



Historic Denver, Inc.

2019 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

CANDIDATE NAME: Michele Fry

1. **Do you have a personal connection with historic preservation?**

The Anderson House once located at 2329 Eliot was at one time a family home, owned by my aunt and uncle. They restored the home themselves, converting the house from a boarding home back to a single-family residence. They kept/restored the original architecture. My aunt died from breast cancer in 1987. Subsequently, my uncle sold the home to Mr. Sonnleitner in 1990. Upon learning Mr. Sonnleitner wanted to sell the home to developers who intended to demolish it, our family worked to preserve the home and keep the demolition from happening. We worked with Barbara Stocklin-Steely of CPD Planning Services to have the Denver Landmark Division Commission designate the home a Denver landmark which was an iconic example of Queen Ann architecture and steeped in Denver's history. Unfortunately, the family's efforts were not enough to save the home and city council voted to allow Mr. Sonnleitner to sell the home to a developer-demolishing it and put up townhomes in its place. Councilwoman Susman of District 5 was quoted as saying the home has a grizzly history because it was once owned by the attorney for Alfred Packer the noted Colorado cannibal of 1874, and therefore should be demolished.

2. **What is your favorite example in Denver (or in your district) where historic preservation, economic redevelopment and strategic reinvestment were successfully combined to create something new?**

The Molkery in Historic Montclair is my one of my favorite examples in City Council District 5 where historic preservation, economic development, and strategic reinvestment were successfully combined to create a new venue for events. The Montclair civic building was purchased by the City in 1908 as Denver's first community center - as noted in many different locations, the information located inside the Molkery and many, many websites. The Molkery was originally part of Baron Von Richtofen's

enormous estate in the east Denver area – as aside Baron Von Richtofen founded the Denver Chamber of Commerce, and was co-founder of Montclair at that time known as village east. The Molkery, in the past, was also a dairy barn, restaurant and a tuberculosis sanatorium. As a child the building would frighten me because I thought there were ghosts inside. As a student of History, I appreciate the history and the preservation of the original architecture/structure.

3. Neighborhoods across Denver are facing intense development pressure, and Denver's population is expected to increase in the decades to come. What specific ideas do you have to balance new infill with our historic built environment?

I don't see where ideas for balance are welcome with the current City Council. A midcentury modern was just torn down on 13th Avenue in District 5; it just needed a little TLC. I see a mentality of tear down the old and build the new with an any type of architecture plan. The history and character of one of the oldest areas in Denver is being erased. We who want to have a balance with preservation and new development are ignored. New houses/buildings could be built, keeping with the original design, instead random architecture is approved that sticks out like a sore thumb.

4. Identify the most critical historic preservation challenge/opportunity in your district. At-Large and Mayoral candidates: you can pick anywhere in the city.

The East Colfax corridor is a preservation challenge and development opportunity in District 5. Colfax is historically rich from the turn of the 20th Century west-east thoroughfare, to the post WWII travel boom seen in Denver because Denver was the halfway point between the East and West Coasts. Full of small business owners from the original family-oriented travel lodges (motels) with the great neon signs, to the later soda fountains and original McDonalds, the first in Denver with indoor seating that opened in 1962: which my grandmother frequented at least once a week-located at Colfax and Glencoe (District 5). This stretch of Colfax is largely undeveloped and is seen as a seedy part of Denver. Colfax has a history stretching back to the late 1800s. The next target for the developers needs to have a balance of history and new infill while protecting the long-standing small business owners and surrounding neighborhoods.

5. Please finish this sentence: "*I believe historic preservation in Denver can be strengthened by....*"

"I believe historic preservation in Denver can be strengthened by...." collaboration! For too long invested and interested parties have worked in silos, seemingly working against each other, instead of coming together to find common ground for all involved parties. The community voice needs to be heard and supported.

6. **Extra & Optional: We think historic preservation is most authentic as a personal and visual experience. *Show us in 1 or 2 images (no more than 2, please) what historic preservation means to you.***