# Staff Summary Report

Tempe

**To: Mayor and City Council**
**Through: City Manager**

**Agenda Item Number** 14
**Meeting Date:** 02/15/01

**SUBJECT:** **FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH #HPO-2001.03**

**PREPARED BY:** DeeDee ($D^2$) Kimbrell, Planner I (480-350-8331)

**REVIEWED BY:** Dave Fackler, Development Services Manager (480-350-8333)

**BRIEF:** This is the second public hearing for First Congregational Church for designation as a historic property/landmark at 101 East Sixth Street.

**COMMENTS:** **PLANNED DEVELOPMENT (0406)** Hold the second public hearing for **FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH** (First Congregational Church, property owner) for designation as a historic property/landmark located at 101 East 6th Street. The following approval is requested from the City of Tempe:

> **#HPO-2001.03** Designation as a Historic Landmark for the First Congregational Church on approximately .97 net acres at 101 East 6th Street.

**Document Name**: 20010215devsrh06 Supporting Documents: Yes

**SUMMARY:** The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is recommending that the Council designate the First Congregational Church as a Tempe Historic Property / Landmark (and listing on the Tempe Historic Property Register), located at 101 East Sixth Street. The church was established in 1898 and is constructed of masonry and the exterior is covered with cement plaster. The HPC approved the proposal on November 9, 2000 by a 4-0 vote. The Planning Commission approved the historic property/landmark designation by a 7-0 vote on their consent agenda at their meeting on January 9, 2001. City Council held the first public hearing on February 8, 2001. Staff recommends approval. To date, there has been no public input.

**RECOMMENDATION:**
Staff – Approval of designation
HPC – Approval of designation
Planning Commission – Approval of Designation
Public – None to date

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. List of Attachments
2-3 History & Facts / Description / Comments
4. Location Map
5. Historic Designation Nomination Form
6. HP staff report
7. Photographs

**HISTORY & FACTS:**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1889. | This church was constructed in 1889 on the southeast corner of Sixth Street and Myrtle Avenue. |
| January 09, 2001. | Planning Commission voted 7-0, on their consent agenda, to approve the designation of The First Congregational Church as a Historic Property/Landmark. |
| January 25, 2001. | City Council introduced this request. |
| February 8, 2001. | City Council held the first public hearing. |

**DESCRIPTION:** Owner – First Congregational
Applicant – Ronald Wilson, City of Tempe, Mark Vinson
Total site area – ± .97 acres

**COMMENTS:** At their public meeting of November 9, 2000, the Historic Preservation Commission recommended that The First Congregational Church located at 101 East Sixth Street be designated as a Tempe Historic Property – Landmark.

This church was constructed in 1889 on the southeast corner of Sixth Street and Myrtle Avenue. Through the years there have been renovations and additions to the church. The first church building was built in what was known as the "Akron Plan." This style of building was developed in Akron, Ohio and was very popular in the west from 1870 to about 1925. It had a 50 foot high tower / steeple and with a front entrance on 6th Street. There was a seating capacity of 300; the auditorium was 40 x 80 feet (the meeting room was always referred to as the auditorium and never as the sanctuary).

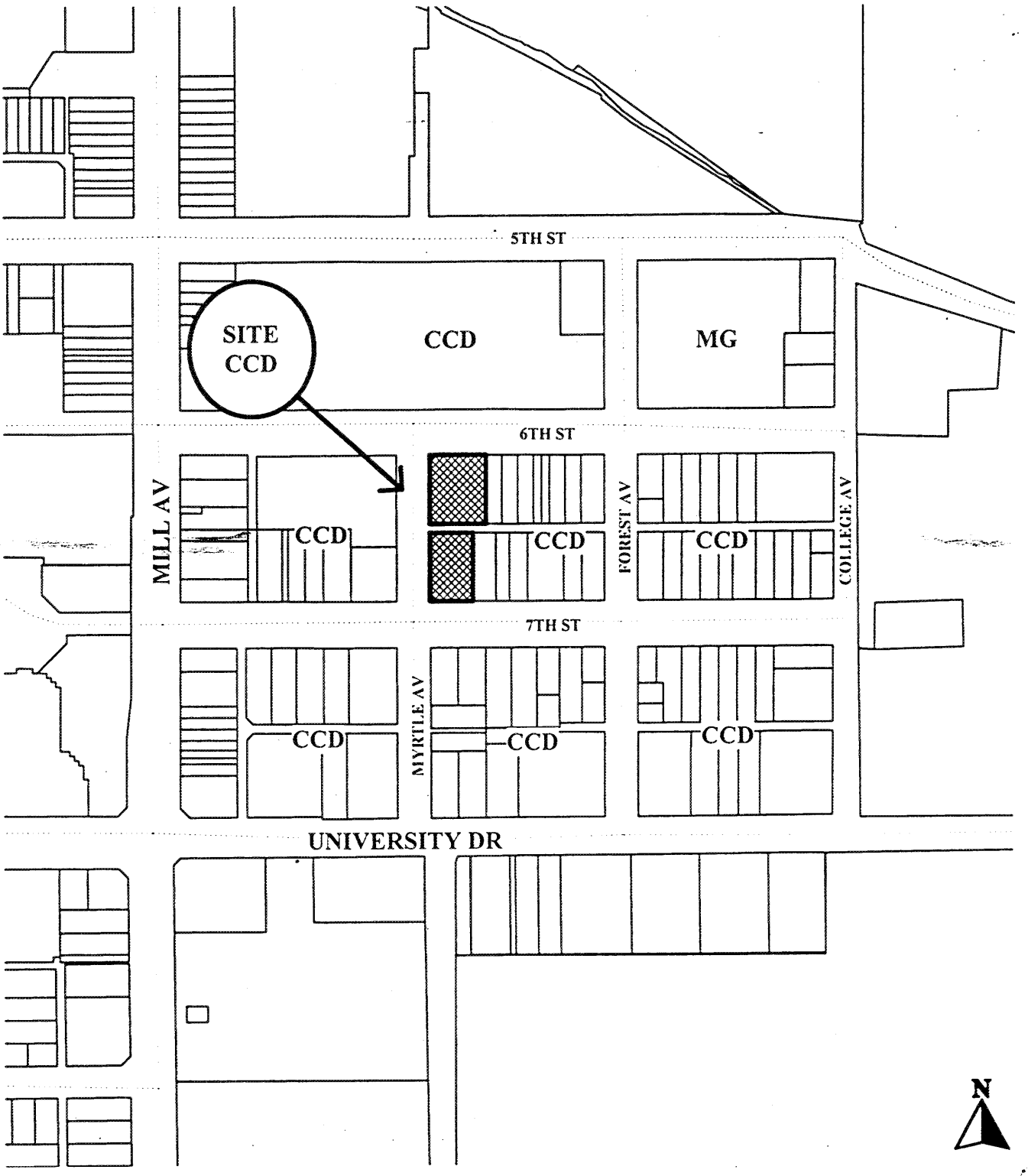
The First Congregation Church of Tempe was dedicated on May 21, 1899. In 1927, a church parlor was added which served as Sunday school rooms, kitchen and dining room, and a general meeting place for social gatherings. The exterior of the building was covered with cement plaster, the walls were strengthened, and cathedral glass was installed in the windows. Sometime between 1928 and 1929 the steeple was removed from the structure. In 1948, a new social hall was built, later named "Prior Hall" in honor of the Reverend Cecil L. Prior (Pastor from 1942-1963). This structure incorporated the existing walls on the east and west side of the building. In addition to the social hall, classrooms were built on the south side of the church, which was referred to as the rear, since the entrance was on 6th Street. In early 1953, a new sanctuary was built using a combination of old brick from the original building joined with new brick. The entrance to the church was moved to the Myrtle Avenue frontage and a new steeple was placed atop the structure. The original bell installed in 1899 was subsequently placed in the 1953 steeple. The bell continues to be rung every Sunday morning. The architect of the 1953 sanctuary, and possibly the 1948 additions, was Kemper Goodwin, FAIA, noted Tempe architect.

Although, there have been numerous renovations to the church, a substantial portion of the existing complex was built prior to 1948, with the sanctuary as the most recent addition in 1953. Despite little evidence of the earlier structures, the 1948 and 1953 portions retain most of their original fabric. Sensitive modifications, including an entry to Prior Hall from the south, were made in the 1990's.

Staff believes The First Congregational Church to be significant, as a landmark, for its presence in Downtown Tempe since 1898. It houses the oldest church congregation on the same site in Tempe. Planning Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, and staff recommend that The First Congregational Church be designated as an official Tempe Historic Landmark. To date, there has been no public input.

Tempe

| FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH | HPO-2001.03 |
|---|---|

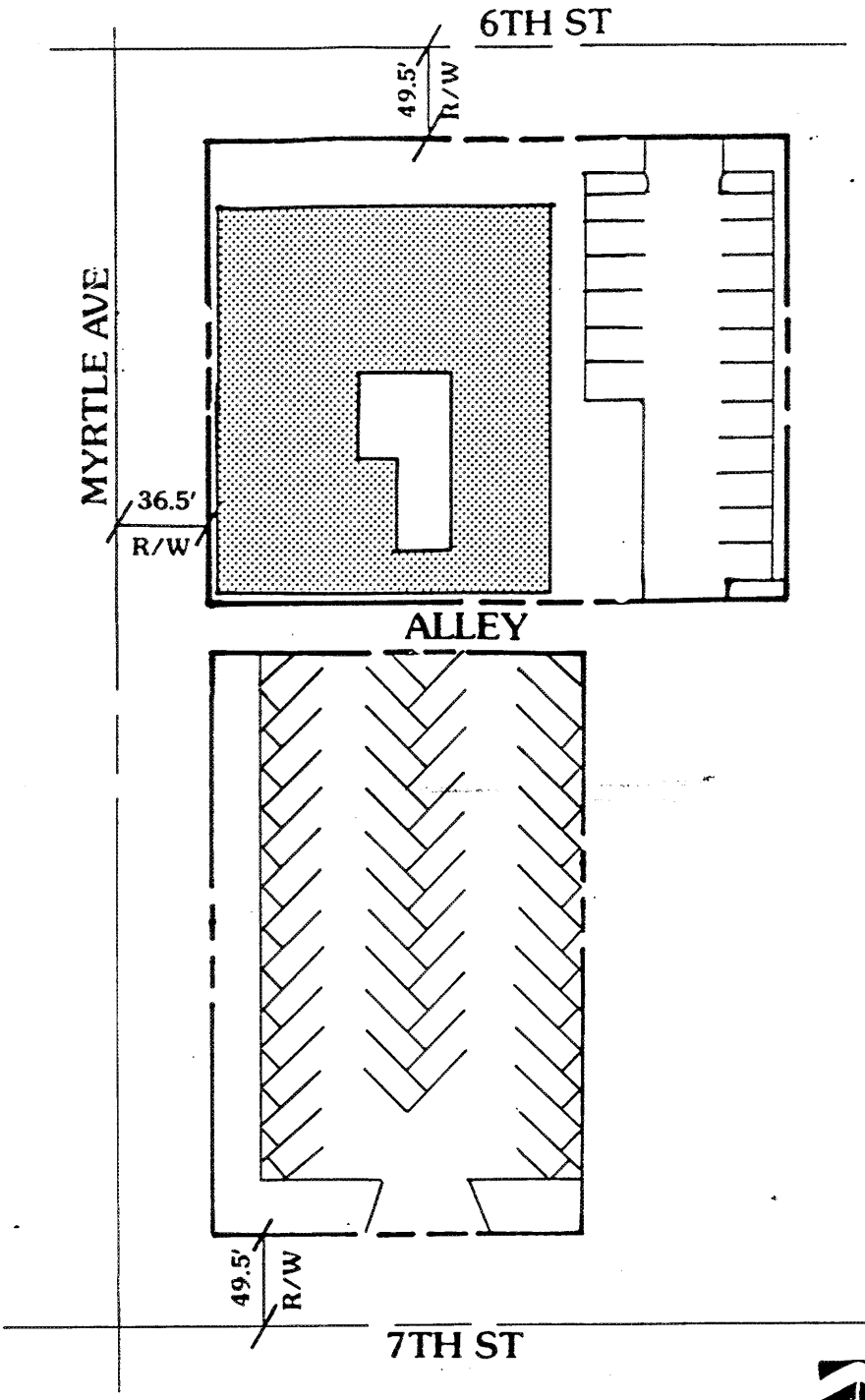



Location Map SEE OTHER SIDE FOR MORE INFORMATION

# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH | HPO-2001.03

## SYMBOL(S):

EXISTING BUILDING




Request

## PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

This is a notice for a public hearing for **FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH** (First Congregational Church, property owner) for designation as a historic property located at 101 East 6th Street. The following approval is requested from the City of Tempe:

**#HPO-2001.03** Designation as a Historic Property for the First Congregational Church on approximately

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# HISTORIC DESIGNATION NOMINATION FORM

Present, Commo[illegible] Proposed Name

~~First Congregational Church~~
of Tempe

Property Location (Address or Boundaries)

101 East Sixth Street
Tempe, AZ 85281

Historic Name

First Congregational Church

Date of Construction / Source of Date

1898-1956

For Sta[illegible]se Only

Received: 22 SEPT 2000 / [illegible] HPO-2001-0[illegible]
DSD#: HPO # 2000.60
Hearings/Approvals*:
HPC: 9 NOV 00
P & Z:
Council:
REASIGNED 2001 NUMBER FOR PROCE[illegible]

* Reviews with other impacted entities (Boards, Commissions, Neighborhoods, etc.) should be scheduled prior to initial public hearing

Legal Description (Subdivision Name, Lot and Block)

Assessor's Tax Parcel Number(s)

Existing Historic Designation (check if any)

☐ National Register _____ (Date Listed) ☐ State Register _____ (Date Listed) ☐ Tempe Survey # _____

Present Function or Use

Church

Summary of Historic Function or Use (please continue on additional sheet if necessary)

First Congregational Church has been in continous use as a church in Downtown Tempe since 1892

Statement of Significance (refer to Designation Criteria in Historic Preservation Ordinance)

First Congregational Church has been on the corner of Sixth and Myrtle since 1898.

Classification (check one)

☐ Property (Building or Structure) ☐ Archaeological Site ☐ District ☑ Landmark

Ownership Information

First Congregational Church
Owner Name

Tempe, AZ 85281
Address

101 East Sixth Street
City State Zip

(480) 967-2275
Phone

[signature] 9-21-00
Signature Date

Applicant Information (if different from ownership)

First Congregational Church
Owner Name

101 East Sixth Street
Address

Tempe, AZ 85281
City State Zip

(480) 967-2275
Phone

Signature Date

Historic Preservation Officer
◆
City of Tempe
Development Services Department
P.O. Box 5002
Tempe, Arizona 85280
◆
(480) 350-8028/8579 fax
www.tempe.gov/historicpres

City of Tempe

A CHECKLIST OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NECESSARY FOR NOMINATION IS INCLUDED ON THE BACK OF THIS APPLICATION FORM. PLEASE INCLUDE THESE ITEMS WITH THE NOMINATION FORM.

rev: 7/00

# Staff Report

## to the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)

By: Sherri Lesser, Planner II

Thru: Mark Vinson, Historic Preservation Officer (HPO)

Meeting Date: 9 November 2000
Agenda Item #: III
DSD Project Review #: HPO-2000.60 — HPO-2001.03
REASSIGNED 2001 NUMBER FOR PROCESSING AT COMMISSION & COUNCIL

Re: Historic Landmark Property Designation: The First Congregational Church 101 East Sixth Street

### Background/Status

An application (see attached) for the designation of the above-referenced property as a Tempe Historic "Landmark" Property (and listing on the Tempe Historic Property Register) was submitted by the property owner, First Congregational Church, C. Ronald Wilson, Pastor. The application has been reviewed by the Historic Preservation Officer and all requirements for notification, posting and advertisement, as set forth in Chapter 14A "Historic Preservation" of the Tempe City Code, have been met and a public hearing set. The present function of the property is a church. The property is currently zoned CCD, Central Commercial District, and is identified as "mixed-use" in General Plan 2020. The Southeast Quadrant Plan and the Downtown Redevelopment Concept Plan 2020 call for the present church complex to be preserved, with potential alterations to the parking areas.

### History

The original First Congregational Church was built in 1899 on the southeast corner of Sixth Street and Myrtle Ave. Through the years there have been renovations and additions to the church. The first church building was built in what was known as the "Akron Plan." This style of building was developed in Akron, Ohio and was very popular in the west from 1870 to about 1925. It had a 50 foot high tower/steeple and with a front entrance on 6th Street. There was a seating capacity of 300; the auditorium was 40 x 80 feet (the meeting room was always referred to as the auditorium and never as the sanctuary). The First Congregational Church of Tempe was dedicated on May 21, 1899. In 1927, a church parlor was added which served as Sunday school rooms, kitchen and dining room, and a general meeting place for social gatherings. The exterior of the building was covered with cement plaster, the walls were strengthened, and cathedral glass was installed in the windows. Sometime between 1928 and 1929 the steeple was removed from the structure. In 1948, a new social hall was built, later named "Prior Hall" in honor of the Reverend Cecil L. Prior ( Pastor from1942-1963). This structure incorporated the existing walls on the east and west side of the building. In addition to the social hall, classrooms were built on the south side of the church, which was referred to as the rear, since the entrance

2a. It is found to be of exceptional significance and expresses a distinctive character, resulting from:

- It is reflective of the city's cultural, social, political or event significant in local, state or national history.
- It represents an established and familiar visual feature of an area of the city, due to a prominent location or singular physical feature.

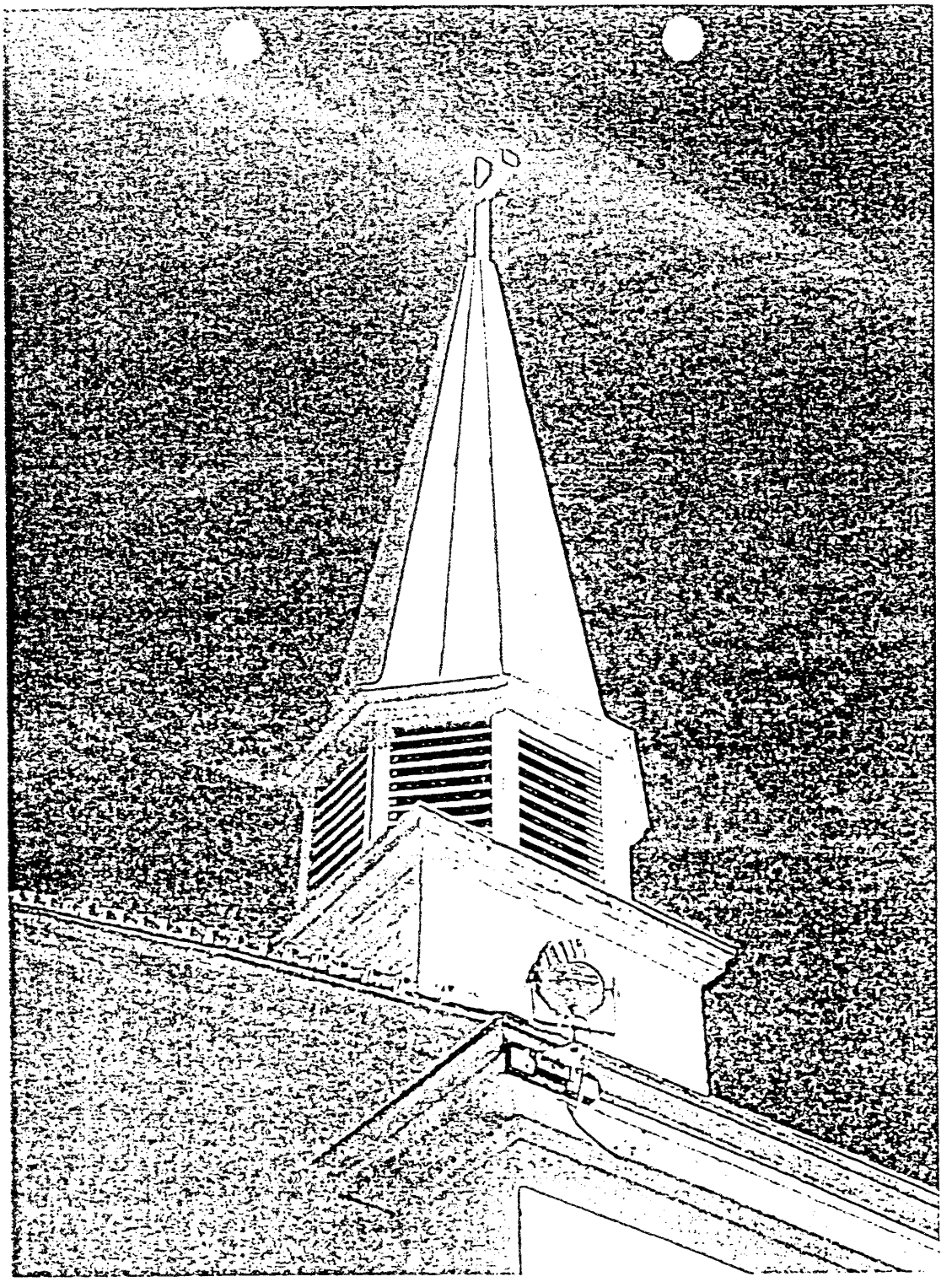
3. If it has achieved significance within the past fifty years, it shall be considered eligible for designation as a landmark if it is an integral and critical part of an historic district or demonstrates exceptional individual importance by otherwise meeting or exceeding the criteria specified in paragraphs (1) or (2) of this subsection above. At such time as a landmark becomes fifty (50) years old, it will automatically be reclassified as an historic property.

**Recommendation(s):**
Historic Preservation staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the nomination and recommend to the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council that the property be designated as a Tempe Historic Property, under the landmark provision.

Note: Per Chapter 14-A of the Tempe City Code, the application, if approved by HPC, will be forwarded to the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) for public hearing and action.

references: Tempe Multiple Resource Update, March 1997
Church History Book

attachments: application
vicinity map
site plan
photographs



**HPO #2000.60**

1. **First Congregational Church**
2. 101 East Sixth Street, Tempe, AZ, 85281
3. Eric M. Hansen, photographer
4. October 2000
5. photo courtesy of Tempe Redevelopment File Archives
6. detail of steeple, facing northeast

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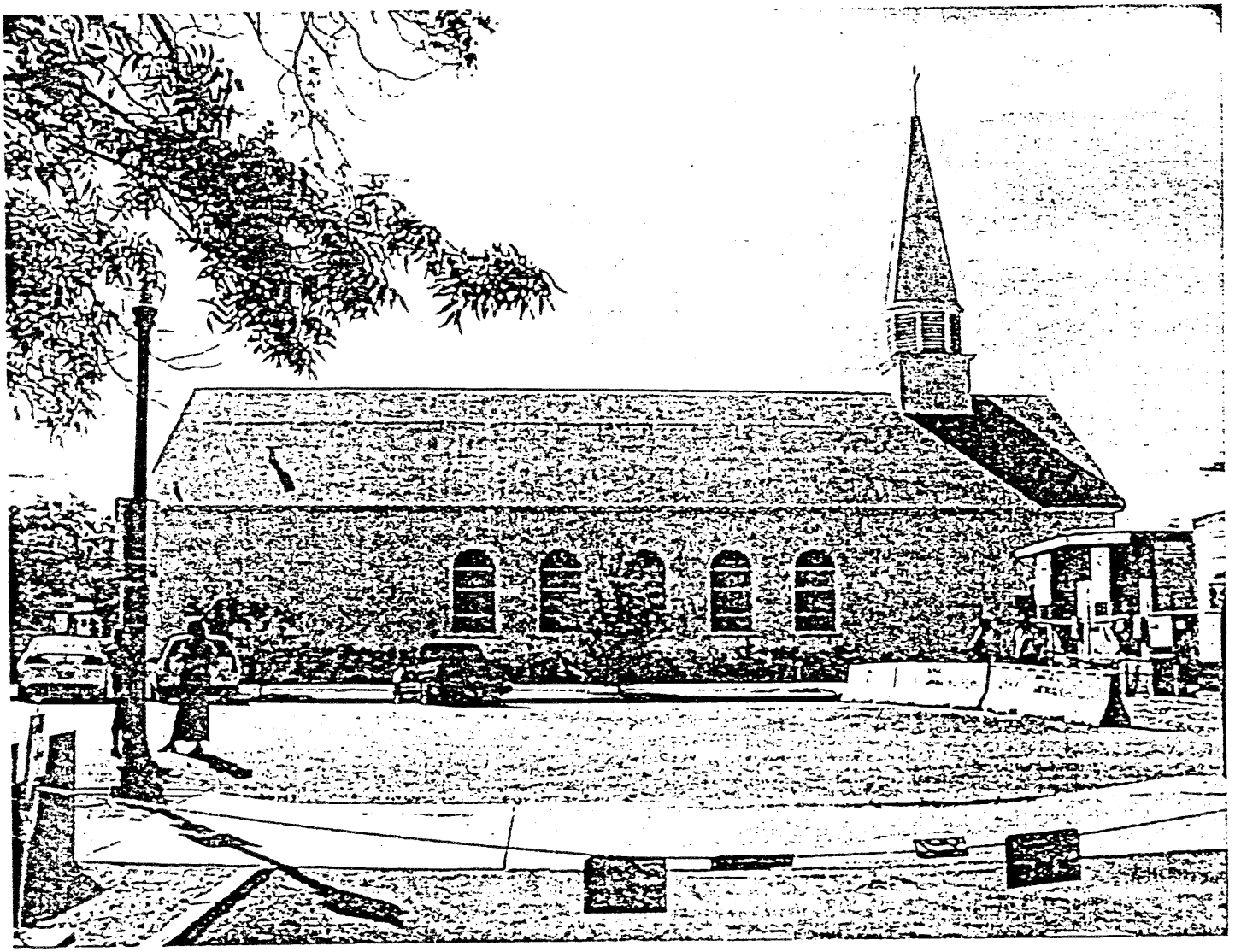

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1. **First Congregational Church**
2. 101 East Sixth Street, Tempe, AZ, 85281
3. Eric M. Hansen, photographer
4. October 2000
5. photo courtesy of Tempe Redevelopment File Archives
6. north elevation, facing south

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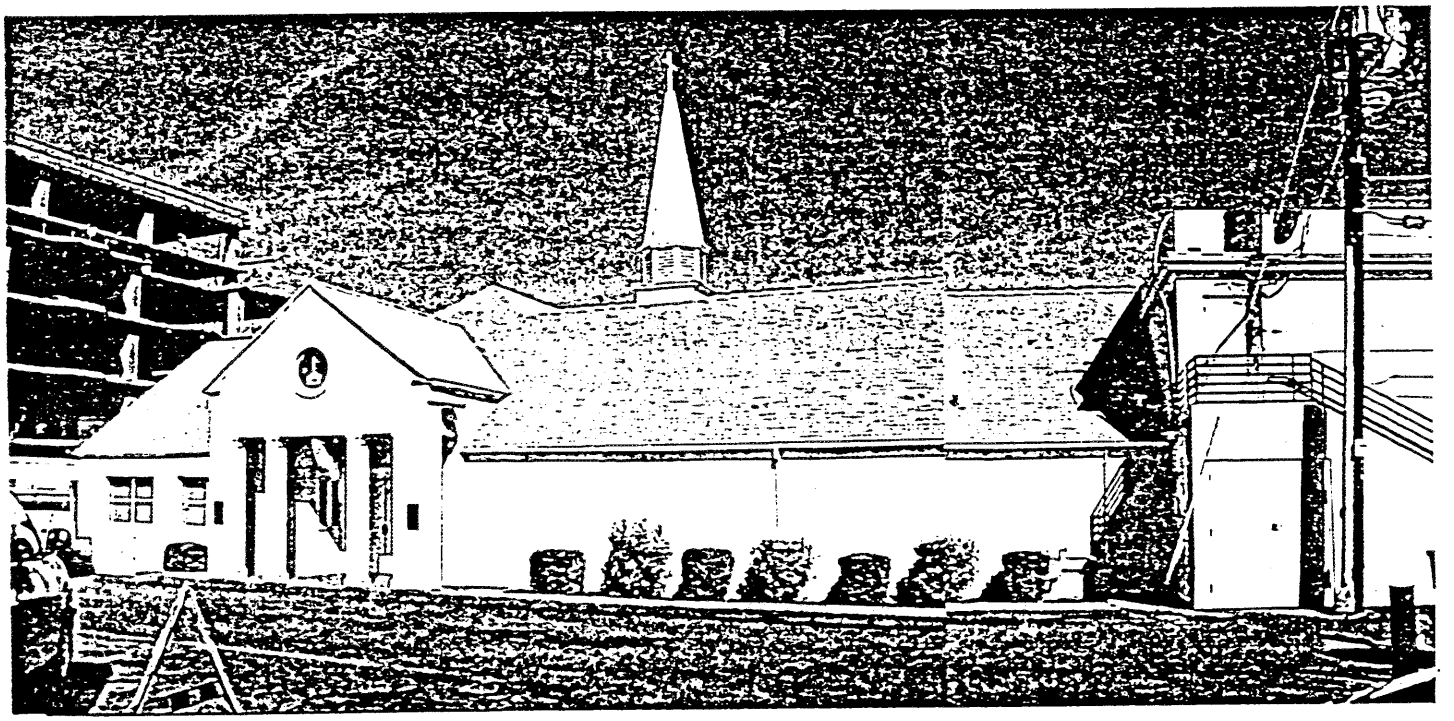

**HPO #2000.60**

1. **First Congregational Church**
2. 101 East Sixth Street, Tempe, AZ, 85281
3. Eric M. Hansen, photographer
4. October 2000
5. photo courtesy of Tempe Redevelopment File Archives
6. south elevation, facing north

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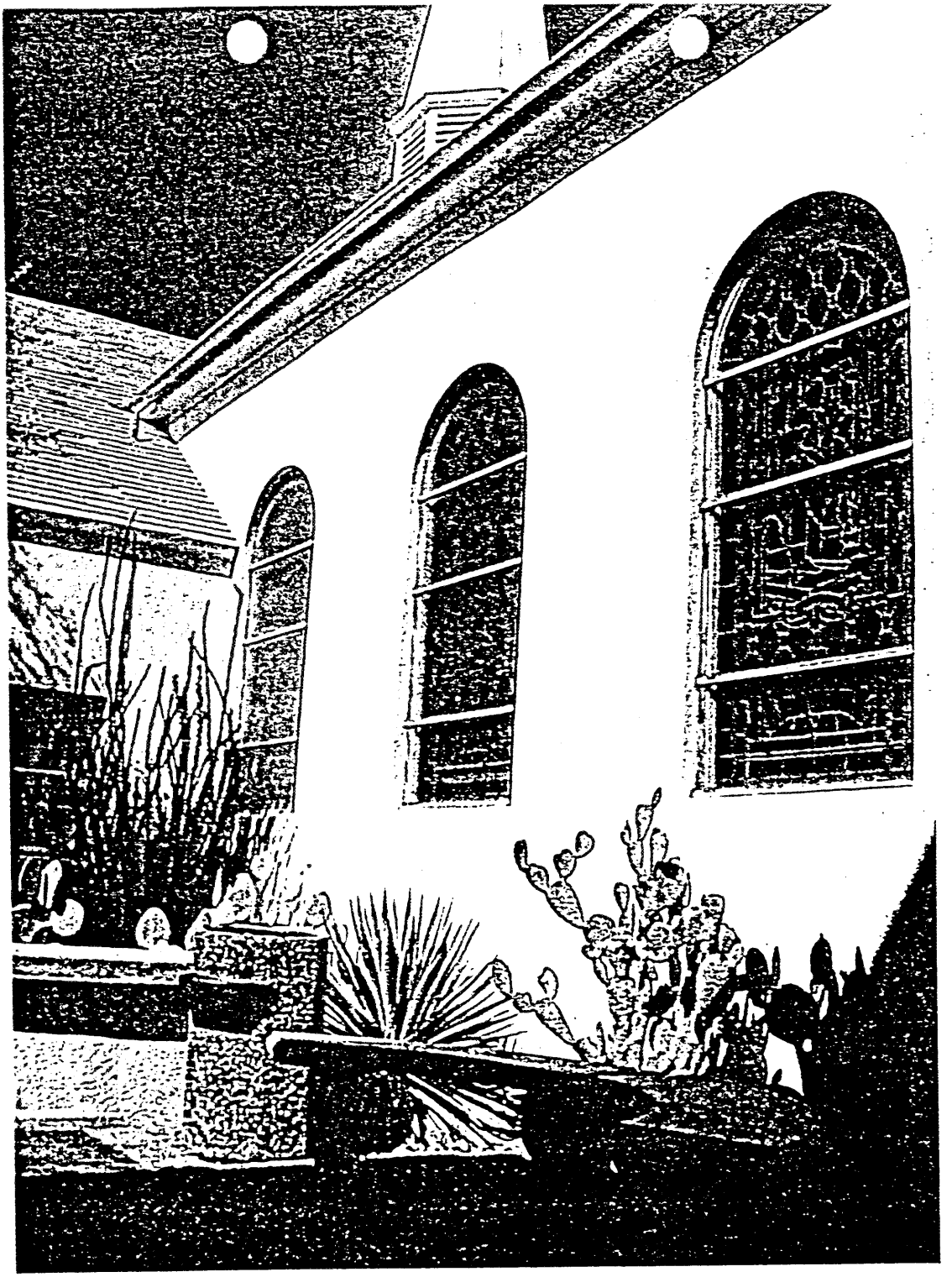

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1. **First Congregational Church**
2. 101 East Sixth Street, Tempe, AZ, 85281
3. Eric M. Hansen, photographer
4. October 2000
5. photo courtesy of Tempe Redevelopment File Archives
6. interior courtyard, facing northwest

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