

DATE: November 10, 2006

TO: Historic District Commission

FROM: Community Development Department

SUBJECT: **The nomination of the historic Folsom Methodist-Episcopal Church (currently Landmark Baptist Church) at 609 Figueroa Street to the Cultural Resource Inventory List**

BACKGROUND

The Cultural Resource Inventory List

When the City of Folsom Historic Preservation Master Plan was approved in November 1998, the initial list of locally significant cultural resources was incorporated with the plan. Among the listed structures and properties was the Landmark Baptist Church at 609 Figueroa Street (see Attachment 4: Historical Churches and Cemeteries).

The Early History of the Protestant Church in Folsom

Protestant missionaries first came to the 'El Dorado Circuit' in 1949 during the height of the gold rush. The first church and Sunday school was organized in Coloma. Among the settlements and mining camps that the missionaries visited was Mormon Island and Granite City (later the location of Folsom). The earliest records of sermons in the current Folsom area, indicates that W. J Cooper was appointed to preach at Mormon Island.

In 1856 (a year after the Granite City area was subdivided into the Town of Folsom) pastor D. A. Dryden was assigned to develop a congregation in Folsom. At the end of that year he reported that the recently organized church had 38 members and owned two buildings (valued at \$ 2,000). The first Methodist Church building (the current Landmark Baptist Church) was constructed in 1860.

NOMINATION

The Community Development Department has received a nomination package for the listing of the Folsom Methodist-Episcopal Church (currently Landmark Baptist Church) at 609 Figueroa Street as a locally significant historical site. The submitted registration form was prepared by the Heritage Preservation League of Folsom. Based on the previous listing of this property in the Historic Preservation Master Plan, staff has determined that the church is automatically eligible for listing and a decision by the Historic District Commission will not be required.

Architecture

As a part of the information provided in the nomination package, the history of the Folsom Methodist-Episcopal Church has been documented. When the original church sanctuary was constructed in 1860, W. G. Blakely was the pastor. The building design was Gothic Revival and the façade materials included kiln-fired brick, granite cornerstones and wood ornamentation shipped from Maine. As a result the cost of the project was \$9,000. A church bell was purchased in 1907 from Michigan but the top structure of the bell tower was later destroyed by seismic activity. Since that time the bell has been located inside the church at the base of the tower. The church was renovated in 1939 when a social hall was added at the rear of the building and in 1958 when new pews and an organ were installed. The overall building is now L-shaped.

Building Use

Between 1922 and 1924 the church housed the first high school in Folsom and until 1934 the church continued intermittently to serve as a school building. At that time many church members had relocated to Orangevale and the congregations of the Folsom Methodist Church and the Orangevale Presbyterian Church agreed to trade properties. By 1958 the Folsom Presbyterian Church (the previous Orangevale Presbyterian Church) had 179 members and 121 Sunday school students. To allow for more growth a new church was built at Persifer Street (the Community Bible Church). In addition, the church purchased land at School Street and Green Valley Road (currently Blue Ravine Road). On this property a new Presbyterian Church was constructed. In 1969, the original church at 609 Figueroa Street was purchased by Landmark Baptist Church.

CRITERIA FOR LISTING AND RESOURCE INTEGRITY

The Historic Preservation Master Plan specifies the following review criteria regarding the listing of a site or structure in the City's Cultural Resources Inventory:

- Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- Property embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or construction method, or represent the work of a creative individual; or
- Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in Folsom's prehistory or history.

In order to qualify for the Cultural Resources Inventory, a property must meet one of the four listed criteria. As previously determined by the City Council and as demonstrated by the information provided in the nomination package, the Folsom Methodist-Episcopal Church property meets the criteria for listing as established by the Historic Preservation Master Plan.

The Master Plan includes guidelines for the assessment of potential resources. The significance of a resource is established by answering the questions: why, where and when the property is important and the integrity of a resource can be determined by evaluating: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. In order to qualify for the Cultural Resources Inventory, a resource must have at least two types of integrity. The nominated church property incorporates all the aspects of integrity that are identified in the Historic Preservation Master Plan

STAFF COMMENTS

The Folsom Methodist-Episcopal Church is located within a block of Figueroa Street that includes five residential properties eligible for local listing and one commercial property that was included with the Folsom Cultural Resource List on November 16, 2005 (the Bradley House Bed and Breakfast).

In addition to the church's connection with early pioneers, religious leaders and craftsmen of the Folsom area, the building has also served as the first high school in Folsom. The congregation of Folsom Presbyterian Church has also initiated the development of two additional Folsom churches.

When the church was completed in 1860 a metal box with a Bible of that era was installed in a corner stone. At the centennial celebration in 1960 the following items were added to the time capsule: a new Bible, the church history, a current map, an issue of Folsom Telegraph, the annual church report and the church membership list.

LISTING

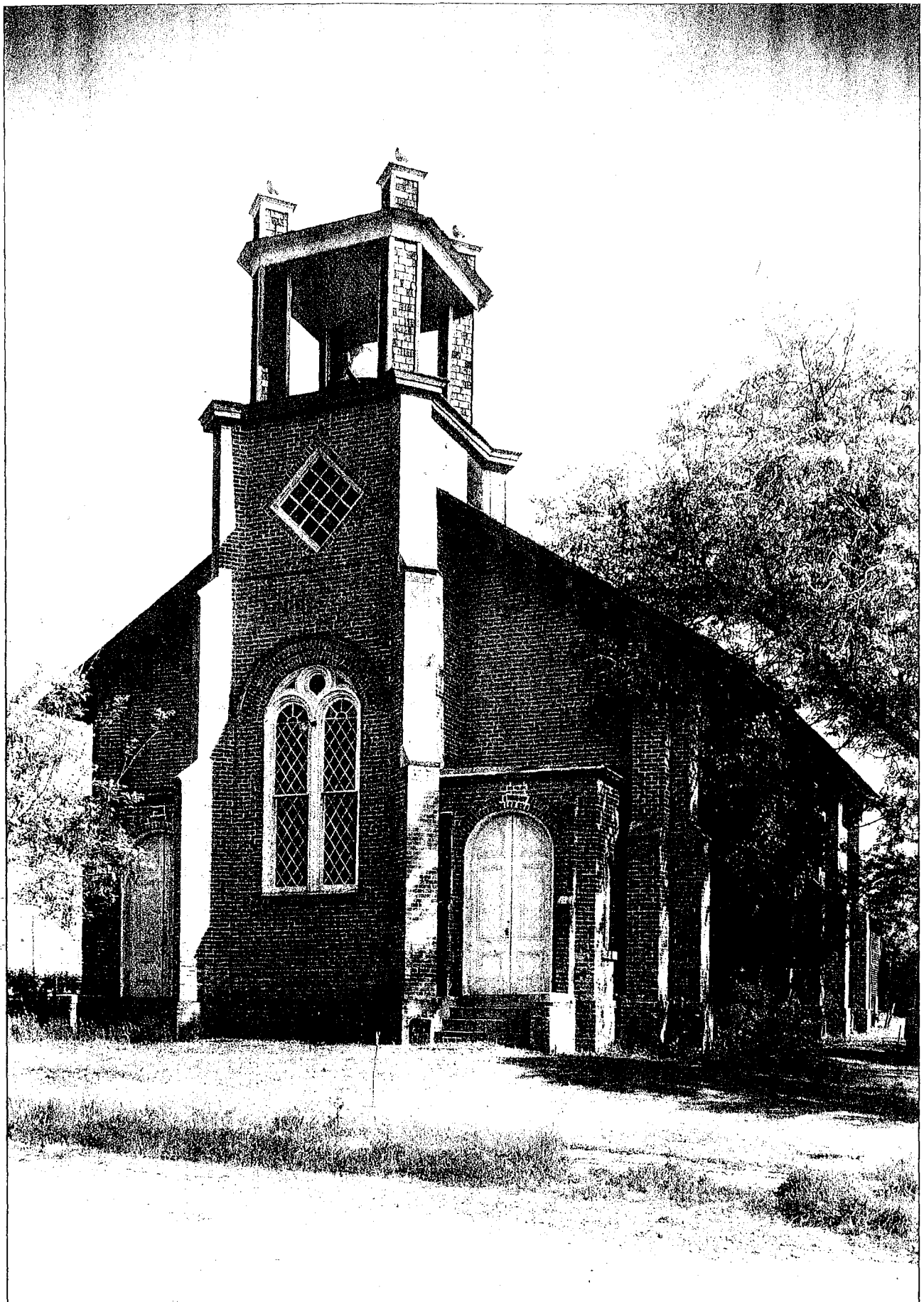
Based on the previous historic listings of the Folsom Methodist-Episcopal Church, staff has included the property with the list of cultural resources eligible for the Cultural Resource Inventory list. Because the property owner (the Lakeside Baptist Church) has no objections to the actual listing, staff will include the property with the Cultural Resource Inventory and the public information binder that is available at the planning counter.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity Map
2. The Nomination Package
3. The History of the Folsom Presbyterian Church
(submitted by the Landmark Baptist Church)
4. The Preliminary Cultural Resources Inventory
5. Photo's of the church property today

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION ACTION

No action is required by the Historic District Commission.



THE LANDMARK BAPTIST CHURCH. Located on Figueroa Street between Scott and Riley Streets, this church was originally established as a Methodist church in 1860. In later years it became a house of worship for Presbyterians. In addition, Landmark Baptist once housed the high school until a school building was erected.