

ITEM: 720 Grant Street Probable Cause Determination

APPLICANT: David Finamore
720 Grant Street
Louisville, CO 80027

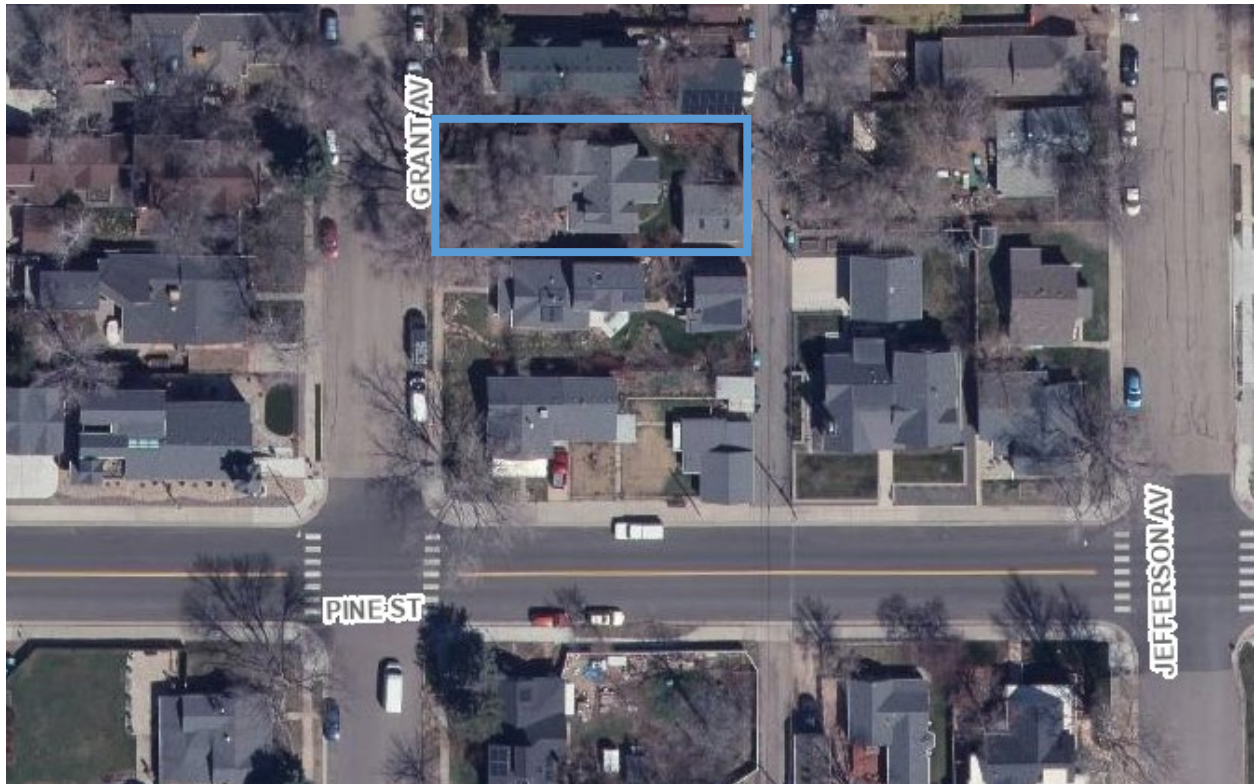
OWNER: David Finamore
720 Grant Street
Louisville, CO 80027

PROJECT INFORMATION:

ADDRESS: 720 Grant Street
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Lots 6-7, Block 7 Pleasant Hill
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: ca. 1904

REQUEST: A request to find probable cause for a landmark designation to allow for funding of a historic structure assessment for 720 Grant Street.

VICINITY MAP:



SUMMARY:

The applicant requests finding probable cause for landmark designation to allow for funding of a historic structure assessment for 720 Grant Street. Under Resolution No. 17, Series 2019, a property may be eligible for reimbursement for a historic structure assessment (HSA) from the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) if the Historic Preservation Commission finds *“probable cause to believe the building may be eligible for landmarking under the criteria in section 15.36.050 of the Louisville Municipal Code.”* Further, *“a finding of probable cause under this Section is solely for the purposes of action on the pre-landmarking building assessment grant request, and such finding shall not be binding upon the HPC, City Council or other party to a landmarking hearing.”*

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Information from Gigi Yang, Louisville Historical Museum

The history of 720 Grant highlights two notable families in Louisville History. The earliest history of the Robinson and Ferguson families that spans 46 years and the role of George Robinson in significant historical events during the Long Strike and the murder of Victor Helburg. Also notable is the second phase of the house as a parish for the United Pentecostal Church in the 1950s-1960s.

The earliest deed for Lots 6 & 7, Block 7 of the Pleasant Hill Addition is from Orrin Welch to John George Robinson in 1904. Robinson, who went by George (1872-1927) was born in Northumberland, England and came to the US in 1878 as a young boy with his parents. Robinson was the Town Marshal when Deputy Marshal and Justice of the Peace, Victor Helburg was shot and killed by Frank Balistrere in 1915. George Robinson was also involved in the United Mine Workers and the fight at the Hecla Mine that occurred in April of 1914, shortly after the Ludlow Massacre. By all accounts, George Robinson was well-loved and respected in the Louisville community. He was a member of the Knights of Pythias, the Methodist Church, and the Boulder Elks Lodge. His wife, Margaret Ferguson, was also actively engaged in the social life of the town with an interest in domestic life and charity. Throughout the 1920s, she led sewing projects, made hats, and dress forms to aid rural communities. Most of the Robinson children lived in Louisville until the 1940s. After their deaths, the children sold 720 Grant to Thomas Davies and Rachel Ann Penry Davies in 1950.

In 1952, the United Pentecostal Church or Apostolic Church purchased the house at 720 Grant from the Thomas Davies estate for use as a parsonage. The first pastor to live at 720 Grant was William LaRue who came from Pueblo, CO with his wife and 18-month-old son. In 1975, the United Pentecostal Church sold the property to Tony Evanoff, Jr. and Pamela Sue Domenico Evanoff.

The Evanoffs only lived at 720 Grant for two years before moving to Rock Springs, WY. However, Tony Evanoff's grandparents (Stephen and Eva Drake Evanoff) came from Bulgaria and had lived in Louisville since 1922. Pamela Sue Domenico moved from Longmont to Louisville as a teenager in the 1960s. Pamela and Tony married in 1967

while Tony served in the Navy during the Vietnam War. After the war, the Evanoffs were active in the Louisville community with Tony chairing the Fall Festival in 1974. In 1977, Tony and Pamela Evanoff transferred ownership of 720 Grant to Robin Wille and Steven Alman. Robin Wille sold the property to the current owner, David Finamore, in 1983.

Please see the attached Social History Report for a more detailed history.



Photo of 720 Grant Street, Boulder County Assessor Card from 1948.



Street view of 720 Grant Street (August 2025)



Street view of 720 Grant Street (August 2025)

ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY:

720 Grant is not included in the PaleoWest "100 Architectural Inventories for the City of Louisville" (2023). "Stories in Places: Putting Louisville's Residential Development in Context" (2018) identifies 720 Grant as a National Folk (Victorian) House Architectural Type constructed in 1904. No further analysis is included on the building. The National Folk (Victorian) Architectural Type is described as:

National folk house forms were associated with railroads and worker housing in general (McAlester 2017:134–147). They were popular from the 1870s to 1930s and are the dominant residential type in Louisville from that time. Housing forms and styles were strongly influenced by the presence of railroads, in that railroads

facilitated the transport of construction materials...Folk Victorian houses, which are National folk houses that have Victorian stylistic elements added to them, are common in Louisville....The gabled roofs of standard National houses are usually relatively lower-pitched in comparison with those of Folk Victorian houses, with which they could potentially be confused...

The structure appears to have maintained the original building footprint since the Boulder County Assessor Card from 1948. Building permit records include a new roof in 2019, pergola and patio added in 2009, a 2-story addition (800 sq ft) and unfinished basement (941 sq ft) added in 1999, and new fence added in 1997.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE ANALYSIS AND CRITERIA FOR FINDING PROBABLE CAUSE FOR LISTING AS LOCAL LANDMARK:

Under Resolution No. 17, Series 2019, a property may be eligible for reimbursement for a historic structure assessment (HSA) from the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) if the Historic Preservation Commission finds “*Probable cause to believe the building may be eligible for landmarking under the criteria in section 15.36.050 of the Louisville Municipal Code.*” Further, “*A finding of probable cause under this Section is solely for the purposes of action on the pre-landmarking building assessment grant request, and such finding shall not be binding upon the HPC, City Council or other party to a landmarking hearing.*”

Staff analysis of the criteria is as follows:

<i>CRITERIA</i>	<i>FINDINGS</i>
<i>Landmarks must be at least 50 years old</i>	720 Grant was constructed ca.1904 making it approximately 121 years old. Staff find the age of the structure meets the criteria.

<i>Landmarks must meet one or more of the criteria for architectural, social or geographic/environmental significance</i>	<u>Social Significance</u> - <i>Exemplifies cultural, political, economic, or social heritage of the community.</i> The social history of 720 Grant includes association with: • Housing for community members that contributed to Louisville through mining, social, and cultural activities, and significant historical events. Staff find that the structure meets the cultural and social heritage of the community and there is probable cause to meet the criterion for social significance. <u>Architectural Significance</u> – <i>Represents a built environment of a group of people in an era of history that is culturally significant to Louisville.</i> • The house consists of Folk Victorian style architecture, reflecting the mining history and immigrant community at the time. Staff find that the location of the structure does have probable cause to meet the criteria for architectural significance in its current form.
<i>Landmarks should meet one or more criteria for physical integrity</i>	<u>Physical Integrity</u> - <i>Shows character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the community, region, state, or nation.</i> • Interesting building character shaped by its Folk Victorian style. <i>Remains in its original location, has the same historic context after having been moved, or was moved more than 50 years ago.</i> • 720 Grant appears to have maintained its historic footprint from 1948, possibly earlier. Staff find probable cause that the structure meets the criteria for physical integrity.

PRESERVATION MASTER PLAN:

The [Preservation Master Plan](#) was adopted in 2015 and includes goals and objectives for the historic preservation program. A finding of probable cause would meet the following goals and objectives:

Goal #3: Encourage voluntary preservation of significant archaeological, historical, and architectural resources

Objective 3.3 - Encourage voluntary designation of eligible resources

Objective 3.4 - Promote alternatives to demolition of historic buildings

Goal #5: Continue leadership in preservation incentives and enhance customer service

Objective 5.1 - Promote availability of Historic Preservation Fund grants and other incentives

FISCAL IMPACT:

The finding of probable cause allows for a grant of up to \$7,500 for a Historic Structure Assessment (HSA) from the Historic Preservation Fund.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends a finding of Probable Cause under the criteria in section 15.36.050 of the LMC, making the properties eligible for the cost of a historic structure assessment. The current maximum amount available for an HSA is \$7,500. Staff recommend HPC approve a grant not to exceed \$7,500 to reimburse the costs of a historic structure assessment.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Application
2. 720 Grant Street - Social History

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM INTAKE FORM

ADDRESS

720 Grant Ave.

APPLICATION TYPES

- ☒ Historic Structure Assessment
- ☐ Landmark
- ☐ Historic Preservation Fund Grant
- ☐ Historic Preservation Fund Loan
- ☐ Alteration Certificate
- ☐ Demolition Review

APPLICANT INFORMATION

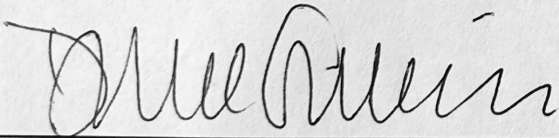
Name: DAVID FINAMORE

Address: 720 GRANT AVE

Telephone: 720 - 891 - 9901

Email: dave.finamore@gmail.com

Applicant Signature:



NOTES

OWNER INFORMATION (if not applicant)

Name: Sawe

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Owner Signature:

CERTIFICATIONS:

By initialing below, I certify that:

- I understand that any grants provided by the City may be counted as income for tax purposes. DF
- I am the owner of the property at the address above, or have been authorized by the owner to make an application. DF
- I understand that only the property owner may be reimbursed for any and all grants.

DF



720 Grant Ave. History

Legal Description: LOTS 6-7 BLK 7 PLEASANT HILL

Year of Construction: 1904

Summary: The history of 720 Grant highlights two notable families in Louisville History. The earliest history of the Robinson and Ferguson families that spans 46 years and the role of George Robinson in significant historical events during the Long Strike and the murder of Victor Helburg. Also notable is the second phase of the house as a parish for the United Pentecostal Church in the 1950s-1960s.

Development of the Pleasant Hill Addition

The subdivision in which this house is located, Pleasant Hill Addition, was platted in 1894. The subdivision was developed in the name of Orrin Welch, the half-brother of Charles C. Welch. Charles Welch was the person most responsible for the establishment of Louisville in 1878 after he established the first coal mine in what would become Louisville in 1877. Orrin Welch is not known to have ever lived in Colorado, and it is Charles C. Welch who is thought to have been the de facto developer.

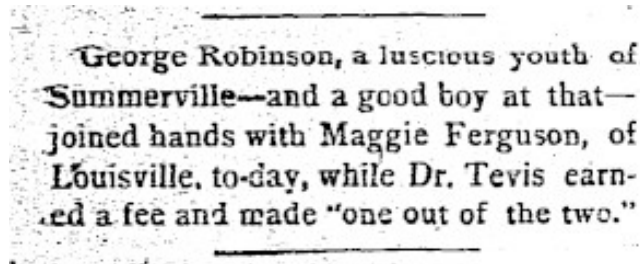
Robinson Family Ownership, 1904-1950

The earliest deed for Lots 6 & 7, Block 7 of the Pleasant Hill Addition is from Orrin Welch to John George Robinson in 1904. Robinson, who went by George (1872-1927) was born in Northumberland, England and came to the US in 1878 as a young boy with his parents, Benjamin Robinson (1852-1900) and Ann Whitman Robinson (1852-1908). George was the oldest of six siblings (David b. 1878, Jane b. 1882, Benjamin b. 1887, Henry b. 1888, and Helen b. 1894). Based on where his siblings were born, it appears that the Robinson family moved around to Michigan, West Virginia, Missouri, and Mexico, before coming to Louisville in 1892.

In Louisville, George's father worked as a coal miner until his early death in 1900 at age 48. His mother Ann, continued to live in Louisville with her two oldest children, David and Jane, until her death in 1908.

The 1910 census shows George's two brothers Benjamin and Henry living together and taking care of their youngest sister Helen, age 12.

Between 1892 and 1896, George Robinson spent time between Louisville and working at mine camps in Summerville, CO – a gold mining camp northeast of Boulder. He must have already met Margaret Ferguson in Louisville and they married in 1896. A humorous announcement of their engagement appeared in the August 3, 1896 issue of the Boulder Daily Camera.



Margaret was the daughter of James R. Ferguson (1835-1892) and Jane Brown Ferguson (1838-1911), Scottish immigrants who came to the US in 1870. They first lived in Illinois with their four oldest children (Janet b. 1860, Robert b. 1864, Jane b. 1867, and Maxwell b. 1868). Margaret (1875-1948) and her younger sister Sarah (b. 1879) were born in Illinois. The Ferguson family moved to Louisville around 1888 when Margaret was 13 years old. Her father, James Ferguson worked as a coal miner in Illinois and then in Louisville until his death in 1892. Margaret and her siblings put down roots in Louisville and descendants of the Ferguson family still live in Louisville today.

In 1904, when George Robinson purchased Lots 6 & 7 Block 7, The Robinsons had one daughter, Eliza (b. 1897). George's uncle, William Robinson had purchased the neighboring Lots 8 & 9 the same year and his parents lived nearby in the Little Italy neighborhood. Margaret also had brothers living just a few blocks away on Grant and Jefferson.

It is assumed that George and Margaret Robinson built the house at 720 Grant in 1904. The Drumm's Wall Map of 1909 shows a structure on the property and the 1948 Boulder County Assessor card notes the year of construction as 1904.

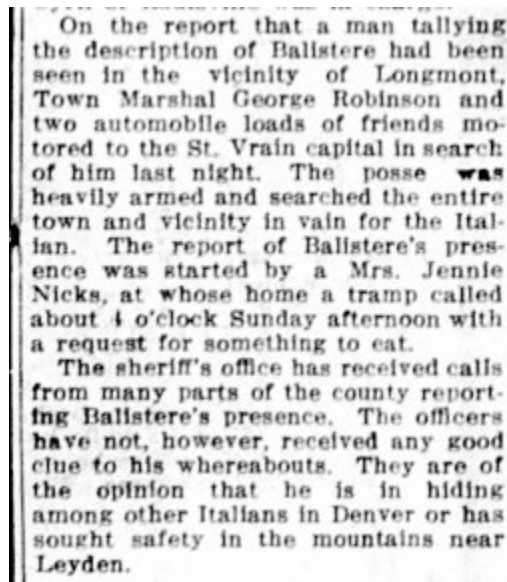


Drumm's Wall Map of 1909 showing Lots 6 & 7, Block 7 of the Pleasant Hill Addition.

The Robinsons eventually had five children in total. Georgina [Georgene] (b. 1905), Benjamin (b. 1907), Jane (b. 1912), and Margaret Ann (b. 1913) all would have grown up in the house at 720 Grant. During their early residency, the house was identified with different addresses including being listed as Spruce St. in the 1910 Census and as 227 Grant in the 1916 City Directory before the address numbering system changed in the late 1930s.

In the early years of their marriage, George, like his father, brothers, and brothers-in-law worked as a coal miner. Perhaps the difficult work and poor working conditions prompted him to seek other employment. In 1912 he ran for a law enforcement position in Louisville and from 1912-1921 he held various titles including Constable, Special Policeman, Night Marshal, and Town Marshal. These were tumultuous times in Louisville and newspaper accounts show Robinson was busy addressing crimes large and small from the theft of shingles and lumber to disorderly drunkenness and stabbings during saloon fights.

Most notably, Robinson was the Town Marshal when Deputy Marshal and Justice of the Peace, Victor Helburg was shot and killed by Frank Balistrere in 1915. The murder occurred in the middle of the day on the corner of Pine and Main, after an altercation between Helburg and Balistrere over a vendor permit. George Robinson, as Town Marshal, organized the search for Balistrere who had escaped immediately after the shooting. The search continued the following days as sightings of Balistrere were reported in Longmont and Denver. Robinson is noted as sending a heavily armed posse to Longmont which failed to locate Balistrere.



On the report that a man tallying the description of Balistrere had been seen in the vicinity of Longmont, Town Marshal George Robinson and two automobile loads of friends motored to the St. Vrain capital in search of him last night. The posse was heavily armed and searched the entire town and vicinity in vain for the Italian. The report of Balistrere's presence was started by a Mrs. Jennie Nicks, at whose home a tramp called about 4 o'clock Sunday afternoon with a request for something to eat. The sheriff's office has received calls from many parts of the county reporting Balistrere's presence. The officers have not, however, received any good clue to his whereabouts. They are of the opinion that he is in hiding among other Italians in Denver or has sought safety in the mountains near Leyden.

November 1, 1915 *Boulder Daily Camera* article.

George Robinson was also involved in the United Mine Workers and the fight at the Hecla Mine that occurred in April of 1914, shortly after the Ludlow Massacre. His exact involvement is unclear, but he was charged with conspiracy and murder. However, as general support in Louisville was overwhelmingly in favor of the striking miners, he retained a positive standing in the town that did not impact his election to office as constable or marshal.



**WOMEN JEER BOB EULER
AS HE MAKES ARRESTS**

Two to three hundred citizens of Louisville turned out last night to wave their handkerchiefs at Night Watchman George Robinson, Hugh Mitchen, Tom Horn, Herman Bieber and Joseph Jasko, strikers, who were brought to this city by Undersheriff Robert Euler and Deputy B. O. Smith to give bond for appearance at trial on a charge of conspiracy in connection with the attack on the Hecla mine. George Robinson, who stands charged with murder as well as conspiracy, was released on his own recognizance. The bonds of the others, at \$1,000 each, were furnished by Louis Eberharter, mayor of Louisville. Human beings dressed in skirts are said to have hurled epithets at Undersheriff Euler and threatened him with a rotten eggging if he came back with warrants for any of them.

Photo of George Robinson and Boulder Daily Camera article from May 20, 1914 on the Hecla Mine.

By all accounts, George Robinson was well-loved and respected in the Louisville community. He was a member of the Knights of Pythias, the Methodist Church, and the Boulder Elks Lodge. He died in 1927 from Bright's Disease – an affliction of the kidneys. His funeral was described in the Boulder Daily Camera as “one of the largest ever held in that town.”

Margaret Ferguson was also actively engaged in the social life of the town with an interest in domestic life and charity. Throughout the 1920s, she led sewing projects, made hats, and dress forms to aid rural communities. She continued to live at 720 Grant after George's death until 1943 when she moved to Denver to live with her daughter Georgina and be closer to the rest of her children who had also moved to Denver. Margaret passed away in 1948.

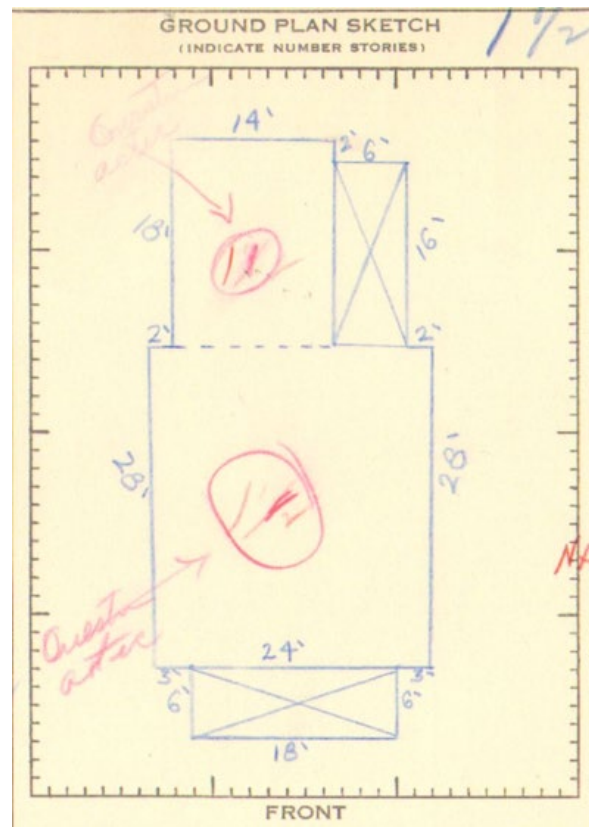
Most of the Robinson children lived in Louisville until the 1940s. The daughters, Eliza, Georgina, Jane, and Margaret Ann took part in women's clubs, the Methodist Church, and aid projects during WWII. Georgina and Margaret became teachers. Georgina taught various grades at the Louisville Grade School from 1933-1943. Margaret taught at Mandalay in Broomfield and in Erie schools. She died at age 31 in 1944.

Benjamin Robinson worked for the railroads in Denver and served in north Africa during WWII. He was tragically injured during the war and lost his eyesight.

After the deaths of George and Margaret Robinson, their children sold 720 Grant to Thomas Davies and Rachel Ann Penry Davies in 1950.



1948 Assessor photo of 720 Grant, the year of Margaret Robinson's death.



Floorplan for 720 Grant from the 1948 Assessor Card.

Thomas and Rachel Ann Davies Ownership, 1950-1951

The Davies purchased 720 Grant when they were in their sixties and both passed away after only a year, in 1951. Thomas and Rachel Ann were Welsh immigrants who came to the US in 1913 and 1920. Thomas worked as a coal miner in the Pluto and Eagle mines in Canfield and Erie. They had four daughters. Thomas' brother John Davies lived in Marshall and that may have brought them to the Louisville area. The Davies are noted as participating in a large musical Welsh celebration of St. David's Day (the patron saint of Wales) in 1925. In December of 1951, Rachel died from a stroke while Thomas was already in the hospital from an illness. Thomas died five days later.

United Pentecostal Church Ownership, 1952-1975

In 1952, the United Pentecostal Church or Apostolic Church purchased the house at 720 Grant from the Thomas Davies estate for use as a parsonage. The Apostolic Church itself was built in 1946 and was located roughly a block away at 833 La Farge. More information about the Apostolic Church can be found in the December 2024 building report on 833 La Farge.

The first pastor to live at 720 Grant was William LaRue who came from Pueblo, CO with his wife and 18-month-old son. LaRue lasted less than a year during which he organized a youth rally and the shed on the property burned down while the family was burning trash in the ash pit. A series of pastors then followed with most staying between 3-4 years. They led youth rallies, Sunday schools, and partnered with other churches and businesses on community events and fundraisers. Membership in the Pentecostal Church was reported as 1.9% of the Louisville population in 1955, which was approximately 35 people.

Other pastors mentioned in the Louisville Times who lived at the parsonage include:

- 1961 – William Ray Lowe
- 1964 – Lloyd Moreau
- 1968 – John Harris

In 1975, the United Pentecostal Church sold the property to Tony Evanoff, Jr. and Pamela Sue Domenico Evanoff.

Recent Ownership

The Evanoffs only lived at 720 Grant for two years before moving to Rock Springs, WY. However, Tony Evanoff's grandparents (Stephen and Eva Drake Evanoff) came from Bulgaria and had lived in Louisville since 1922. Pamela Sue Domenico moved from Longmont to Louisville as a teenager in the 1960s. Pamela and Tony married in 1967 while Tony served in the Navy during the Vietnam War. After the war, the Evanoffs were active in the Louisville community with Tony chairing the Fall Festival in 1974. In 1977, Tony and Pamela Evanoff transferred ownership of 720 Grant to Robin Wille and Steven Alman. Robin Wille sold the property to the current owner, David Finamore, in 1983.



Current Boulder County Assessor photo of 720 Grant.

The preceding research is based on a review of relevant and available online County property records, census records, oral history interviews, Louisville directories, and Louisville Historical Museum maps, files, and obituary records.