

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
JULY 26, 2021
C14H-2000-0005; HR-2021-103182
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
13300 DESSAU ROAD

PROPOSAL

Relocate Evangelical Lutheran Church from 13300 Dessau Road to Jourdan-Bachman Pioneer Farms, 10621 Pioneer Farms Drive.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

The relocation will be performed by an experienced house mover. The bell tower will be removed with a crane and replaced following the move; the church building will be moved without further disassembly.

To support its interpretation as part of Pioneer Farms living history museum, the organization has conducted additional research into the history of the property. Future work will involve minimal intervention to weatherize and paint the exterior and replace non-historic doors with period-appropriate doors.

ARCHITECTURE

The Gothic Revival-influenced church features pointed arch windows on either end with more Classical pedimented window frames on the side façades. The church also features decorative gable ornamentation and a low bell tower with a hexagonal spire and pressed metal roof.

DESIGN STANDARDS

The City of Austin's [Historic Design Standards](#) (March 2021) are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and are used to evaluate projects at historic landmarks. Limited standards address relocation:

Demolition and relocation

1.1 Do not demolish or relocate a historic building.

Relocation is an act of last resort and should only be considered when preservation in place is no longer viable. The current location is landlocked and surrounded by existing or proposed new development that will compromise the church's setting and feeling. Set off of Dessau Road, the church is isolated and subject to vandalism. Relocation to Pioneer Farms is being pursued at the request of the Dessau Lutheran Cemetery Association, which lacks adequate funds to maintain the building.

Evaluation of relocation should consider the reasons the property is significant, how relocation will impact the historic integrity of the property, and whether the property will remain eligible for designation at its proposed site.

The Historic Landmark Commission initiated designation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in 2000, in response to an intended sale of the tract and uncertain future of the church building. At that time, the Commission used 13 historic designation criteria. While only required to meet one criterion, the church was deemed significant under six: for its connections to the mid-19th century German settlement of Dessau, as a significant example of a rural Gothic Revival church, for its relationship to the adjoining historic Dessau cemetery, for its hilltop location that reflects German traditions and culture, as the only significant representation of the history of the Dessau community, and for its survival amidst modern development as a reminder of that community.

Relocation will result in a loss of integrity of location and setting; it will sever the physical ties to the Dessau settlement and cemetery. However, the church's setting will be severely compromised if it remains in place, with new construction accelerating beyond that present at the time of designation. Development in front of the church building will disconnect it from Dessau Road. At Pioneer Farms, the church will be returned to a rural setting, and it will have an interpretive relationship to the cabin of Frederick Kruger, a Dessau community leader who helped facilitate the church's construction.

Staff finds that the church will retain sufficient integrity and will still meet the required two criteria for designation following relocation. It will retain its historic associations with the Dessau community and its architectural significance.

1.2 If demolition or relocation is necessary, ensure the safety of the building and any adjacent properties before, during, and afterwards.

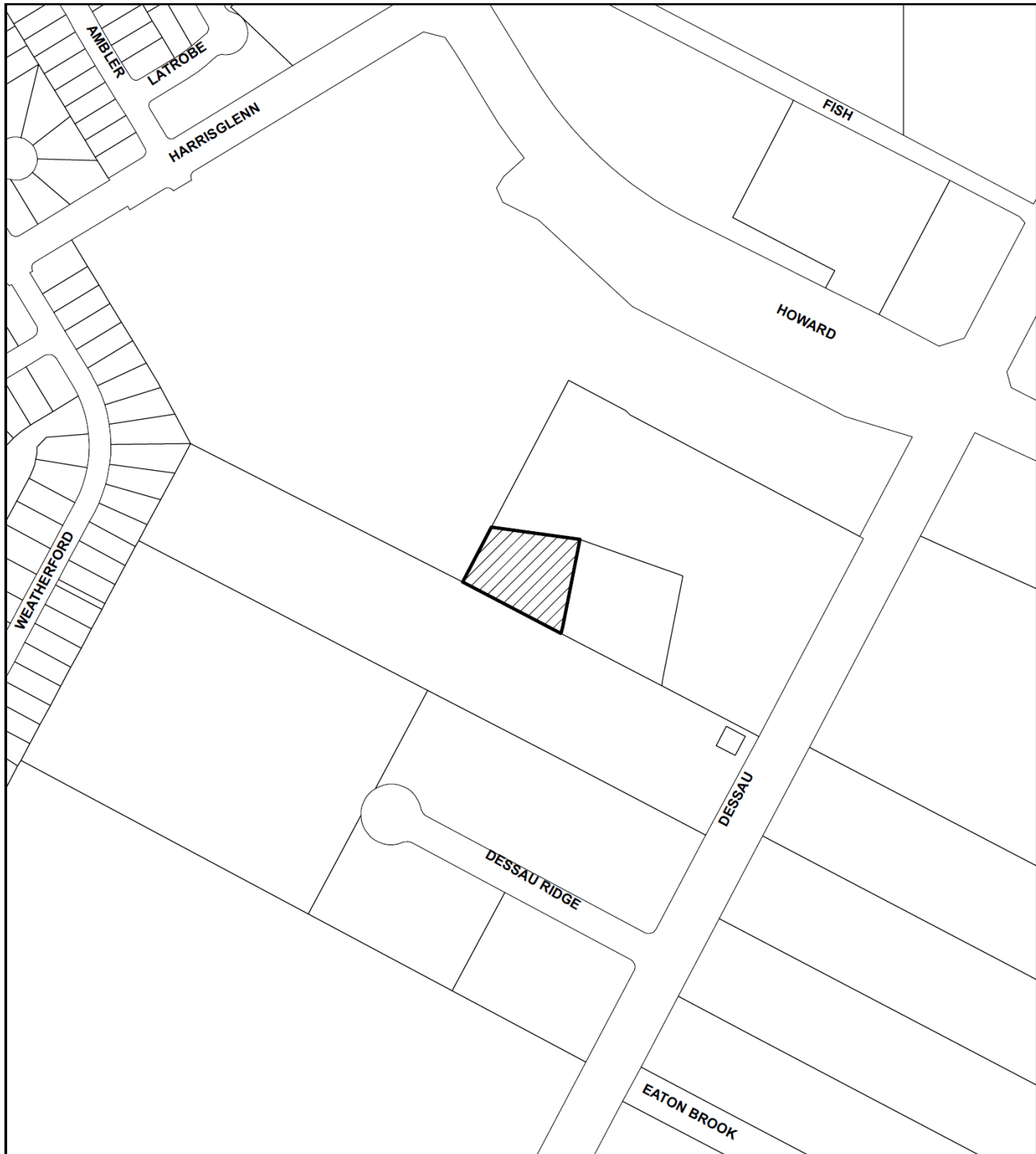
The church will be relocated with minimal disassembly and restored with care.

Summary

On February 24, 2020, the Commission passed a resolution to support of relocation of the church through waived fees and code requirements to facilitate the project. While this action did not constitute approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for relocation, Commissioners remarked that the dangers at the existing site offset the loss of context through relocation, and that the new location is well suited for the building.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve the application. To maintain the landmark designation once the move is complete, future Commission action will be required to initiate historic zoning at the new location and remove historic zoning from the Dessau Road tract.

LOCATION MAP*Existing Location*

SUBJECT TRACT



PENDING CASE



ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 292'

NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: C14H-2000-0005

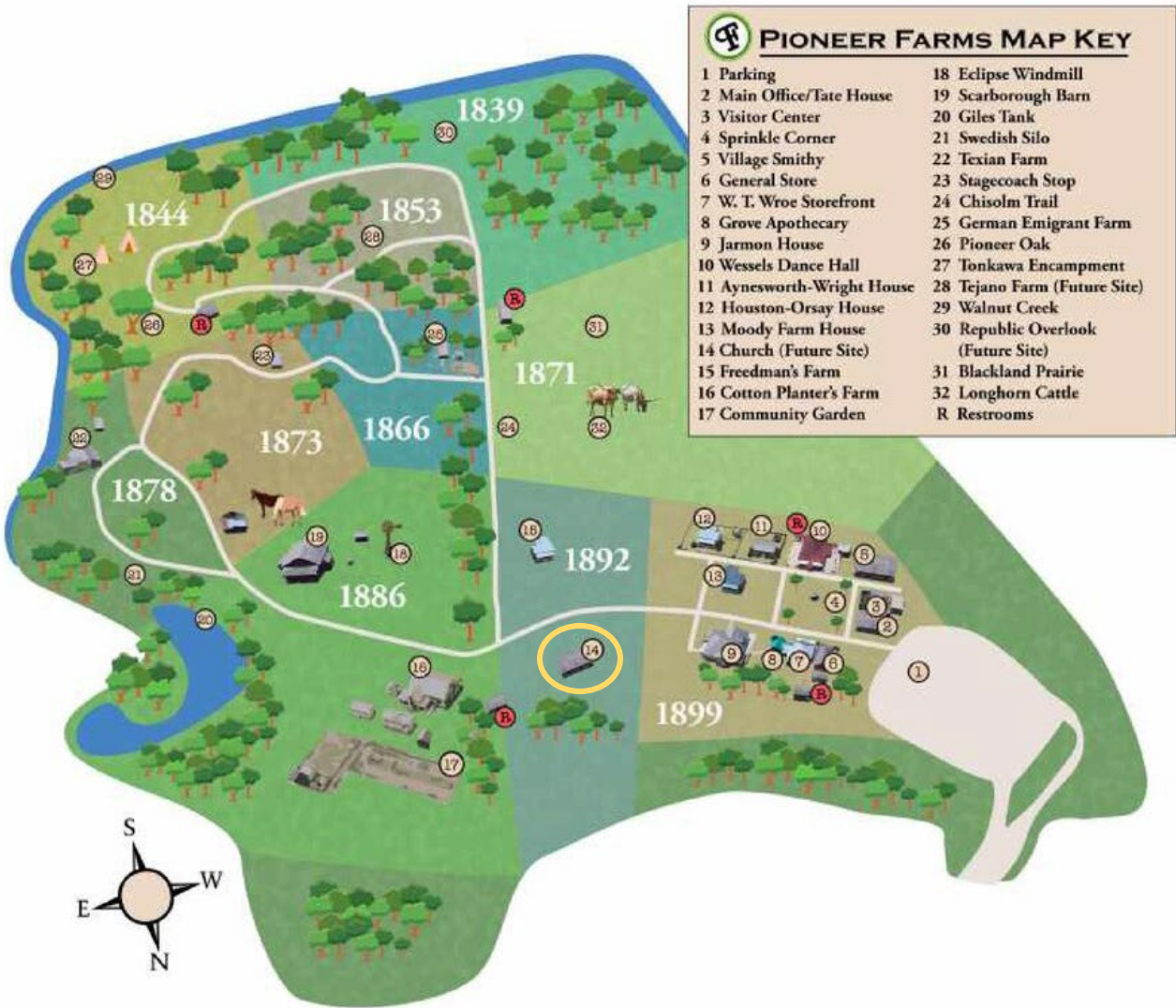
LOCATION: 13300 DESSAU ROAD

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Proposed Location



From <https://www.pioneerfarms.org/sitemap>.