



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

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LITTLE ROCK HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTE RECORD

Thursday, March 6, 2025, 4:00 p.m.

Board Room, Little Rock City Hall, 500 W. Markham

I. Roll Call

Members Present:

Christina Aleman, Chair

Tom Fennell

Scott Green

Dr. Thomas DeGraff III

Chase Waters

Staff Present:

Hannah Ratzlaff

Raeanne Gardner

II. Finding a Quorum

A quorum was present being five (5) in number.

III. Citizen Communication

No citizens chose to speak at this time.

IV. Minutes

1. February 6, 2025

The minutes were presented to the commission. Commissioner Fennell made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Commissioner DeGraff seconded. The minutes were approved by voice vote as submitted.

V. National Register Nominations

1. NR2025-001 Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
7012 Shamrock Drive
Gibson & Company's Blue Star/ Horizon Home
National Register of Historic Places Nomination

2. NR2025-002 Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
5026 E. Crestwood
Robert H. Johnson House
National Register of Historic Places Nomination

NR ITEM NO.: ONE

FILE NO.: NR2025-001

NAME: Gibson & Company's Blue Star/ Horizon Home

LOCATION: 7012 Shamrock Drive

APPLICANT/AUTHORIZED AGENT:

Ralph Wilcox & Mason Toms
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
1100 North Street,
Little Rock, AR 72201

OWNER:

Nathan W Smith
7012 Shamrock Drive
Little Rock, AR 72205



Figure 1. Gibson & Company's Blue Star/ Horizon Home.

AREA: 0.58 acres

NUMBER OF LOTS: 1

WARD: 3

HISTORIC DISTRICT: None Adjacent

HISTORIC STATUS: DOE August 15, 2018, PU10558

CURRENT ZONING: R2, Single-Family

A. BACKGROUND

Location

The subject structure is located at 7012 Shamrock Drive.

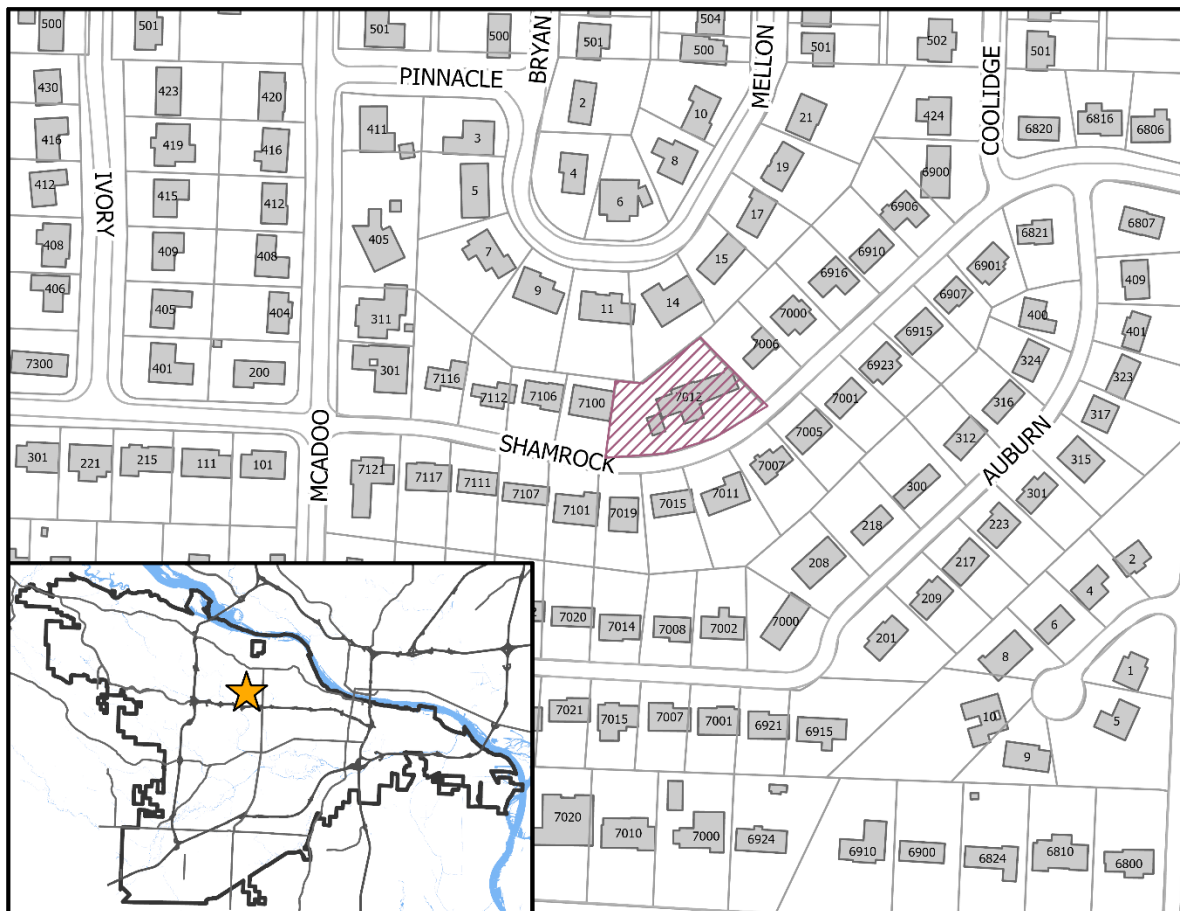


Figure 2. Location of the Gibson & Company's Blue Star/ Horizon Home at 7012 Shamrock Drive.

B. PROPOSAL/REQUEST/APPLICANT'S STATEMENT:

The application requests to nominate the Gibson & Company's Blue Star/ Horizon Home to the National Register of Historic Places for local significance under Criterion C due to its unique building methodology and use of concrete, and as an award-winning design in the Horizon Home program. The area of significance is Architecture. The period of significance is 1964. The home was designed by F. Eugene Withrow and constructed by J.L. Gibson (Gibson & Company).

C. EXISTING CONDITIONS:

See photos in Nomination (Attachment A).

D. DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:

None

E. NEIGHBORHOOD NOTIFICATIONS AND COMMENTS:

All neighborhood associations registered with the City of Little Rock that surround the site were notified of the public hearing.

At the time of distribution, there were no comments regarding this application.

F. ANALYSIS:

The Nomination's Statement of Significance summary section states:

"Built in 1964, the Gibson & Company's Blue Star/ Horizon Home is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with local significance under Criterion C: architecture/method of construction. Built as part of the Horizon Home program, which encouraged the use of concrete in construction, the Gibson & Company's Blue Star/ Horizon Home, utilized concrete in several different ways in its construction, and was a regional winner in the Horizon Home program. The Gibson & Company's Blue Star/ Horizon Home was the second Horizon Home built in Central Arkansas, with the first Horizon Home having been built in North Little Rock in 1961, and is the only Horizon Home known to have been built in Little Rock."

The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has set forth the "Arkansas Certified Local Government Procedures." In Section V of this agreement, "Certified Local

Governments Participation in the National Register Nomination Process,” Little Rock Historic District Commission’s role is identified:

“B. CLG involvement in the National Register process

- 1. Within 60 calendar days of receipt of the nomination, the CLG shall inform the AHPP by submission of a report (see section V-A) as to its opinion regarding the eligibility of the property. The CLG shall also inform the property owner(s) using National Register criteria for evaluation, as to its opinion regarding the eligibility of the property.*
- 2. In the event a nomination is received by the AHPP before submission to the CLG, the AHPP will forward a copy of the completed nomination to the CLG within 30 calendar days of receipt.*
- 3. If both the commission and chief elected official recommend that a property not be nominated because it does not meet the National Register criteria for eligibility, the CLG will so inform the property owner(s) and the State Historic. Preservation Officer, the property will then not be nominated unless an appeal is filed with the SHPO in accordance with appeal procedures outlined in 36 CFR 60. Appeals must be received by the SHPO within 30 calendar days of the date the property owner receives notification by certified mail that the property has been determined ineligible for nomination by both the CLG and the Chief elected official. This is in accordance with Section 101[c] 2 of the NHPA.*
- 4. If the commission or the chief elected official of the CLG recommend that a property should be nominated, the nomination will be scheduled for submission to the Arkansas State Review Board. Scheduling will be in accordance with notification time constraints as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.*
- 5. The Arkansas State Review Board, after considering all opinions, including those of the commission and the chief elected official of the CLG, shall make its recommendation to the State Historic Preservation Officer. Either the local preservation commission or the chief elected official may appeal the SHPOs final decision.*
- 6. When a National Register nomination, that has been reviewed by a commission, is submitted to the National Park Service for review and*

listing, all reports or comments from the local officials will be submitted along with the nomination.

7. *The AHPP and the CLG will work together to provide ample opportunity for public participation in the nomination of properties to the National register. All reports submitted by the CLG to the AHPP regarding the eligibility of properties shall include assurances of public input. The CLG shall retain a list of all persons contacted during the evaluation period and note comments that were received. If a public meeting was held, a list of those attending shall be included in the report.”*

Staff finds the nomination meets the National Register criteria for eligibility in the National Register of Historic Places.

The nomination is scheduled to be heard at the April 2, 2025 State Review Board meeting at the Division of Arkansas Heritage headquarters at 1100 North Street in Little Rock.

G. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the nomination of the Gibson & Company’s Blue Star/ Horizon Home to the National Register of Historic Places for local significance under Criterion C and the submission of the nomination to the State Review Board.

H. COMMISSION ACTION MARCH 6, 2025

Staff, Ratzlaff, made a presentation to the Commission. The property owner, Nathan Smith, addressed the commission and expressed his support of the nomination of the residence, describing unique features of the home and his intent to utilize the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program.

Commissioner Fennell made a motion to recommend approval of the nomination of the of the Gibson & Company’s Blue Star/ Horizon Home for local significance under Criterion C due to its unique building methodology and use of concrete, and as an award-winning design in the Horizon Home program. Commissioner Waters seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously with a vote of 5 ayes, 0 noes, 0 absent, and 1 vacant position.

NR ITEM NO.: TWO

FILE NO.: NR2025-002

NAME: Robert H. Johnson House

LOCATION: 5026 E. Crestwood Drive

APPLICANT/AUTHORIZED AGENT:

Megan Willmes
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
1100 North Street,
Little Rock, AR 72201

OWNER:

James R & Ruth Ann Johnson Family Revo Trust
5026 Crestwood Drive
Little Rock, AR 72207



Figure 3. Robert H. Johnson House.

AREA: 0.41 acres

NUMBER OF LOTS: 1

WARD: 3

HISTORIC DISTRICT: Near the Hillcrest Historic District

HISTORIC STATUS: Surveyed as “Unknown” in 2006, PU8395

CURRENT ZONING: R2, Single-Family & Heights Landscape Design Overlay District

A. BACKGROUND

Location

The subject structure is located at 5026 E. Crestwood Drive.

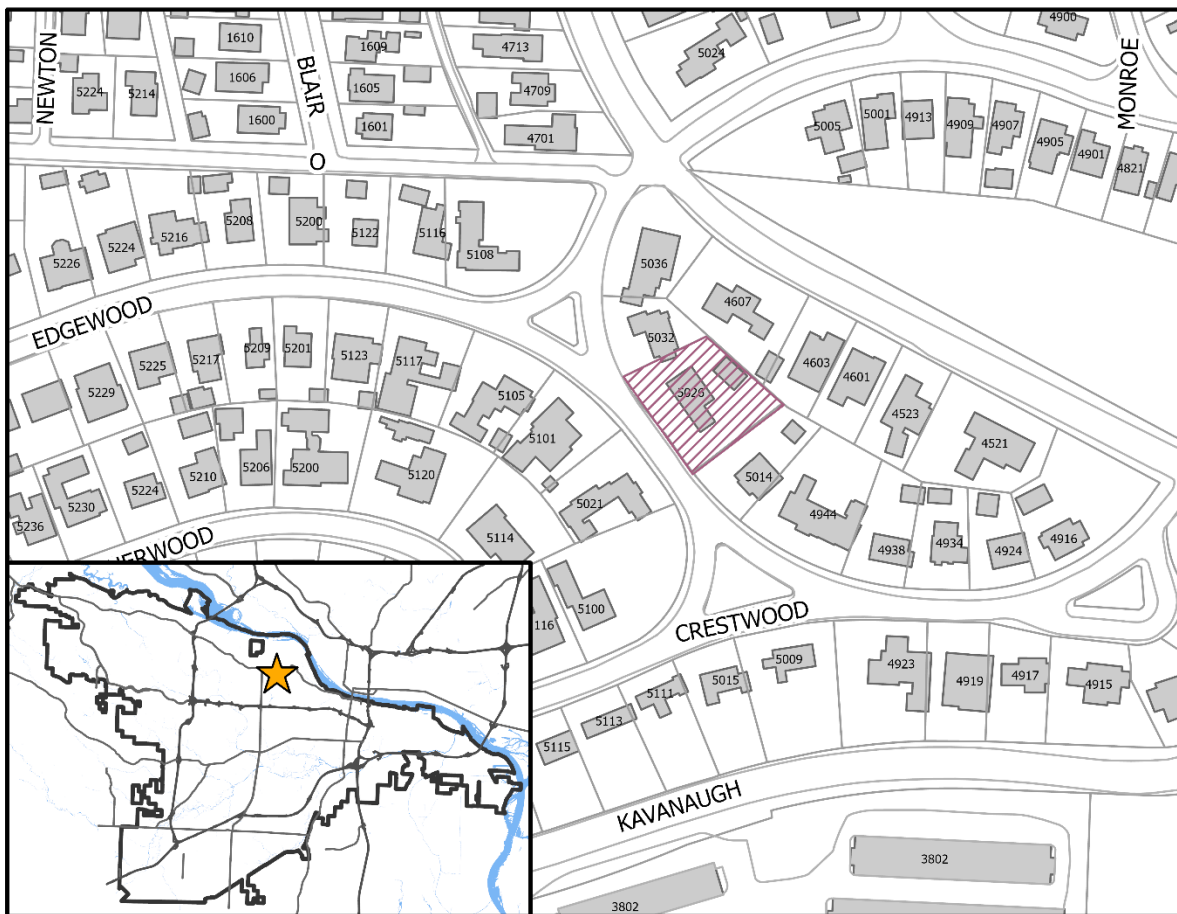


Figure 4. Location of the Robert H. Johnson House at 5026 E. Crestwood Drive.

B. PROPOSAL/REQUEST/APPLICANT'S STATEMENT:

The application requests to nominate the Robert H. Jonson House to the National Register of Historic Places for local significance under Criterion C as a significant and intricate example of the Tudor Revival style. The area of significance is Architecture. The period of significance is 1926-27. The home was designed by H. Ray Burks, a prominent local architect of revival styles in the early 20th century.

C. EXISTING CONDITIONS:

See photos in Nomination (Attachment A).

D. DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:

None

E. NEIGHBORHOOD NOTIFICATIONS AND COMMENTS:

All neighborhood associations registered with the City of Little Rock that surround the site were notified of the public hearing.

At the time of distribution, there were no comments regarding this application.

F. ANALYSIS:

The Nomination's Statement of Significance summary section states:

"The Robert H. Johnson House at 5026 E. Crestwood Drive in Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas, is an outstanding example of a high-style Tudor Revival residence in the city, where high-style examples are rare compared to the pared-down Storybook Tudor Revivals and single-story, all-brick Tudor Revival bungalows in the Hillcrest neighborhood. The house is located in the prosperous neighborhood of Prospect Terrace in the Pulaski Heights addition, which was developed as an automobile-friendly area for upper-middle class and wealthy white residents. The house was built by Robert H. and Martha (nee McCloy) Johnson in 1926 and completed in 1927. Rober and Martha both lived in the house until their respective deaths in 1965 and 1985. The house was designed by architect H. Ray Burks, a relative of Martha, and the Johnson family still owns the house to the present day. The Robert H. Johnson House is a significant, textbook example of the Tudor Revival style, with its half-timbering and stucco second story, oriel window with diamond panes and stained glass, stone lintels, casement windows in pairs and groups, a jettied cross gable, steeply pitched roof, and decorative vergeboard. Thus, as significant and intricate example of the Tudor Revival architectural style, the Rober

H. Johnson House is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C: Architecture and local significance.”

The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has set forth the “Arkansas Certified Local Government Procedures.” In Section V of this agreement, “Certified Local Governments Participation in the National Register Nomination Process,” Little Rock Historic District Commission’s role is identified:

“B. CLG involvement in the National Register process

- 1. Within 60 calendar days of receipt of the nomination, the CLG shall inform the AHPP by submission of a report (see section V-A) as to its opinion regarding the eligibility of the property. The CLG shall also inform the property owner(s) using National Register criteria for evaluation, as to its opinion regarding the eligibility of the property.*
- 2. In the event a nomination is received by the AHPP before submission to the CLG, the AHPP will forward a copy of the completed nomination to the CLG within 30 calendar days of receipt.*
- 3. If both the commission and chief elected official recommend that a property not be nominated because it does not meet the National Register criteria for eligibility, the CLG will so inform the property owner(s) and the State Historic. Preservation Officer, the property will then not be nominated unless an appeal is filed with the SHPO in accordance with appeal procedures outlined in 36 CFR 60. Appeals must be received by the SHPO within 30 calendar days of the date the property owner receives notification by certified mail that the property has been determined ineligible for nomination by both the CLG and the Chief elected official. This is in accordance with Section 101(c) 2 of the NHPA.*
- 4. If the commission or the chief elected official of the CLG recommend that a property should be nominated, the nomination will be scheduled for submission to the Arkansas State Review Board. Scheduling will be in accordance with notification time constraints as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.*
- 5. The Arkansas State Review Board, after considering all opinions, including those of the commission and the chief elected official of the CLG, shall make its recommendation to the State Historic Preservation Officer. Either the local preservation commission or the chief elected official may appeal the SHPOs final decision.*

6. *When a National Register nomination, that has been reviewed by a commission, is submitted to the National Park Service for review and listing, all reports or comments from the local officials will be submitted along with the nomination.*
7. *The AHPP and the CLG will work together to provide ample opportunity for public participation in the nomination of properties to the National register. All reports submitted by the CLG to the AHPP regarding the eligibility of properties shall include assurances of public input. The CLG shall retain a list of all persons contacted during the evaluation period and note comments that were received. If a public meeting was held, a list of those attending shall be included in the report.”*

Staff finds the nomination meets the National Register criteria for eligibility in the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination is scheduled to be heard at the April 2, 2025 State Review Board meeting at the Division of Arkansas Heritage headquarters at 1100 North Street in Little Rock.

G. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends an amendment to the nomination to name the site the “Martha and Robert H. Johnson House” rather than the Robert H. Johnson House. Martha Johnson’s association with the house is equally or more significant, especially considering her familial connection to the architect, H. Ray Burks.

Staff recommends the nomination of the Robert H. Johnson House to the National Register of Historic Places for local significance under Criterion C and the submission of the nomination, inclusive of the amendment, to the State Review Board.

H. COMMISSION ACTION

MARCH 6, 2025

Staff, Ratzlaff, made a presentation to the Commission. Commissioner Fennell made a motion to recommend approval of the Robert H. Johnson House to the National Register of Historic Places for local significance under Criterion C inclusive of staff’s recommendation to the State Review Board to amend the nomination name to the “Martha and Robert H. Johnson House”. Commissioner Waters seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously with a vote of 5 ayes, 0 noes, 0 absent, and 1 vacant position.

VI. Deferred Certificates of Appropriateness
None

VII. New Certificates of Appropriateness
None

VIII. Other Matters

1. Year in Review

Staff provided and presentation of the 2024 year for the commission, including COA actions, National Register actions, COA project status, grant projects, and awards.

2. Grant Updates

Staff provided an update to the commission regarding active grant projects and their status. Ratzlaff reported that the 2024 CLG grant project to resurvey a section of the Hillcrest Historic District was on schedule and the consultant team, SWCA Environmental Consulting, had submitted the first 10 draft Arkansas Architectural Resource Forms (AARF) for the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program's (AHPP) review. The next project milestone is the submission of the full draft report and all draft AARFs by May 9, 2025.

Additionally, Ratzlaff reported that the Underrepresented Communities Grant project to write a new National Register Nomination for the Dunbar Jr & Sr High School & Junior College site submitted with national significance was on schedule and the consultant, Clifton Historic Resources, LLC, completed drafting 75% of the nomination and was working towards the next milestone deadline of April 11th for a full draft.

3. Enforcement Issues

415 E 15th Street—unpermitted installation of fencing

Assistant City Attorney, Raeanne Gardner, provided an update to the commission stating the property owner had remedied the violation by removing the unpermitted fencing following the decision by the court to begin daily fines.

Lot 9, Block 45 City of Little Rock—unpermitted installation of fencing

Gardner stated that the City had filed a motion to dismiss regarding the case filed in Pulaski County Circuit Court on the matter.

4. Certificates of Compliance

HDC2025-002—515 Rock Street—window repair and HVAC replacement

HDC2025-003—417 E 10th Street—foundation, porch, and siding repair

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business for the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 4:34 P.M.

Attest:

Chair

Date

Secretary

Date