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## **Feed and Grain stands Building avoids demolition for now; owners will appeal before City Council**

**By Rachel Carter**

*Reporter-Herald Staff Writer*

The 115-year-old Loveland Feed and Grain building will stand — as long as the Historic Preservation Commission's decision stands.

During a meeting Thursday night, the commission unanimously voted to deny the request of owners Dean and Betty Anderson to raze the building.

“As much as (historic preservation) is about ordinances, this is about vision,” said Martin Janssen, commission chairman. “It’s about what a community has been and what a community can be.”

Although it wasn't the decision the Andersons wanted, they were happy not to endure another delay by the commission, which already put off a decision last month.

“I'm glad they voted,” said 75-year-old Dean, adding that he and Betty will appeal the decision to the Loveland City Council.

Supporters who have rallied in the past month to save the downtown landmark at 130 W. Third St. said they will appear before the council with the same arguments to save the Feed and Grain.

“Hopefully the same and stronger,” said Loveland resident Erin McLaughlin, who has led efforts to save the granary. “The endearment is nice, but I think we need to come back with even more professional input.”

The whole situation started in late January, when the Andersons applied to tear down the building, at the request of developer Gary Hassenflu.

Hassenflu, president of Garrison Cos. in Prairie Village, Kan., has an option to buy the site for \$392,000.

Hassenflu originally planned to turn the granary into an apartment complex.

But Hassenflu says the project isn't financially possible, and he's out of options to redevelop the property. He now wants to demolish it to build from the ground up.

Residents who want to save the building called Hassenflu's plans into question Thursday night.

They argued that apartments are not the right use for the building, one reason Hassenflu's renovation plans didn't qualify for historic preservation grants and tax credits.

Many also argued that no one seriously considered other options — such as an art center, offices, retail shops or a restaurant.

“Garrison (Cos.) blindsided the Loveland community with this request,” said resident Tiffany Zerges. “Up to this point, we believed the company was doing a great thing for trying to save the building.”

Several residents spent the past month developing a plan they hope will work: raise money to buy the building from the Andersons for \$400,000.

The group wants to raise \$100,000 in donations from the community and ask the Loveland City Council for another \$100,000. That \$200,000 would serve as a cash match for a possible grant from the State Historical Fund.

“Yes, we are dreamers, we do have a vision, we do have a dream, but there’s a reality to it as well; it can happen,” McLaughlin told the commission. “We’re not just a disorganized grass-roots effort making a bunch of ruckus.”

Because the Feed and Grain building is structurally sound, commission members unanimously denied the Andersons’ request to tear it down.

But city code allows property owners to ask for an exemption claiming “economic hardship” to allow demolition anyway. Commission members denied that as well.

“We can’t just let it go quietly into the night,” Janssen said during the meeting. “We would be remiss if we did.”

Although he has good humor about the situation, Dean Anderson feels duped by the process.

The Andersons received historic designation for the building on the local historic register in February 2005. Loveland’s historic preservation program is voluntary — but once in, it’s not easy to get out.

“I didn’t want to go through all this,” he said. “If you step into this, you’re in it forever.”

With public notice requirements, the earliest that City Council members could consider the Andersons’ appeal would be at the April 18 council meeting.

Loveland Feed and Grain owner Dean Anderson, right, addresses Loveland Historic Preservation Committee members Martin Janssen, left, and Gregg Ault during a meeting Thursday night in the City Council Chamber.