

## STAFF REPORT FOR THE HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING OF JANUARY 9, 2020

**FILE NO:** HRC-2019-0009

**AGENDA ITEM:** E-1

**STAFF CONTACT:** Hope Sullivan, AICP, Planning Manager

**AGENDA TITLE:** For Possible Action: Discussion and possible action regarding a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors regarding a request for a Historic Tax Deferment on property zoned Residential Office (RO), located at 311 West Third Street, APN 003-124-01. (Hope Sullivan, hsullivan@carson.org)

**STAFF SUMMARY:** The subject property may be eligible for the Open Space Use Assessment, commonly known as a Historical Tax Deferment, as a result of its historical status in Carson City. The Commission makes a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors based on the finding that the property is in general conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation, Carson City Historic District Guidelines and with Historic Resources Commission policies.

**RECOMMENDATION:** "I move to recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of HRC-2019-0009 for the building only, based on the finding that the request is consistent with the design guidelines for the historic district and the Secretary of the Interior Standards as noted in the staff report."

### VICINITY MAP



### BACKGROUND

Carson City Municipal Code (CCMC) 21.02 allows for an Open-Space Use Assessment. Per CCMC 21.02.020, "Open-space use means the current employment of land, the preservation of which use would conserve and enhance natural or scenic resources, protect streams and water supplies or preserve sites designated as historic by the Carson City Board of Supervisors and the division of historic preservation and archeology of the state department of conservation and natural resources.

Per CCMC 21.02.040, property designated as historic by the Carson City board of supervisors may be eligible for the open-space use assessment.

As a practice, applications for Open Space Use Assessments are referred to the Historic Resource Commission, to provide a recommendation to the Board. The Historic Resources Commission, as a practice, utilizes the following four criteria in making a recommendation.

**1. The property must have significance or be listed in the Carson City Historic Survey.**

*The subject site is listed in the Carson City Resources Inventory completed in March 1980. Per the survey, the home was constructed in 1869. The historic significance derives from its association with George Washington Gale Ferris, Jr., an early agriculturalist and the inventor of the Ferris wheel. Ferris Senior imported large numbers of eastern trees for Carson City homes. An engineer by education, Ferris Junior's original Ferris wheel was 250 feet tall, had 36 cars each holding 40 passengers, and became the main attraction of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893.*

**2. The property must be in good repair and the applicant is encouraged to present photographs as evidence.**

*A site visit was conducted on December 27, 2019, and the site was found to be in good condition. The property owners are currently modifying the building to transition the use from an office use to a residential use.*

**3. Any alteration on the property must be of compatible historical character.**

*On June 11, 2019, the Chair of the Historic Resource Commission (HRC) authorized repair of a chimney.*

*On February 28, 2019, the Chair of the HRC authorized modifications related to converting the building from an office to a single family home.*

*On February 9, 2017, the HRC authorized modifications related to converting the building from an office to a single family home.*

*In 1983, the property owner obtained HRC approval for a re-roof.*

*In approving these modifications, the HRC also found the proposed modifications to be in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior Guidelines and Standards for Rehabilitation, Carson City Historic District Guidelines, and the Historic Resources Commission policies.*

**4. The property must be in compliance with Historic Resources Commission guidelines.**

*During the site visit conducted on December 27, 2019, Planning Division staff found the subject site to be in compliance with the Development Standards, Division 5, Historic District Design Guidelines.*

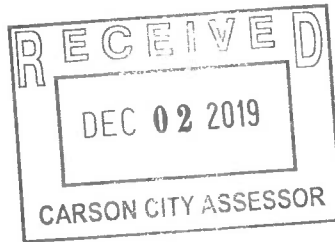
Attachments

Application for Open Space / Historic Use Assessment

Property Information from the Carson City Resources Inventory completed in March 1980.

APN 003-124-01

Return this application to:  
Carson City Assessor's Office  
201 N. Carson St., Ste. 6  
Carson City, NV 89701



This space above for Recorder's Use Only

### Application for Open Space/Historic Use Assessment

*Return this application to the County Assessor's Office at the address shown above no later than June 1<sup>st</sup>. If this application is approved, it will be recorded and become a public record.*

**IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED, PLEASE ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS TO THIS APPLICATION.**

Please type in the following information for each owner of record or his representative.

Owner:

Palle and Tatiana Jensen

Representative:

Address:

311 W Third Street

Address:

City, State, Zip:

CC, NV 89703

City, State, Zip:

Phone #:

310-925-2398

Phone #:

This property is <1 acres in size and the current use of this property is (i.e. grazing, recreation, residential, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

For what reasons do you feel the above-described property should be classified as open space/historic:

Ferris Mansion in LOC / has DOI historical registration

Is the property available and accessible to the general public? Visual easement for outside, is private home inside

If not, explain: Inside not accessible because family lives there

If open space real property classification is sought on the basis of the property being designated by law as **historic**, please answer the following questions:

- 1) The historic name of the property is Ferris Mansion
- 2) The address of the property is 311 W Third Street CC NV 89703
- 3) The improvements were constructed in 1863. (Indicate year, estimate if unknown)

(I) (We) hereby certify that the foregoing information submitted is true, accurate and complete to the best of (my) (our) knowledge. (I) (We) understand that if this application is approved, this property may be subject to liens for undetermined amounts. (Each owner of record or his authorized representative must sign. Representative must indicate for whom he is signing, in what capacity and under what authority.) Please print name under each signature.

Lukana Sensen 311 W Third Street CC NV 89703 11/18/19  
Signature of Applicant or Agent – Address and Phone Number Date

X [Signature] 311 W Third Street CC NV 89703 11/18/19  
Signature of Applicant or Agent – Address and Phone Number Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant or Agent – Address and Phone Number Date

FOR USE BY THE COUNTY ASSESSOR OR DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

|                                     |  |                         |                      |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|----------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Application Received                                   | <u>11/18/19</u><br>Date | <u>LA</u><br>Initial |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Property Inspected                                     | _____<br>Date           | _____<br>Initial     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Income Records Inspected (If applicable)               | _____<br>Date           | _____<br>Initial     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | County Commission Action                               | _____<br>Date           | _____<br>Initial     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Written Notice of Approval or Denial Sent to Applicant | _____<br>Date           | _____<br>Initial     |

Reasons for Approval or Denial and Other Pertinent Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Official Processing Application

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**RECEIVED**

**DEC 04 2019**

CARSON CITY  
PLANNING DIVISION

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Hope Sullivan, Community Development  
**FROM:** Kimberly Adams, Assessor's Office  
**DATE:** December 3, 2019  
**RE:** Historical Site Assessment  
Parcel No. 003-124-01

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Enclosed you will find an application for Historical tax deferment status. This property is NOT currently receiving the deferment.

The current values are as follows:

| ASSESSED VALUE:      | TAXABLE VALUE:       |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| LAND: 39,900         | LAND: 114,000        |
| IMPROVEMENTS: 31,809 | IMPROVEMENTS: 90,884 |

The Historical Deferment values should be close to the amounts shown below:  
(with the new system, the calculation may differ by a few dollars)

| ASSESSED VALUE:      | TAXABLE VALUE:       |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| LAND: 29,526         | LAND: 84,360         |
| IMPROVEMENTS: 23,539 | IMPROVEMENTS: 67,254 |

The Historical Deferment values will begin July 1, 2021 if the application is recorded on or before June 30, 2021.

Please proceed accordingly.

Thank you.

Kimberly Adams  
Chief Deputy Assessor

## KIT CARSON TRAIL INVENTORY

NAME: G.W.G. FERRIS HOUSE.

ADDRESS: 311 W. THIRD STREET.

LOCATION: HOUSE LOCATED ON THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF WEST THIRD STREET AND SOUTH DIVISION STREET.

CONSTRUCTION DATE: ca. 1869.

ARCHITECT: NONE KNOWN

BUILDER:    .

### HISTORICAL INFORMATION, INCLUDING HISTORICAL EVENTS & PERSONS CONNECTED WITH THE STRUCTURE.

The Ferris house was built around 1869 for George Washington Gale Ferris, Sr., who had purchased the land the previous year. The house is a frame structure which measures approximately sixty feet by sixty feet.

In 1864 George Washington Gale Ferris, Sr. came to Nevada with his family from Galesburg, Illinois. According to legend he and his wife and their children crossed the plains in a carriage, not in a covered wagon. The family settled first at a farm in Carson Valley. In addition to the usual farm products Ferris planted trees of many varieties<sup>1</sup>. In 1871-1872 G.W.G. Ferris planted and raised many shade and ornamental and forest trees, and in addition, he imported a great number of eastern forest trees, such as hickory, black walnut and chestnut. Ferris also planted apple and pear trees and grapevines.

George Washington Gale Ferris, Jr., who was to become the most prominent figure associated with the house, was a young boy when the family moved to Carson City. He was born in Galesburg on February 14, 1859.

He later graduated from a military school in Oakland, California and in 1881 graduated in engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. By 1892 young Ferris was associated with railroad and coal interests in the East, and was at last a bridge

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<sup>1</sup>. The state's official Christmas Tree, a 116 year old Colorado Blue Spruce, was planted in 1876 by George Washington Gale Ferris, Sr. This and other tiny saplings were planted by Ferris as part of the first major landscaping project around the Capitol in 1876.

builder and organizer of G.W.G. Ferris & Company of Pittsburgh.

He and other engineers had been challenged to build something "which would rival the Eiffel Tower." for the World's Colombian Exposition of 1893. One Saturday afternoon while he sat in a "chop-house" the idea finally came to him<sup>2</sup>. He was said to have written it down immediately on the tablecloth. His invention, the Ferris Wheel, towered 250 feet with thirty-six cars, each holding forty people. Immediately popular with fairgoers, it took twenty minutes to make a complete revolution<sup>3</sup>.

He died in 1896 in Pittsburgh at the age of thirty-seven.

In 1890, Ferris moved to Riverside, California and sold the house and block to his daughter Mary Ferris Ardery. She bought the property on September 9, 1890, for \$3,000. Mrs. Ardery married Alexander M. Ardery on September 29, 1880 and lived in the house until the early 1920s. They had two daughters, Martha and Ruth. Ardery was born in New York State in 1850 and came west in 1861 with his family. In 1870 he was employed by the Virginia and Truckee Railroad as a telegraph operator and assistant dispatcher. In 1881, he became chief dispatcher and in August, 1883, master of transportation. In 1909, he became vice-president and general manager, replacing Henry M. Yerington, who had died the previous month. After his death, his widow continued to live in the house until 1922, when it passed out of the hands of the Ferris family.

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

Carson Daily Appeal, April 29, 1870; March 22, 1876; March 29, 1876; March 25, 1876; August 8, 1906; June 2, 1921.

Nevada Appeal, APPLE TREE, July 13, 1975.

Carson Daily Index, March 6, 1881; September 22, 1881.

Sam Davis, History of Nevada

Thompson & West, History of Nevada

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<sup>2</sup>. Family tradition believed that the idea for the Ferris wheel came from his early days in Nevada, when he watched the big wheel turning near the Mexican mill on the Carson River.

<sup>3</sup>. The wheel cost \$390,000 and took six months to fabricate. It was built in Pittsburgh and reassembled in Chicago. The wheel was taken down after the Chicago fair, and was erected again nine years later for the St. Louis World's Fair of 1904. Finally, the wheel was taken down and sold for scrap.



**National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form,  
G.W.G. Ferris House, November 27, 1978.**

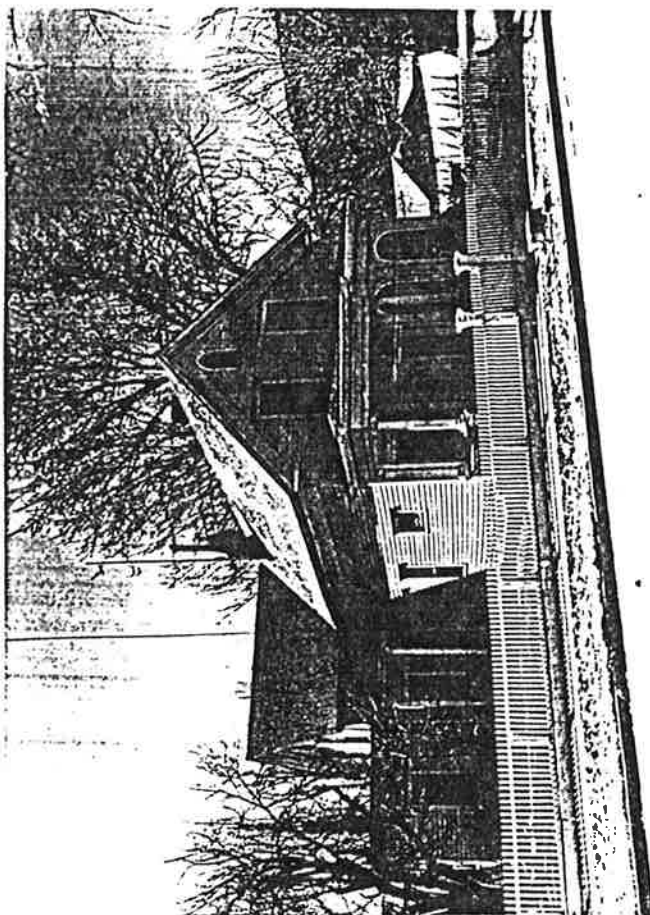
**S. Allen Chambers, Jr., The Architecture of Carson City, Nevada,  
Selections from the Historic American Buildings Survey, Number 14  
(Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1973).**

ILLUSTRATIONS - GEORGE WASHINGTON GALE FERRIS, SR.,  
HOUSE

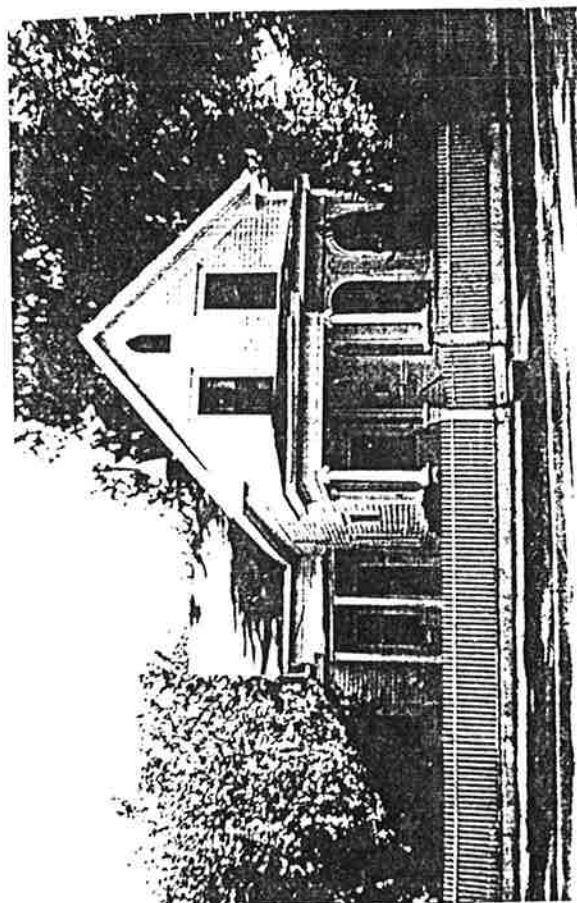


Looking S.E.

1993.



39.4



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# CARSON CITY RESOURCES INVENTORY

## IDENTIFICATION:

1. Address: 311 West Third APN 3-124-1
2. Common Name: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Historic Name: Ferris family Home
4. Present Owner: Barbara Levy
5. Address (if not occupant): 1431 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco, CA 94109
6. Present Use: offices Original Use: residence

## DESCRIPTION, ALTERATIONS, AND RELATED FEATURES:

The vernacular structure combines influences from Greek, Gothic, and Classical Revival origins. The two story structure has an intersecting gabled roof. The foundation is stone and the wood frame is sheathed in clapboard siding. Windows are all double hung with some being two light over two and some one pane over one. A square bay with arched windows and a porch are the focal point of the front facade. Essentially Classical in design, the porch decoration includes: dentils, turned columns with Ionic capitals and a balustrade. Beveled glass windows, pointed arched windows in the gable peaks, and eave returns are other decorative details.

The Classically derived porch detailing was apparently added to the building in the mid-1890's. Additions with both flat and shed roofs have been made to the east and west. The west porch has been partially enclosed, windows have been changed on the western facade, and lamps have been added to the fence posts. The porch columns and capitals may be later than the original building and the doors may not be original.

## RELATIONSHIP TO SURROUNDINGS:

Somewhat large in scale and height, this structure is a focal point of the neighborhood and compatible environmentally.



Street Furniture: ---

Landscaping: lawn, street trees

Architectural Evaluation: PS \_\_\_\_\_ NR X

District Designation: PD 2 NR \_\_\_\_\_

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT CONSULTANTS

2306 J Street, Penthouse

Sacramento, CA 95816

(916) 446-2447

Date March 1980

## THREATS TO SITE:

None Known ☒ Private Development \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zoning RO Public Works Project \_\_\_\_\_  
 Vandalism \_\_\_\_\_ Neglect \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## ADJACENT LAND USES:

mostly residential/office intrusions  
 beginning

## PHYSICAL CONDITION:

Excellent ☒ Good \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Deteriorated \_\_\_\_\_

APPROXIMATE SETBACK: 25 feet

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Architect (if known) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Builder (if known) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Construction 1869 Estimated \_\_\_\_\_ Factual ☒ Source: marker  
 Is Structure on Original Site? ☒ Moved? \_\_\_\_\_ Unknown \_\_\_\_\_

## SIGNIFICANCE:

The fine detailing and design of the building are outstanding in quality and the structure is significant architecturally as well as an excellent example of its type and era.

Historic significance derives from its association with George Washington Gale Ferris, Jr., an early agriculturist and the inventor of the Ferris wheel. Ferris, Sr., imported large numbers of eastern trees for Carson City homes. An engineer by education, Ferris, Jr.'s original Ferris wheel was 250 feet tall, had 36 cars each holding 40 passengers, and became the main attraction of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893.

## SOURCES:

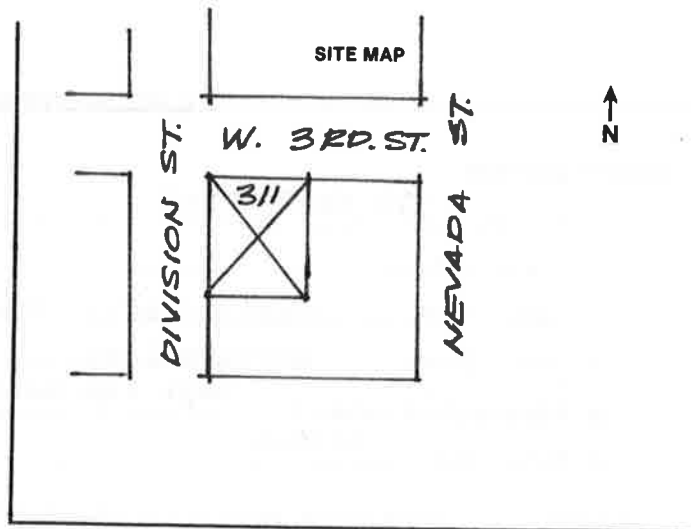
Carson City Historic Tour  
 Historic American Building Survey, 1974  
 Noreen Humphreys

## SUGGESTED LAND USE AND FACADE MODIFICATIONS, WHERE APPROPRIATE:

Adaptive Use:

Facade Changes:

Zoning:



## CARSON CITY RESOURCES INVENTORY

1988 CC Resources Inventory N-6<sup>th</sup>  
(1980 updated)

## IDENTIFICATION:

1. Address: 311 West Third 08 3-124-01  
 2. Common Name: \_\_\_\_\_ LEVY, BARBARA K  
 3. Historic Name: Ferris family Home 1431 VAN NESS AVE  
 4. Present Owner: Barbara Levy SAN FRANCISCO CA 94109  
 5. Address (if not occupant): 1431 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco, CA 94109  
 6. Present Use: offices Original Use: residence

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Landscaping: lawn, street trees

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HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT CONSULTANTS

2306 J Street, Penthouse

Sacramento, CA 95816

(916) 446-2447

Date March 1980

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## THREATS TO SITE:

None Known ☒ Private Development \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zoning RO Public Works Project \_\_\_\_\_  
 Vandalism \_\_\_\_\_ Neglect \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

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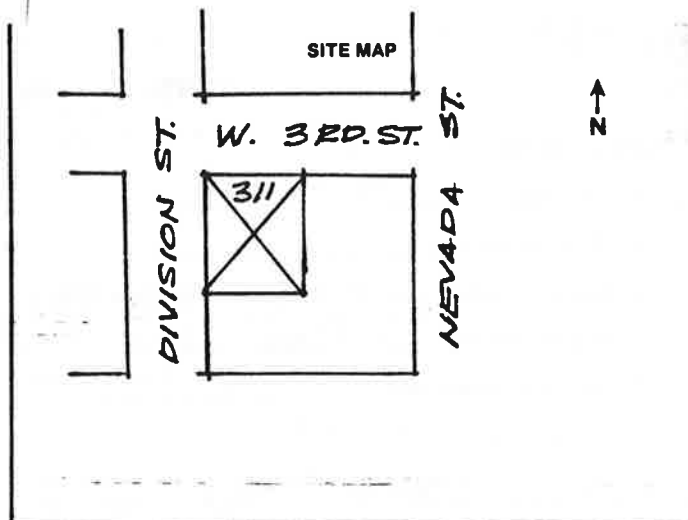
Carson City Historic Tour  
 Historic American Building Survey, 1974  
 Noreen Humphreys

## SUGGESTED LAND USE AND FACADE MODIFICATIONS, WHERE APPROPRIATE:

Adaptive Use:

Facade Changes:

Zoning:



1988 Update by: Ana Koval  
 Rainshadow Associates  
 P.O. Box 352  
 Carson City, NV 89702  
 (702) 849-1438