny the request upon finding that the request does not substantially comply with the standards in Zoning Ordinance Section 21A.34.020.G or
3. The Historic Landmark Commission may continue the petition and require additional information from the applicant or staff.

VICINITY MAP



## **COMMENTS**

### **Public Comments**

*Staff has received comments from the public regarding this petition. This item started as an enforcement issue. When the painting was under way, the City received multiple phone calls. As a result, the City issued a stop work order. The public has been contacting the Planning Division since that time. The majority of the comments have been in the form of phone calls. The comments received expressed concern about painting the exterior of the building.*

## **BACKGROUND, ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS:**

### **BACKGROUND**

The subject property was originally built in 1898 as the First Church of Christ Scientist. The building was designed by Walter Ware, a notable Utah architect. The architectural style of the building is Romanesque and it is constructed out of Kyune sandstone, brick and stone. The structure was used by the Church of Christ Scientist until the recent past, when it was sold and converted to a retail business. The property was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. The structure is also listed on the Salt Lake City Register of Cultural Resources.

In the 1970's the church was restored. At some point in time before the restoration, the structure was painted. During the renovation, the paint was removed by using chemical cleaners and low pressure washing. The City does have a report done by Burtch Beall, the architect who oversaw the 1970's restoration work, that explains the paint removal process. That report indicates that several methods for paint removal, including steam cleaning, low pressure water blasting, chemical cleaning, chemical cleaning combined with low pressure water blasting and sanding were tested on small areas to determine which method would remove the paint without damaging the masonry. According to the report, the most successful method was the combination of chemical paint removers and low pressure water blasting or rinsing. The report indicates that the paint removal was successful and states that generally the masonry was undamaged and of a uniform color and texture. However, the report does state that an unauthorized contractor attempted to remove the paint with a belt sander that did cause damage to the masonry. The report indicates that the damaged masonry would be repaired or restored at a later date. It is unclear if this was done.

The property was recently purchased by the current owners of the property. In June 2007, the owners received a conditional use permit to operate their church from the structure. As part of the submittal for that application, the applicants submitted a picture of the building that indicated the exterior of the building was in its restored condition. Since that time, part of the building was painted. The City received a complaint about the painting of the building and an enforcement action began. A 100% latex primer with a latex additive added was used to prime the structure. The paint that was used was a latex based paint. The primer may make it more difficult to remove the paint. Staff has mentioned to the representative of the property owner that a decision on the paint cannot be made until a detailed analysis focusing on removing the paint is supplied to the City. Staff has recommended that the applicant hire a qualified professional to perform the analysis and potentially remove the paint.

Staff did speak with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding the history of the structure and the current status of the structure. SHPO did provide historical background of the structure and also stated that a

qualified individual should analysis the paint and masonry to see if could be removed without causing further damage.

## STAFF ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The Historic Landmark Commission should make findings in this case based upon Section 21A.34.020(G): *Standards for Certificate of Appropriateness for Alteration of a Landmark Site or Contributing Structure*, of the City Zoning Ordinance.

### **1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be used for a purpose that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment;**

**Discussion:** The structure was originally constructed as a church and the current owners are operating a church from the structure.

**Finding:** The project is consistent with this standard.

### **2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided;**

**Discussion:** The exterior building materials add to the historic character of this property. According to the *Design Guidelines for Residential Historic Districts in Salt Lake City* (Design Guidelines), the “distinct characteristics of the primary building material, including the scale of the material unit, its texture and finish, contribute to the historic character of a building.” In brick buildings, the particular size of brick and how it was laid was distinct (Design Guidelines, pg 61). The inherent color of the material was an important characteristic. One important characteristic of historic building materials is that they weather over time. The weathered look of the historic materials helps display the age of the building. Design Guideline 2.4 discusses painting of masonry. It states that painting of brick changes the character of the building. However, paint may be applied to masonry to provide a protective sealant to soft brick. The Beall Report indicates that the masonry was in good condition after the restoration was completed in the 1970’s. If removing the paint would damage the brick further, the only option may be to legalize the painting of the building.

#### **Applicable Design Guidelines**

**2.1 Preserve the historic appearance of original materials.** Preservation includes proper maintenance of the material to prevent deterioration.

**2.4 Avoid painting masonry, unless this is needed to provide a weather protective coating to soft brick.** Painting brick changes the character of the building and may affect a sense of visual continuity among other masonry structures in the area. If brick is presently painted but was not painted historically, it may be removed if the procedure will not damage the original finish. Also consider repainting it rather than stripping the paint.

**2.6 When repointing masonry, preserve original mortar characteristics, including its composition, profile, and color.** In some cases, matching the composition of the historic mortar mix may be essential to the preservation of the brick itself.

**6.1 Protect and maintain significant stylistic elements.** Distinctive stylistic features and examples of skilled craftsmanship should be treated with sensitivity. The best preservation procedure is to maintain historic features from the outset so that intervention is not required. Protection includes maintenance through rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and reapplication of paint.

**Finding:** The painting of the brick has negatively altered the historic character of the structure. The paint should be removed if removing it will not cause further damage to the structure. If removing the paint would cause further damage, then the Historic Landmark Commission should legalize the painting of the building. Staff recommends that the applicant provide an analysis, performed by a qualified contractor, to analyze the brick, the paint and the painting method to determine if the paint can be removed. Staff recommends that the professionally prepared analysis be reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Office.

**3. All sites, structures and objects shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create a false sense of history or architecture are not allowed;**

**Discussion:** Painting the original building materials covered the weathered materials that help the viewer determine the age of the building. This altered the structure in a manner that created a false sense of history.

**Finding:** Painting of the structure covered the weathered materials that added to the history of the structure. The request does not comply with this standard.

**4. Alterations or additions that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved;**

**Discussion:** The structure does contain an addition on the rear of the property. It is not known when the addition was constructed. The addition is relatively simple, not readily visible from the street, and does not contribute to the historic significance of the structure. The paint that was applied to the structure has altered the historic nature of the building. The paint is new and has not acquired historical significance.

**Finding:** The painting of the structure has reduced the historic significance of the structure.

**5. Distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved;**

**Discussion:** The manner in which brick was laid, including the make up of the mortar and the scale and finish of the brick are distinctive to this period of time. The mortar used at this time was a lime based mortar which made it soft. Modern mortar is now primarily a Portland Cement based product which is typically harder than older building materials. Covering the historic mortar with paint altered the historic character of the structure.

The sandstone detailing around the front entry, windows, and outline of the roof contribute greatly to the architectural style of the building and the overall historic character of the structure. Painting over the sandstone has dramatically altered the appearance and texture of the material.

**Applicable Design Guidelines**

**2.1 Preserve the historic appearance of original materials.** Preservation includes proper maintenance of the material to prevent deterioration.

**2.4 Avoid painting masonry, unless this is needed to provide a weather protective coating to soft brick.** Painting brick changes the character of the building and may affect a sense of visual continuity among other masonry structures in the area. If brick is presently painted but was not painted historically, it may be removed if the procedure will not damage the original finish. Also consider repainting it rather than stripping the paint.

**2.6 When repointing masonry, preserve original mortar characteristics, including its composition, profile, and color.** In some cases, matching the composition of the historic mortar mix may be essential to the preservation of the brick itself.

**6.1 Protect and maintain significant stylistic elements.** Distinctive stylistic features and examples of skilled craftsmanship should be treated with sensitivity. The best preservation procedure is to maintain historic features

from the outset so that intervention is not required. Protection includes maintenance through rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and reapplication of paint.

**Finding:** The application does not comply with this standard because the paint covers distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques and therefore alters the historic character of the structure.

**6. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced wherever feasible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, texture and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other structures or objects;**

**Discussion:** In the 1970's the structure went through a renovation that included removing paint from the exterior of the building. While some portions of the exterior masonry were damaged, the removal of the paint did not result in further damage, according to the architect who oversaw the restoration. It is not known what condition the exterior building materials were in prior to the recent painting of the structure. A thorough analysis by a qualified professional would be beneficial in determining the condition of the brick and what sort of treatment is appropriate. The professional should also be able to review the painting of the structure to determine if the exterior paint can be removed without causing further damage to the brick. This should happen before considering this petition. Staff has requested that the applicant provide this type of report but it has not been received. The applicant wanted to go ahead with the hearing despite not submitting this information to the City.

**Finding:** The applicant did not submit any information to the City regarding the overall condition of the exterior building materials prior to painting the structure. In order to determine if the painting was appropriate, the applicant must submit a condition report on the exterior building materials that includes a recommendation from a qualified professional on the removal of the paint.

**7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible;**

**Discussion:** The analysis in this report indicates that the standards do not support legalizing the painting of the structure. If possible, the paint should be removed from the structure. Due to the age of the structure and building materials, removing the paint may or may not be feasible. Sand blasting is prohibited by ordinance. Staff recommends that the property owners hire a professional who is capable of using the gentlest means possible to remove the paint. The State Historic Preservation Office maintains a list of contractors who can perform this type of work and the applicant is urged to contact the State Historic Preservation Office. In addition, the Beall Report indicates that in the 1970's a chemical cleaner and low pressure water rinse were used to remove the paint without causing damage to the masonry.

### **Applicable Design Guidelines**

**2.7 Use the gentlest means possible to clean the surface of a structure.** Perform a test patch to determine that the cleaning method will cause no damage to the material surface. Many procedures can actually have an unanticipated negative effect upon building materials and result in accelerated deterioration or a loss of character. Harsh cleaning methods, such as sandblasting, damage the weather-protective glaze on brick and change its historic appearance. Such procedures are prohibited. If cleaning is appropriate, a low pressure water wash is preferred. Chemical cleaning may be considered if a test patch is first reviewed.

**Finding:** If the Historic Landmark Commission does not approve the legalization of the painting of the structure, then the applicant shall use the gentlest means possible to remove the paint. A Certificate of Appropriateness specific to the removal of the paint is required.

**8. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant cultural, historical, architectural or archaeological material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood or environment;**

**Discussion:** This proposal does not include additions or alterations other than the painting of the building. The painting has altered the historic and architectural character of the building by covering the original materials.

**Finding:** Painting the exterior of the building diminishes the historic character of the property and does not comply with this standard.

**9. Additions or alterations to structures and objects shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible in massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment;**

**Discussion:** As discussed under item 7, it may be possible to remove the paint from the historic structure without causing further damage. If it is possible to remove the paint then it should be removed by using the gentlest means possible to remove the paint. The State Historic Preservation Office maintains a list of contractors who can perform this type of work and the applicant is urged to contact the State Historic Preservation Office.

**Finding:** It is possible that the paint could be removed from the historic materials. Staff recommends that the HLC require the applicants to hire a licensed professional with an expertise in removing paint from masonry to insure that the paint can be removed properly.

**10. Certain building materials are prohibited including the following:**

- a. Vinyl or aluminum cladding when applied directly to an original or historic material, and**
- b. Any other imitation siding material designed to look like wood siding but fabricated from an imitation material or materials;**

**Discussion:** No new siding materials are proposed as part of this request.

**Finding:** This standard does not apply to this project

**11. Any new sign and any change in the appearance of any existing sign located on a landmark site or within the H historic preservation overlay district, which is visible from any public way or open space shall be consistent with the historic character of the landmark site or H historic preservation overlay district and shall comply with the standards outlined in Part IV, Chapter 21A.46, Signs;**

**Discussion:** Signage is not a component of this project.

**Finding:** This standard does not apply to the project.

**12. Additional design standards adopted by the Historic Landmark Commission and City Council.**

**Discussion:** The painting of the building is not consistent with standards 2, 3, 5, 6 and 8 of the applicable standards for alterations to a Landmark Site. The National Park Service does have several publications that discuss removing paint from masonry. Specifically, *Preservation Brief 1: Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings* provides information on

different chemical cleaners that may be able to remove the paint. Preservation Brief 1 also discusses which methods and chemicals should not be used.

**Finding:** The request is inconsistent with standards 2, 3, 5, 6 and 8 as noted above and not supported by the design guidelines mentioned in this staff report or found in the *Design Guidelines for Residential Historic Districts in Salt Lake City*.



**Attachment A**  
**Historic Photos of Property**

**Attachment B**  
**National Register Nomination Form**

# **Attachment C**

## **Current Photos of Building**

# **Attachment D Beall Report**