

RESOLUTION 2024-028

A resolution conditionally approving Boulder County Community Planning & Permitting Docket HP-23-0004: Walker Ranch Historic District

Recitals

A. Boulder County Parks and Open Space (the “Applicant”), applied to Boulder County under Article 15 of the Boulder County Land Use Code (the “Code”) for a Boulder County Historic Landmark Designation of the Walker Ranch Historic District.

B. The subject property is located at 7701 Flagstaff Road, Boulder County Assessor Parcel Nos. 157900000021 and 157900000032, in Section 22, Township 1 South, Range 71 West of the 6th Principal Meridian, in a Forestry zoning district in unincorporated Boulder County (the “Property”).

C. The proposed landmarking site includes thirteen contributing buildings and three non-contributing buildings.

Contributing Buildings

- Garage/Log House
- Gas House
- Granary/Tack House/Root Cellar
- Livestock Barn/Hay Barn
- Lower Barn
- Miller House
- Original Blacksmith Shop
- Scale House
- Shed/Brooder House
- Spring House
- Turkey House
- Wagon Barn
- Wheat Barn/Pig Barn

Non-contributing Buildings

- New Blacksmith Shop
- Caretaker’s House
- Garage

D. The Walker Ranch was started in 1876 with a lease of 80 acres near the Property by James Walker. James purchased the Property in 1882 from Uriah Osborn. All the buildings at Walker Ranch have a vernacular architecture style, and most of them were built by the Walker family in the 85 years they owned the Property.

E. James Walker arrived in the City of Boulder in 1869 from Missouri, hoping the altitude and dry climate of the Rocky Mountains could help him with his sickness. His health improved, and in 1876, he married Phoebe Skinner, a schoolteacher. In 1877, William Walker was born, and he was James and Phoebe's only child. James Walker raised the Galloway breed of cattle imported from Scotland, which could handle the cold winters of Colorado. Later, the Walker family had to switch to Herefords when the Galloway breed became more challenging to sell. James Walker would drive the cattle to Denver stockyards to be sold. In later years, William Walker would have trucks take the cattle to Denver.

F. After William was born, Phoebe's health worsened, and she needed a caretaker. The Walkers hired Veronica Kossler, a neighbor's young daughter. Years later, William and Veronica married in 1902. After James retired, William and Veronica took over the farm and raised their six children. They had five daughters who eventually married and moved off the farm. Jim, the youngest child, stayed on the farm until it was sold off starting in 1950. At the peak, the ranch had 3,000 acres and 500 cattle.

G. In 1977, the Applicant bought 2,556 acres of Walker Ranch and the original homestead. In the mid-1980s, the Applicant started restoration efforts to the homestead and acquired another 800 acres of land from the Bureau of Land Management, bringing the total to 3,616 acres. The Walker Ranch property is already on the National and State Register of Historic Places.

H. On November 2, 2023, the Historic Preservation Advisory Board ("HPAB") met and reviewed the application and determined that the site was eligible for landmark status under Criteria 1, 3, and 4 of Article 15-501.A of the Code. The HPAB voted unanimously to recommend approval of landmarking to the Board of County Commissioners (the "Board").

I. The above-described request for landmark designation was processed and reviewed as Boulder County Community Planning & Permitting Docket HP-23-0004 (the "Docket"), as further described in the memorandum and written recommendation to the Board by Boulder County Community Planning & Permitting Department planning staff dated December 12, 2023, together with its attachments (the "Staff Recommendation"). The Staff Recommendation found that the Docket could meet the criteria for approval with recommended conditions, and therefore recommended that the Board conditionally approve the Docket.

J. At a public hearing on the Docket held on December 12, 2023 (the "Public Hearing"), as further reflected in the official record of the Public Hearing, the Board considered the recommendation of the HPAB and the Staff Recommendation, as well as the documents and testimony presented by County Community Planning & Permitting Department staff. The Board also heard testimony from Carol Beam on behalf of the Applicant. No members of the public spoke at the Public Hearing.

K. Based on the Public Hearing, the Board finds that the Docket meets one or more of the criteria for landmark designation contained in Article 15-501.A of the Code, specifically Criteria 1, 3, and 4, subject to the conditions stated below.

L. Therefore, the Docket can be approved, subject to the conditions stated below.

Therefore, the Board resolves:

Docket HP-23-0004 is approved on the basis and terms set forth in this Resolution, above, and subject to the following conditions:

1. Alteration of any exterior feature of the buildings within the district, both contributing and non-contributing, as well as new construction, will require review and approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness (“CA”) by Boulder County. Applicable county review processes, including but not limited to Site Plan Review, may be required.

2. Regular maintenance that prolongs the life of the landmark, using original materials or materials that replicate the original materials, will not require review for a CA, provided the Community Planning & Permitting Director has determined that the repair is minor in nature and will not damage any existing architectural features. Emergency repairs that are temporary in nature will not require review (depending on the type of work, a building permit may still be required).

3. The Applicant shall be subject to the terms, conditions, and commitments of record and in the file for Docket HP-23-0004: Walker Ranch Historic District.

A motion to approve the Docket was made by Commissioner Marta Loachamin, seconded by Commissioner Ashley Stolzmann, and passed by a 2-0 vote. Commissioner Levy was excused from the Public Hearing.

[Signature Page to Follow]

ADOPTED as a final decision of the Board on this _____ day of March 2024.

The signatures below indicate approval of the text of the Resolution but are not necessarily reflective of the votes taken at the Public Hearing.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF BOULDER COUNTY:**

Ashley Stolzmann, Chair

Marta Loachamin, Vice Chair

Claire Levy, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Clerk to the Board