

Ridglea Theater gets Fort Worth's highest historic designation

Posted Monday, Jan. 10, 2011 0 comments [Print](#) [Share](#) [Reprints](#)

BY SANDRA BAKER

sabaker@star-telegram.com

The Ridglea Theater on Camp Bowie Boulevard was awarded Fort Worth's highest historic designation Monday, which can lead to significant incentives for redevelopment but also make tearing the building down more difficult.

The Cultural and Historic Landmarks Commission, on a 5-0 vote, approved the owner's request for the "highly significant endangered" designation. The commission also approved the designation for the adjoining two-story office and retail building.

"It's been kicking around for a while," said Ames Fender, the commission chairman. "It's coming to a happy conclusion."

The designation carries a 20 percent federal historic tax credit for developers who follow Interior Department guidelines for historic preservation.

Jerry Shults, owner of the Gas Pipe smoke-shop chain, bought the 60-year-old, single-screen theater in December from Dallas-based FixFunding. Shults was not at Monday's meeting.

The Texas Historical Commission has ruled the properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, Jerre Tracy, executive director of Historic Fort Worth, told commission members.

"Needless to say, this is a happy day for all of the citizens of Fort Worth," Tracy said.

The theater is on Historic Fort Worth's list of most endangered places.

Shults is scheduled to reopen the theater as a music venue in September, but he says full renovations could take up to two years.

FixFunding acquired the property in a bankruptcy in October 2009. A year later, Bank of America backed out of a deal to buy the property.

The bank wanted to tear down parts of the structure, a plan that preservationists and neighbors objected to.

The City Council approved the use of the "highly significant endangered" designation in 1995.

Sandra Baker, 817-390-7727

Read more: <http://www.star-telegram.com/2011/01/10/2758770/ridglea-theater-gets-fort-worths.html#ixzz1AkA2DvLH>