

## Robin Reed

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**From:** Rebecca Palmer  
**Sent:** Friday, August 9, 2024 5:32 PM  
**To:** Megan Berner  
**Cc:** Carla Cloud; Melissa Hafey; Robin Reed; Ashley Turney  
**Subject:** RE: Lear Theater/First Church of Christ, Scientist CCCHP Request for Permission

Thank you very much for your inquiry, Megan:

We will review these documents and reply in a timely manner. Currently, a site visit is not necessary to complete this process. Thank you for the offer.

Fencing that is anchored in the ground is considered permanent and cannot be characterized as temporary. We welcome a review of alternative construction fencing proposals that will provide the security necessary for the resource and could be more aesthetically pleasing than the current fencing. Please do not hesitate to send us construction fencing alternatives that will meet the needs of the city and not be so permanent as to adversely affect the setting and feeling of this significant resource.

Best Regards,

**Rebecca Lynn Palmer**

Administrator/State Historic Preservation Officer  
Nevada State Historic Preservation Office  
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
901 South Stewart Street, Suite 5004  
(O): 775-684-3443 | (F) 775-684-3442  
[rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov)

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**From:** Megan Berner <BernerM@reno.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 9, 2024 11:10 AM  
**To:** Rebecca Palmer <rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov>  
**Cc:** Carla Cloud <ccloud@shpo.nv.gov>; Kristen Brown <knbrown@shpo.nv.gov>; Melissa Hafey <HafeyM@reno.gov>; Robin Reed <rreed@shpo.nv.gov>; Ashley Turney <TurneyA@reno.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Lear Theater/First Church of Christ, Scientist CCCHP Request for Permission

**WARNING** - This email originated from outside the State of Nevada. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Good morning, Rebecca,

Thank you for the response to our Request for Permission. We have compiled some responses to your questions and concerns and are hoping to continue a process to move forward with the proposed improvements to the area around the building. I know you received an email from our Assistant City Manager, Ashley Turney, inviting you to come out and tour the property to get a better sense of some of our concerns and reasons behind some of our requests. I'm unsure whether that invitation has been accepted as of yet. As Ashley mentioned, there is no timeline for an opening date of the building. These

proposed improvements/updates are fairly superficial when thinking about the work that would need to be done on the building itself to bring it up to code and open it to the public. While the Reno City Council allocated one-time ARPA funds for a historic structures report, landscaping, and securing the site (to include fencing), the City has no plans or identified funding sources for the future use of the building, bringing the interior up to code, or making the space accessible and usable to the public. Our main concerns, given the available funding that needs to be used quickly according to the ARPA funding guidelines, are to protect the building while it remains vacant and to ensure the public of our intention to try to find a way to eventually reactivate the space for the community. Following is additional information in response to your questions and concerns in the letter sent on June 24, 2024:

**CONCRETE STEPS AND LANDING:** The existing conditions in the images of these areas show damage that is due to failed patches from past repairs. Our designers and staff believe that replacing the concrete would be better as a long-term solution. This might be helpful to discuss on site and look at in person in order to determine whether repairing would suffice in lieu of full replacement.

**STAIR AND LANDING SITE WALLS:** There is no replacement or repairing of the walls unless there is damage during the removal and replacement of the stairs and landings. They are currently in good condition.

**HISTORIC HANDRAILS AT UPPER STEPS:** Currently, there are no proposed improvements to the upper handrails. They are out of the limit of work that the City determined and they will remain as is.

**NEW HANDRAILS AT CURVED LOWER STEPS:** The new handrails will measure 2'-9". The existing handrails at the upper steps measure 36" at the top and 37.5" at the lower end.

**LANDSCAPING:** We worked with the City Horticulturalist to come up with the landscaping plan. They worked with historic photographs in devising that plan. While specific plans could not be identified from historic photographs, the landscape heavily references historic photographs, specifically with columnar-formed plants at specific locations along the front of the building and the general form and density of plants. It was determined not to put trees in front of the entrance and no narrow evergreens at the corners of the buildings due to the impact on the building and the type of tree. We worked with the City horticulturalist to select plants which the City has had success with and that mirror the plant forms shown in historic photographs. Roses were used in the landscaping design due to their popularity during the time of the building's construction and the viburnum on either side of the stairs mimic plant forms seen in photographs. The design is heavily influenced by the architect's 1938 rendering and images from 1940 and 1945. Individual shrubs in the lawn near the building's front entrance were not included for ease of maintenance. The City advises against the use of cyprus or juniper. Boxwood is used as an alternative for the columnar form plants. They are slightly narrower but will have a similar structured effect. Trees were omitted from the interior of the fence, however street trees are used to mimic the effect outside the proposed fence.

**EXTERIOR LIGHTING:** Please see attached manufacturer's cut sheets depicting the proposed lights that will be installed at the site.

**EXTERIOR LIGHTING:** We are not proposing any repair or replacement of existing lighting on the building at this time. The only lighting being proposed is within the landscape and depicted in the site drawings.

**ADA RAMP:** See elevation attached.

CAMERAS: We are not including this in this request at this time.

WROUGHT IRON PERIMETER FENCE AND GATES: The City of Reno Code Enforcement requires the fencing of vacant structures when they have been abandoned for over 12 months and experience continuous nuisance activities such as graffiti, the presence of hazardous conditions such as homeless camps, solid waste, excrement, urine, break-ins, illicit drug use on-premises, and any other nuisance or criminal activity. Please see the code sections below. I underlined and bolded the applicable sections.

**Sec. 8.22.110. - Abandoned nuisances.**

No owner, occupant, agent, person associated with the property or anyone having charge or control of any property, building or premises within the city shall permit or allow the existence of an abandoned nuisance upon any property building, structure, or premises owned, occupied or controlled by them and shall be subject to the remedies and enforcement provisions of this chapter.

(a) An "abandoned nuisance" exists on any property where a building, structure, or any improvements are located on the property, the property has been vacant or **substantially vacant for 12 months or more** and:

- (1) Two or more abandoned nuisance activities exist or have occurred on the property during any 12-month period; or
- (2) A person associated with the property has caused or engaged in two or more abandoned nuisance activities during any 12-month period on the property or within 100 feet of the property.

(b) "Abandoned nuisance activity" means:

- (1) Instances of unlawful breaking and entering or occupancy by unauthorized persons;
- (2) **The presence of graffiti, debris, litter, garbage,** rubble, abandoned materials, inoperable vehicles or junk appliances, or **any nuisance per se;**
- (3) The presence of unsanitary conditions or hazardous materials;
- (4) **The lack of adequate lighting, screening, fencing or security;**
- (5) Indicia of the presence or activities of gangs;
- (6) Environmental hazards;
- (7) Violations of city codes, ordinances or other adopted policy; or

(8) Any other activity, behavior, conduct or condition defined by the governing body of the city to constitute a threat to the health, safety or welfare of the residents of or visitors to the city.

Also, The adopted International Property Maintenance Code Section 301.3 is applied to require property owners to secure the premises with fencing.

**Section 301.3 Vacant Structure and Land.**

Vacant structures and premises thereof or vacant land shall be maintained in a clean, **safe, secure, and sanitary condition as provided herein so as not to cause a blighting problem** or adversely affect the public health and safety.

In the past, several fires have been started inside the property—one leaving fairly significant damage to the floor in the lobby area. Windows are continuing to be broken as the construction fence provides only minimal security (it is chain-link and easy to climb over). Folks who gain access to the grounds shelter behind bushes and leave garbage behind (they have also started fires in the landscaping in the past). Our interest is in securing the property and preventing any further potential damage to the building.

Since there is no timeline as of yet for the use of the space and opening the building, it may sit as is for a number of years and we want to ensure that it is protected from vandalism. The City's intention is to create some momentum towards the eventual rehabilitation of the building and to possibly use the surrounding outdoor areas as a space for events and gatherings. The fencing will ensure that the building is safe and that the landscaping remains intact and clear of debris. It was selected to match the fencing at the neighboring property and because it is an appropriate style for the Lear, and because it provides the best security for keeping the property safe from damage. There are sections of the neighboring property's fencing that are at 6 feet high. The slatted style of the fence allows for good visibility through the fencing and does not obscure the view of the building beyond. We are proposing a fence at this height because a 4 foot fence would not keep people from accessing the property. The fencing is intended to be temporary.

Without the property being activated, the opportunities for break-ins and vandalism remain high. The construction fence is not aesthetically pleasing and creates a sense of neglect on the property. It is also continually damaged as in the attached photo, creating security concerns. The City is intending to activate the outside area as a way to utilize the space until plans for the building are made. The City intends to have the Historical Resources Commission and the public a part of that conversation once the historic structures report is completed and we have a better idea of what will be required to bring the building to a place that it can be opened to the public and converted into an appropriate use.

Please let me know if I can provide any further information.

Thank you,  
Megan



**Megan Berner, MA, MFA**

(She/Her/Hers)

*Arts & Culture Manager*

City Manager's Office

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**From:** Rebecca Palmer <[rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov)>

**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2024 2:30 PM

**To:** Megan Berner <[BernierM@reno.gov](mailto:BernierM@reno.gov)>

**Cc:** Carla Cloud <[ccloud@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:ccloud@shpo.nv.gov)>; Kristen Brown <[knbrown@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:knbrown@shpo.nv.gov)>; Melissa Hafey <[HafeyM@reno.gov](mailto:HafeyM@reno.gov)>; Frank Avera <[AveraF@reno.gov](mailto:AveraF@reno.gov)>; Robin Reed <[rreed@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:rreed@shpo.nv.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Lear Theater/First Church of Christ, Scientist CCCHP Request for Permission

Good afternoon, Megan:

The Nevada SHPO has reviewed the documents provided both on June 11 and May 13. Our comments are attached as a scan for your convenience. The hard copy letter will go out in the mail tomorrow.

Best Regards,

**Rebecca Lynn Palmer**

Administrator/State Historic Preservation Officer

Nevada State Historic Preservation Office

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

901 South Stewart Street, Suite 5004

(O): 775-684-3443 | (F) 775-684-3442

[rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov)

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**From:** Megan Berner <[BernierM@reno.gov](mailto:BernierM@reno.gov)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, June 11, 2024 8:23 AM

**To:** Kristen Brown <[knbrown@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:knbrown@shpo.nv.gov)>; Melissa Hafey <[HafeyM@reno.gov](mailto:HafeyM@reno.gov)>; Frank Avera <[AveraF@reno.gov](mailto:AveraF@reno.gov)>

Cc: Carla Cloud <[ccloud@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:ccloud@shpo.nv.gov)>; Rebecca Palmer <[rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov)>

Subject: Re: Lear Theater/First Church of Christ, Scientist CCCHP Request for Permission

**WARNING** - This email originated from outside the State of Nevada. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Good morning,

I wanted to check in on the status of this and see if you have any further feedback or are in need of more information. I have attached updated plans that have some additional information that may be helpful for this review. This includes the lighting on the building. We are not proposing to attach anything to the building at this time. All of the lighting will be placed in the landscaping.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Thank you,  
Megan

**Megan Berner, MA, MFA**

(She/Her/Hers)



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**From:** Kristen Brown <[knbrown@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:knbrown@shpo.nv.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 15, 2024 11:31 AM  
**To:** Megan Berner <[BernierM@reno.gov](mailto:BernierM@reno.gov)>; Melissa Hafey <[HafeyM@reno.gov](mailto:HafeyM@reno.gov)>; Frank Avera <[AveraF@reno.gov](mailto:AveraF@reno.gov)>  
**Cc:** Carla Cloud <[ccloud@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:ccloud@shpo.nv.gov)>; Rebecca Palmer <[rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Lear Theater/First Church of Christ, Scientist CCCHP Request for Permission

Hello Megan, thank you. We will review these materials and get back to you as soon as possible.

**Kristen Brown**

Comstock Preservation and History Officer

Comstock Historic District Commission

Nevada State Historic Preservation Office

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

P.O. Box 128 / 20 North E Street

Virginia City, Nevada 89440

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**From:** Megan Berner <[BernierM@reno.gov](mailto:BernierM@reno.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 13, 2024 3:47 PM  
**To:** Kristen Brown <[knbrown@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:knbrown@shpo.nv.gov)>; Melissa Hafey <[HafeyM@reno.gov](mailto:HafeyM@reno.gov)>; Frank Avera <[AveraF@reno.gov](mailto:AveraF@reno.gov)>  
**Cc:** Carla Cloud <[ccloud@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:ccloud@shpo.nv.gov)>; Rebecca Palmer <[rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Lear Theater/First Church of Christ, Scientist CCCHP Request for Permission

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Thank you for your feedback, Kristen. I have included an updated packet with some additional information as requested. I don't have everything you asked for just yet but I'd love to get moving on the other items—concrete, landscaping, fencing—if possible. We are still working on the lighting details but should have that information shortly.

Our office requires additional information. Please submit the following:

- A site plan that indicates where the new fencing and gates will be installed. [See attached site plans.](#)
- Drawings of the new fence, including elevations and details. If photographs of a similar fence are available, please submit those. [See attached site plans.](#)
- An estimate of how long this “temporary” fence will remain in place. [We estimate that the fence will be in place for 2-5 years, depending on progress with rehabilitating the building for adaptive reuse. Once there is consistent presence in the building, fencing for security purposes should no longer be needed.](#)
- A site plan indicating which concrete sidewalks and steps are proposed for repair or replacement. [See attached plans.](#)
- Labeled/captioned existing condition photographs of the areas where concrete repair or replacement will occur. [See attached.](#)
- For areas where concrete will be repaired instead of replaced, please submit the repair methodology. [See attached plans.](#)
- Confirmation that new concrete will be tinted to match any historic concrete nearby. [Yes, see attached plans.](#)
- Drawings of the proposed new handrails at the two terrace staircases. [See attached plans.](#)
- Detail photographs of the existing railings that the new terrace staircase railings are intended to match. [See attached.](#)
- Plan and elevation drawings of the proposed new ADA ramp, including handrail. [See attached plans. I do have some questions on whether it makes sense to construct this ADA ramp now without knowing what the use of the building will be and if this will be the best place for a ramp based on that. Do you have any thoughts?](#)
- Drawings indicating the location of existing lights that will be repaired. [Forthcoming.](#)
- Labeled/captioned photographs of the lights proposed for repair. [Forthcoming.](#)
- Repair methodology for the lights. [Forthcoming.](#)
- Drawings indicating the proposed location of security cameras. [Forthcoming.](#)
- Cut sheets or manufacturer website screenshots of the proposed security cameras. [Forthcoming.](#)
- Description of how the cameras will be installed (e.g., drilling into stucco, conduit hidden or visible). [Forthcoming.](#)
- Site plan showing proposed irrigation repair and/or expansion areas. [See attached plans.](#)
- Site plan and drawings indicating location of new outdoor electrical. [See attached plans.](#)
- A new scan of the proposal from Highline Electric. It is faint and blurry in both the hard copy and the PDF. [Attached.](#)
- Confirmation that the chain link fence has been in place, in some format, for approximately ten years. [According to Artown, the fence went up in 2016 so it has been in place for approximately 8 years.](#)



**Megan Berner, MA, MFA**

[\(She/Her/Hers\)](#)

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**From:** Kristen Brown <[knbrown@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:knbrown@shpo.nv.gov)>

**Sent:** Friday, March 29, 2024 1:49 PM

**To:** Megan Berner <[BernierM@reno.gov](mailto:BernierM@reno.gov)>; Melissa Hafey <[HafeyM@reno.gov](mailto:HafeyM@reno.gov)>; Frank Avera <[AveraF@reno.gov](mailto:AveraF@reno.gov)>

**Cc:** Carla Cloud <[ccloud@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:ccloud@shpo.nv.gov)>; Rebecca Palmer <[rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov)>

**Subject:** Lear Theater/First Church of Christ, Scientist CCCHP Request for Permission

Hello Melissa, Megan, and Frank,

Thank you for submitting the Lear Theater landscaping, electrical, ADA, fencing, and concrete proposal on March 21, 2024. Our office has reviewed it pursuant to the Commission for Cultural Centers and Historic Preservation (CCCHP) Covenants that expire on December 31, 2060.

Our office requires additional information. Please submit the following:

- A site plan that indicates where the new fencing and gates will be installed.
- Drawings of the new fence, including elevations and details. If photographs of a similar fence are available, please submit those.
- An estimate of how long this “temporary” fence will remain in place.
- A site plan indicating which concrete sidewalks and steps are proposed for repair or replacement.

- Labeled/captioned existing condition photographs of the areas where concrete repair or replacement will occur.
- For areas where concrete will be repaired instead of replaced, please submit the repair methodology.
- Confirmation that new concrete will be tinted to match any historic concrete nearby.
- Drawings of the proposed new handrails at the two terrace staircases.
- Detail photographs of the existing railings that the new terrace staircase railings are intended to match.
- Plan and elevation drawings of the proposed new ADA ramp, including handrail.
- Drawings indicating the location of existing lights that will be repaired.
- Labeled/captioned photographs of the lights proposed for repair.
- Repair methodology for the lights.
- Drawings indicating the proposed location of security cameras.
- Cut sheets or manufacturer website screenshots of the proposed security cameras.
- Description of how the cameras will be installed (e.g., drilling into stucco, conduit hidden or visible).
- Site plan showing proposed irrigation repair and/or expansion areas.
- Site plan and drawings indicating location of new outdoor electrical.
- A new scan of the proposal from Highline Electric. It is faint and blurry in both the hard copy and the PDF.
- Confirmation that the chain link fence has been in place, in some format, for approximately ten years.

Please note that the east elevation is not a secondary elevation. Due to the way Ralston/Riverside wraps around the building, the setback along the east with lawn and landscaping, the clear public view toward the east façade, and its relation to the adjacent park (now historic in its own right), the east elevation is considered one of the primary elevations. Care must be taken to design an ADA ramp that is sensitive to the building's architecture. Pursuant to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, it should be compatible, yet differentiated.

Thank you, please let me know if you have questions or wish to discuss.

**Kristen Brown**

Comstock Preservation and History Officer

Comstock Historic District Commission

Nevada State Historic Preservation Office

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[knbrown@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:knbrown@shpo.nv.gov)



**From:** Megan Berner <[Bernerm@reno.gov](mailto:Bernerm@reno.gov)>

**Sent:** Thursday, March 21, 2024 2:52 PM

**To:** Rebecca Palmer <[rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov)>

**Cc:** Kristen Brown <[knbrown@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:knbrown@shpo.nv.gov)>; Melissa Hafey <[HafeyM@reno.gov](mailto:HafeyM@reno.gov)>; Frank Avera <[AveraF@reno.gov](mailto:AveraF@reno.gov)>

**Subject:** CCCHP Grant Program - Permission to Undertake Structural or Visual Alterations

**WARNING** - This email originated from outside the State of Nevada. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Good afternoon,

We have completed the form to request permission/consultation with SHPO on our proposed work on the First Church of Christ, Scientist/Lear Theater. The hard copy is in the mail and I have attached a digital copy to this email. We look forward to hearing from you and working with you all on this.

Best,  
Megan

**Megan Berner, MA, MFA**

[\(She/Her/Hers\)](#)

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