

Historic Significance and Integrity Assessment Report for Listing Farmer's State Bank of Scottsdale on the Scottsdale Historic Register

Farmer's State Bank of Scottsdale

7245 E. Main Street, Scottsdale, Arizona
Scottsdale Historic Register No. SHR-00-3
Resolution No. 5550

Background

In July of 1999 the City Council adopted Resolution No. 5324 and Ordinance No. 3242 which established the Scottsdale Historic Register, the City's official list of historic and archaeological resources with special significance in the United States, Arizona and Scottsdale history, architecture, archaeology, engineering or culture. The first group of properties to be considered for designation were those properties that had previously received HP overlay zoning under an earlier City Historic Preservation (HP) program. The building was originally constructed as the Farmer's State Bank of Scottsdale, and is currently leased by the Rusty Spur. It was zoned HP on February 1, 1983 in case 9-Z-83. The property is owned by Jeffrey and Debra Burling and is located at 7245 E. Main Street on parcel no. 130-23-115.

Historic Context: Early Town Building, 1908 – 1933

Scottsdale's historic development followed a pattern typically found in Western communities. Like other Arizona cities and towns, the provision of a reliable water supply was critical to sustaining the community's viability after its initial settlement in the late 1800s. With the construction of Granite Reef Dam in 1908, followed by Roosevelt Dam in 1911, Scottsdale shared in the population boom that transformed the Salt River Valley. A main line rail connection to the national railway system completed into the Valley in 1924 provided further impetus for growth and development. During this period Scottsdale grew slowly, but steadily, as a small market town principally providing services for families involved in agricultural pursuits.

Within the core of the original Scottsdale town site are several extant buildings that represent this early period of the community's development. The dates of their construction, the types of buildings, their uses as well as their locations illustrate the traditional pattern of community development that occurred in Scottsdale, Arizona and throughout the nation in the early twentieth century.

Description

The structure is a small one-story red brick building with a flat roof built right on the sidewalk with no setback. The building and lot at 7245 E. Main Street is about 25' wide and 50' deep or about .03 acres. Brick corbelling ornaments the roof cornice and brick pilasters define the building corners. Banks often used brick or stone façade to signify permanence and solidity to the users, compared to wood facades. The front façade is divided into three bays by brick piers. The easternmost bay contains a recessed entry door and two large wooden divided light windows dominate the remaining two bays. A wooden shed porch roof, a later addition to the building, extends across the front facade. The roof is cantilevered over the sidewalk and has shake shingles. The porch roof appears on photos in the 1950's at a time when other

businesses on Main Street were adding covered walkways to create an old west ambiance. Although the City's HP standards do not regulate the interior of building, the original bank vault has long been a prominently visible fixture of the interior. A rear one-story block addition with a flat roof was also added later.

History

The Farmer's State Bank opened on January 22, 1921 and was Scottsdale's first bank building. A December 22, 1920 article in the *Arizona Republican* described the origins of the bank by stating that "As evidence of their belief in Arizona, a group of well known Scottsdale farmers and business men yesterday filed articles of incorporation of the Farmer's State Bank of Scottsdale. . . . That their faith in Arizona is not disturbed by unrest throughout the country is demonstrated by their launching a banking institution at this time. . . ." The company incorporated with \$20,000 in capital stock divided into 200 shares at \$100 a share. The incorporation of the Farmer's State Bank, following the construction of a cotton gin to process locally grown cotton (now demolished) and the arrival of electricity to Scottsdale, represented the confidence business and civic leaders had in the town's potential. Directed by members of prominent Scottsdale farming families and respected community leaders, the bank was a center of community life until 1933 when it closed, a casualty of the Depression. It continued to house various financial and real estate related businesses until after WWII, including a currency exchange and insurance agency. It was converted to the Scottsdale Coffee Shop. It was the first home of the Scottsdale Chamber of Commerce and was the town library at one time. The Rusty Spur Saloon has occupied the building since 1958 with the bank vault storing liquor instead of money.

Significance

Farmers State Bank is historically significant as one of the initial buildings of the community dating from the earliest period of its town development. The establishment of local banking facilities was tangible testimony of the progress that had been made in establishing Scottsdale as a viable community. The availability of local capital was a key step in the growth and development of early towns. The type of financial institution founded also is representative of the economic influence of agriculture at work. The willingness of the local citizenry, which for the most part relied upon the uncertainty of agricultural production for their livelihood, to provide funding for its substantial construction tangibly illustrates the pride and aspirations that they had for their community. It is also a local casualty and reminder of the Depression.

Architecturally the building is significant as one of the early simple brick rectangular commercial storefronts with brick piers and corbelling at the top of the parapet. The physical character of the building still conveys the integrity of its original brick storefront construction.