



**To:** Landmark Preservation Commission  
**From:** Abigail Christman, Principal City Planner, Community Planning & Development (CPD)  
**Date:** January 23, 2024  
**RE:** Landmark Designation for 5013 E. Montview Blvd.

### Landmark Preservation Commission Suggested Motion:

I move to deny the designation application #2023L-009 for 5013 E Montview Blvd, based on insufficient evidence demonstrating that the structure meets Landmark Ordinance criteria B and D, or is related to a historic context or theme, citing as findings of fact the designation application, presented testimony, submitted documentation and the information provided in the January 23rd staff report.

### Request to Designate a Structure:

**Application:** #2023L-009  
**Address:** 5013 E. Montview Blvd.  
**Zoning:** U-SU-H  
**Council:** Council District #9, Darrell Watson  
**Owner:** Rinehart Living Trust (Mark and Marianne Rinehart)  
**Applicant(s):** Margaret McRoberts, Trish Leary, Bernadette Kelly

### Case Summary:

On behalf of the property owner, Reinhart Living Trust, All Demolition submitted a demolition application for 5013 E. Montview Blvd. on August 28, 2023. Landmark Preservation reviews all primary structures in Denver proposed for demolition to determine whether they have the potential to be designated as an Individual Denver Landmark. Staff have ten business days to conduct a review of eligibility. Based on initial research, staff determined that 5013 E. Montview Blvd. had the potential to be eligible under criteria B, C, D and F. When staff determines a property has the potential for designation, signage is posted and Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNOs) as well as at-large and district city council members are notified.

5013 E. Montview Blvd. was posted on September 14, 2023. The Landmark Ordinance, Chapter 30 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code (DRMC), lays out the timeline for the posting process. Properties are posted for twenty-one days, but if a notice of intent to file an application for designation (NOI) is submitted, then the posting period is extended to sixty days. Landmark received a NOI for 5013 E. Montview Blvd. on September 25, 2023, extending the posting period to November 13, 2023. When a NOI is filled, the property owners are required to meet with the individuals who filed the notice within 40 days to explore alternatives to demolition. The city provides a facilitator for this meeting, which was held on October 17, 2023. Additional facilitated meetings were held on October 31, 2023, and November 9, 2023. At these meetings, the community stakeholders and owners sought to find a compromise between demolition and preservation, including the possibility of finding a buyer interested in preserving the property.

However, no agreement was reached during the facilitated meetings and on November 13, 2023, three Denver residents submitted an owner-opposed designation application. Per Chapter 30 of the DRMC, Landmark staff conducted a preliminary review to determine whether the application was complete, and whether the structure was eligible for designation. Landmark staff determined that the application was technically complete with relevant information included in each application section. Landmark staff had previously determined the property had the potential for designation when reviewing the demolition application. Staff then set a public hearing before the Landmark Preservation Commission on December 19, 2023, for the Commission to review the designation application.

The applicants and the owner continued to engage in facilitated discussions and reached an agreement to postpone the designation hearing to allow time for the property to be listed with a realtor to see if a buyer interested in preserving the property could be found. The Landmark Preservation Commission agreed to this forty-two-day extension on December 12, 2023. This postponed the designation hearing to January 23, 2024.

### **Designation Criteria and Evaluation, Chapter 30, Denver Revised Municipal Code:**

To meet landmark designation criteria, in accordance with Chapter 30, DRMC, the application must be complete, and the structure must meet the following criteria:

1. The structure maintains its integrity
2. The structure is more than 30 years old, or is of exceptional importance
3. The structure meets at least three of ten criteria
4. The LPC considers the structure's historic context

### **Criteria Evaluation:**

While technically complete, Landmark staff does not find that the designation application as submitted sufficiently supports two of the four identified designation criteria. According to Chapter 30 (DRMC), "an application for designation shall describe the appearance of the structure or district and shall demonstrate how the structure or district meets the criteria for designation set forth herein." The designation application identifies four areas of significance: B, C, D, and F. Criteria B and D relate to individuals associated with the property while criteria C and F relate to the physical characteristics of the property. As such, significant research is typically required for criteria B and D in order to establish that individuals have a substantial connection to a property as well as an influential role in the history of the city, state, or nation. The same level of primary source research is generally not required for criteria C and F since these deal with the innate qualities and setting of the property.

Landmark staff find that the designation application does not adequately demonstrate how the structure meets criteria B and D. No substantial research beyond that included in the Landmark staff demolition report has been included. The designation application for 5013 E. Montview Blvd. contains no additional research to support criteria B and D. The historic context (section 6) consists of a fifteen-paragraph general history of the development of South Park Hill, with only two paragraphs discussing the 1930s period when 5013 E. Montview Blvd. was constructed. That is followed with a history of 5013 E. Montview Blvd. that is taken verbatim from the demolition staff report. Landmark staff have ten

business days to review demolition applications, so the research that can be conducted for the staff report is limited. The staff report identifies potential areas of significance based on initial research, but generally does not include all of research needed to support these areas of significance in a designation. Instead, the staff report is intended to notify the public of the proposed demolition and the potential significance of the property; it is not intended to be a complete designation application. It is anticipated that if community members decide to submit a designation application, additional research will be needed to prepare a satisfactory designation application.

**B. It has direct and substantial association with a recognized person or group of persons who had influence on society**

The house at 5013 E. Montview Blvd. is directly associated with Harry Huffman, the first owner of the house. Harry and Christine Huffman purchased the property in 1934 and lived there until 1938. Harry Huffman was a local theater entrepreneur. A pharmacist-turned-theater owner, Huffman was well known for constructing the Aladdin Theater on East Colfax Avenue. He also owned several other theaters, including the Bluebird Theater. At the time he moved into 5013 Montview, he had just been appointed general manager of Denver's theaters. However, staff find that additional information is needed to show a substantial association between Huffman and the property, as well as to document his influence in Denver history. The Huffmans only lived at 5013 E. Montview Blvd. for four years. Harry Huffman appears to have strong associations with two other extant properties, 785 St. Paul St., where the Huffmans lived from 1916 until 1934, and Shangri-La, the opulent mansion the Huffmans built in 1937-1938. Additional support for the significance of Huffman's association with 5013 E. Montview Blvd. is needed. The designation application does not provide sufficient justification for why this home tells a significant story related to Huffman. Additionally, the statement of significance provides biographical information but does not present a clear case for Huffman's influence on society. Newspaper articles, books, or other sources which reference Huffman's work in theater would help to establish this significance. A discussion of the history of movie theaters in Denver would help to put Huffman's role in context.

The designation also suggests that 5013 E. Montview Blvd. is significant for its association with Mary Elizabeth "Betty" Hawley, a prominent community leader who rose to prominence in Denver during her time in the home, from 1949 to 1959. Mrs. Hawley had an ongoing role as board member and fundraiser for the Denver Symphony Orchestra, but also worked with other organizations. However, while her volunteer work appears to have been substantial, additional documentation is needed to establish her "influence on society." Additional information that would help establish her significance include a list of boards she served on and dates, information on fundraising events or campaigns that she organized, and particular causes that she promoted in the community.

The designation application also includes Alston and Allison McCarthy in the statement of significance. The McCarthys owned the Universal Tractor Company, a local dealer of tractors, utility vehicles & other equipment, but no support for their significance is included in the designation.

**C. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type**

5013 E. Montview Blvd. displays the distinctive characteristics of the Italian Renaissance Revival Style, reflecting the popularity of revival styles in the 1930s. Though simpler than some other examples of the style in Denver, 5013 E. Montview Blvd. still reflects the key features of the style including the low-pitch hipped roof clad in red tile, stucco walls, round arch entry, prominent chimney, brick trim, decorative brackets, and upper story windows that are smaller than those on the first floor. This residence is a late example of the Italian Renaissance Revival Style, which was popular from 1890-1935. The simple detailing likely reflects the fact that this is a late example built during the Great Depression as well as the fact that the house was built on speculation. However, the mass and form of the house as well as the use of a revival style ensures that it fits with the other large residences on Montview Blvd.

**D. It is a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder**

5013 E. Montview Blvd. was constructed by Douglas M. Sugg, a builder prolific in the 1920s and 1930s in East Denver. Sugg was active as a builder in the Country Club, Driving Park, Park Hill, and East Seventh Avenue neighborhoods. Two of his notable homes in the Country Club Historic District are 2025 East 4th Avenue (1928), which was designed by Fisher and Fisher, and the Tudor Revival house at 150 Franklin, which Sugg constructed speculatively in 1935. The house at 5013 Montview Blvd. is a good example of a revival style house, built with a modern attached garage, that was constructed on speculation. However, additional information is needed to document Sugg as a master builder and to establish that the Montview property is a significant example of his work. The designation application provides the addresses of three other properties built by Sugg: 2025 East 4<sup>th</sup> Ave., 150 Franklin, and 2279 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. This summary of his work is not sufficient to establish him as a master builder. Either more information on the properties Sugg constructed or his prominence within the construction and real estate industries is needed. Additional context on the fact that this house was built on speculation (such as when Sugg started building on speculation and whether this was related to the economy during the Great Depression) is needed help to establish this as a significant example of Sugg's work.

**F. It represents an established and familiar feature of the neighborhood, community, or contemporary city, due to its prominent location or physical characteristics**

5013 Montview is located on the corner, on the north side of East Montview Boulevard, and faces directly onto the Montview Parkway Historic District. It is identifiable as a stately early twentieth century home that, like many of the houses along the parkway, often advertised the prominent social status of the residents within. Located on a large corner lot, it is and has been an established and familiar building along East Montview Boulevard for almost nine decades.



### **Integrity:**

Chapter 30 requires that a landmark designated property maintain its integrity. Integrity is defined as “the ability of a structure or district to convey its historic, geographic, architectural, or cultural significance...recognized as belonging to its particular time and place in Denver’s history.” The seven qualities that, in various combinations, define integrity are location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

The Italian Renaissance Revival style house at 5013 East Montview Blvd has good historic integrity. It appears to have had few significant alterations and retains original stucco, windows, roof tiles and brick embellishments, including a decorative chimney cap on the front façade. The integrity of design, workmanship, materials, feeling, location, and setting are intact, and it retains its ability to convey its history as a high-end early twentieth century home. According to the designation application, the primary alterations to the property are the construction of a second-story addition to the garage and the replacement of the original second-story windows.

### **Relates to a Historic Context and Period of Significance:**

The designation application does not clearly articulate how the structure relates to a historic context or theme. The application states that 5013 E. Montview Blvd. is significant for its association with Harry Huffman for his role in the development of movie theaters in Denver but provides no context for the history of movie theaters in Denver. Without this context, it is difficult to determine whether Huffman’s role was a significant one. Similarly, the application states that 5013 E. Montview is significant for its association with Betty Hawley and her philanthropic work but provides no context for this work. The application presents D.M. Sugg as a master builder and 5013 E. Montview Blvd. as a good example of his

speculative construction but provides no context for speculative building during the 1930s. Without an overview of Sugg’s career and other speculative work, it is difficult to determine either Sugg’s status as a master builder or 5013 E. Montview Blvd. as a significant example of his work. Thus, Landmark staff find that the designation application does not meet the context requirements of the Landmark ordinance.

The period of significance is the time period during which a structure gained its historic, architectural, geographic, or cultural importance. The designation proposes a period of significant of 1933-1993 but does not provide support for this extended period of significance beyond the fact that 5013 E. Montview Blvd. “has remained a prominent residential structure on Montview Boulevard.”

#### **Boundary:**

The designation application proposes to designate the legal description below:  
Mores Park Heights 01311 B11 L24 TO 29 Inc. Exc. Rear 7 FT to City

#### **Public Review Process:**

Community Planning & Development has met all posting and notification requirements delineated in Chapter 12 (Article III, Section 12-96) and Chapter 30 of the DRMC.

#### **Notifications:**

- Owner notification letters regarding the LPC public hearing
- City Council and Community Planning and Development email notifications
- Registered Neighborhood Organization and courtesy email notifications
  - Greater Park Hill Community, Inc.
  - Opportunity Corridor Coalition of United Residents
  - City Park Friends and Neighbors
  - Strong Denver
  - Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation (INC)
  - Historic Denver, Inc.
  - Colorado Preservation, Inc.
  - History Colorado
- Posted signage for Landmark Preservation Commission public hearing

#### **Public Comments:**

As of 5:00 p.m. on January 15, 2024, CPD has received comments from 71 individuals or organizations regarding the designation.

- Public Comments, including emails and petitions, submitted to CPD from individuals
  - 1 individual in support
  - 68 individuals in opposition
- Public Comments, including letters, submitted to CPD from Registered neighborhood organizations
  - Letter of support from Greater Park Hill Community
  - Letter of support from Historic Berkeley Regis



**Attachments Provided by CPD:**

- Designation Application
- Map of structure proposed for preservation
- Facilitation summary
- Owner comments and attachments
- Public comments received by 5 p.m. on January 15, 2024