

Provider: Conference for Catholic Facility Management (“CCFM”)

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Course Title: Pros and Cons of Historical Easements, Designations and Districts: The Complications Associated with Historical Designations

Course Number: PHX1607

Speaker: B. “Marty” Martin
Diocese of Lubbock



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Best Practices

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Course Description

This session will discuss the issues encountered when Church buildings are declared ‘landmark’ sites. Specifically, in the areas of remodeling and building improvement. We will also discuss the areas to investigate; such as building condition, building use change, and preservation of patrimony, before you make a decision to proceed with the process.

Learning Objectives

At the end of the program, participants will be able to:

- 1. Understand the issues encountered when religious buildings are declared ‘landmark’ sites, using examples and case studies.**
- 2. Discuss the building condition investigation process associated with potential ‘landmark’ sites, using examples and case studies.**
- 3. Understand the building use change process associated with potential ‘landmark’ sites, using examples and case studies.**
- 4. Discuss the facility preservation process associated with potential ‘landmark’ sites, using examples and case studies.**

Pros and Cons of Historical Easements, Designations and Districts

Introduction to the Diocese of Lubbock, Texas:

- 33 years old, very young as dioceses go.**
- 25 Counties in West Texas.**
- 63 parishes, 45 pastors.**
- 50 parishes are in small, rural farming communities.**
- Counties are 2,000 to 9,000 in population.**
- Lubbock is 220,000 in population, and is home to the other 13 parishes.**

Pros and Cons of Historical Easements, Designations and Districts

Each State has unique criteria / standards to meet in order to be considered as a landmark site; although they may be very similar, it would be best to check into the requirements for your County or State.

Criteria for consideration to be designated as a landmark site:

- 1. Age of the structure, 50 years is minimum and structures older than 50 may be altered.**
- 2. Historical significance of the structure, must be established through written or photographic documentation established by the applicant.**
- 3. Architectural integrity through historic persons or events associated with the structure. In this case, the structure must maintain the appearance from its period of historical significance. This means that the structure may not have been relocated and it can have no repairs or additions that are of an artificial nature.**

Pros and Cons of Historical Easements, Designations and Districts

Benefits of designation as a landmark site:

- 1. Tax exemption, amount of the exemption depends on the whether or not the property is income-producing, and must be applied for each year.**
- 2. Designation as a landmark may make the site eligible for certain government or private grants.**
- 3. Certain measure of protection under the law in regards to zoning.**

Note: In the case of our Diocese, the desire was to establish a historical Catholic presence in a predominately Protestant area.

Pros and Cons of Historical Easements, Designations and Districts

Responsibilities of being a landmark designation:

- 1. Owner must maintain the landmark exterior and site area according to the historic period.**
- 2. Owners are reviewed periodically for proper treatment of the historic properties.**
- 3. Staff of the designated historic society has administrative approval of all repairs and remodeling of the site and structure.**
- 4. The structure must be in a good state of repair to qualify, THC holds sole right to determine the state of the structure.**

Pros and Cons of Historical Easements, Designations and Districts

Types of historical sites:

- Landmark areas / districts.**
- Individual Landmark sites (building or buildings on a property).**

Pros and Cons of Historical Easements, Designations and Districts



Blanco Canyon Historical Area

This was the historically verified area of the first Mass in West Texas, under the expedition of Vasquez de Coronado and Fray Juan de Padilla in 1541.

Pros and Cons of Historical Easements, Designations and Districts



**St. John
Church,
Hermleigh
1908**

**First Church in the Diocese.
Preserved as it was originally built.**

Pros and Cons of Historical Easements, Designations and Districts

Needs for Repairs and/or Remodeling:

- 1. If you have gained the designation through age and historical significance then you are committed to maintain the structure to the period. This means that you must submit any repair or remodeling plans for approval to the designated agency in your State. They will determine if the materials are the same or a satisfactory replacement (i.e. – St. John, Hermleigh, window and door frames).**
- 2. But, if you have been designated to be of an architectural significance then you must meet #1; but also meet an exemplary model of preservation that displays architectural integrity, in other words it must be compatible with the original design and also meet accepted preservation practices. ****Be careful here******

Pros and Cons of Historical Easements, Designations and Districts



Mercy Retreat Center, Slaton, Texas 1929

This was an exposed fire escape in the original construction. After our Hermleigh experience, we performed the addition of the wall and roof before we made the request and only applied for first and second of the criteria.

Pros and Cons of Historical Easements, Designations and Districts



Our Lady of Mercy Hospital / Mercy Retreat Center

Original hospital entrance, but with new storm windows. Again, the work was done, and before requesting designation, the name was changed to avoid a use change request.

Pros and Cons of Historical Easements, Designations and Districts



St. Elizabeth University Parish, Lubbock 1935

i.e. - Repairs to stained glass windows (inside and out) with protective glass; repairs to doors and new signage before application.

Pros and Cons of Historical Easements, Designations and Districts

Areas to examine before you proceed to request designation:

- 1. Have the building inspected by a professional, inside and out; roof, plumbing, electrical, structure, site...**
- 2. Determine the reason you wish the designation and, if it is not a currently used structure, whether the necessary repairs are warranted before the designation is made to avoid the extra examination by the agency.**
- 3. If you are going to repurpose the structure, have that done before the application to avoid having to make a use change request.**
- 4. Remove or protect all patrimony to an approved Diocesan site.**

Conclusion / Questions

**This concludes The American Institute of Architects
Continuing Education System Course.**

**At this time, the course participants are
free to ask questions.**

Provider: Conference for Catholic Facility Management (“CCFM”)

Provider Contact: Andy Guljas (317.525.7176)



Speaker: B. “Marty” Martin
Diocese of Lubbock (806.792.3943)

