



# Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission

## Commissioner Resources





## **Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission Commissioner Resources**

Note: additional materials are available on the Village website and at Village Hall.

### **Contents:**

1. Maps (including local and national historic districts)
2. Landmarks List
3. Article Establishing the Historic Preservation Commission
4. Rules of Procedure for the Historic Preservation Commission
5. Frank Lloyd Wright and Prairie School of Architecture Historic District
6. Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District
7. Gunderson Historic District
8. History of Historic Preservation in Oak Park
9. Architectural Review Guidelines, including (but not limited to):
  - Appendix C: All Requirements P13
  - Appendix F: Historic Preservation Ordinance



## Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission

# Maps



*Pleasant & Euclid 1961 (Village photo)*



# Historic Landmarks Map

Village of Oak Park, IL

## Historic Districts

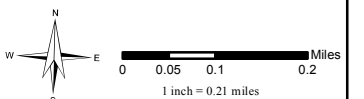
- █ Frank Lloyd Wright Historic Dist.
- █ Gunderson Historic Dist.
- █ Ridgeland - Oak Park Historic Dist.

## Landmarks

Landmarks
1 Frank Lloyd Wright Home & Studio 428 Forest St Chicago Avenue
2 John Farson House (Pleasant Home) 217 Home Avenue
3 Pilgrim Congregational Church 460 Lake Street
4 Unity Temple 875 Lake Street
5 Ernest Hemingway Birthplace Home 339 N. Oak Park Avenue
6 Plaza Hotel 123 S. Marion Street
7 Harry S. Adams House 710 Augusta Street
8 Rollin Furbeck House 515 Fair Oaks Avenue
9 Hills-DeCaro House 313 Forest Avenue
10 Thomas Gale House 1027 Chicago Avenue
11 George Furbeck House 223 N. Euclid Avenue
12 Oak Park & River Forest Day Nursery 1139 Randolph Street
13 Charles Roberts House 321 N. Euclid Avenue
14 Roberts Building 300-304 N. Grove Avenue/ 818 Erie Street
15 Odd Fellows Hall 812-818 Harrison Street
16 Albert & Kittie Ernst House 1023 Wenonah Avenue
17 Oak Park Conservatory 615 Garfield Street
18 Park Grove & Park View Manor 173-181 N. Grove Avenue
19 Bishop Quarter School Addition 655 Lake Street
20 C.A. Sharpe House (Dole/Cheney Mansion) 220 N. Euclid Avenue
21 Poley Building 408-410 S. Austin Boulevard
22 Harold C. Lewis House 950 Columbian Avenue
23 Andreas Brisch House 701 S. East Avenue
24 George and James Tough House 1045 Wesley Avenue
25 Margaret Morse House 1038 Fair Oaks Avenue
26 Albert Schneider House 553 N. Marion Street
27 Dorothy Manor Apartments 424-426 S. Austin Boulevard
28 First United Methodist Church 324 N. Oak Park Avenue
29 Maze Branch Library 845 Gunderson Avenue
30 Howard W. Jenkins House 500 Linden Avenue
31 Dr. Henry Bernhardt Cottage 705 S. East Avenue
32 Charles W. Ellis House 625 S. Oak Park Avenue
33 Boulevard Arcade Building 1033 South Boulevard
34 Cicero Fire House No. 2 129 Lake Street
35 Robert Parker House 1019 Chicago Avenue
36 Gustaf and Fride Benson House 1139 Woodbine Avenue
37 Linden Apartments 175-181 Linden Avenue
38 Charles Schwein House 639 Fair Oaks Avenue
39 Edward and Caroline McCready House 231 N. Euclid Avenue
40 Russell Wallace House 178 N. Euclid Avenue
41 Charles S. Castle House 647 Linden Avenue
42 Joseph D. Everett House 228 Forest Avenue
43 Chester Filcraft House 845 Chicago Avenue
44 Paul Blatchford House No. 1 250 Forest Avenue
45 William A. Douglass House 317 N. Kenilworth Avenue
46 Nineteenth Century Club 178 Forest Avenue
47 Rutherford-Dodge House 308 N. Oak Park Avenue
48 Vernon W. Skiff House 633 N. East Avenue
49 Charles E. Matthews House 432 N. Kenilworth Avenue
50 Harlem Office Building 1515 N. Harlem Avenue
51 John D. Caldwell House 130 S. East Avenue
52 Charles W. Helder House 629 Fair Oaks Avenue
53 Freeman Landon House 700 S. Lombard Avenue
54 George and Mary Sheppard House 217 S. Humphrey Avenue
55 Rankin-Hemingway House 639 N. Oak Park Avenue
56 William J. Ehlers Flats 241 S. Elmwood Avenue
57 Edwin H. Ehrwin House 410 N. Kenilworth Avenue
58 George L. Smith House 743 Columbian Avenue
59 Charlton H. Catlin Flats 209-211 S. Elmwood Avenue
60 Andreas Brisch House no. 1 745 S. East Avenue
61 Purcell-Yager House 303 Forest Avenue
62 Edward B. Kittle House 636 Fair Oaks Avenue
63 Walter S. Gerts House 200 S. East Avenue
64 I.M. and Fannabell Fixman House 1010 Fair Oaks Avenue
65 Charles Roberts Stable 317 N. Euclid Avenue

## Transportation

- CTA-Stations
- Blue Line
- Green Line
- I-290
- P-R Public ROW

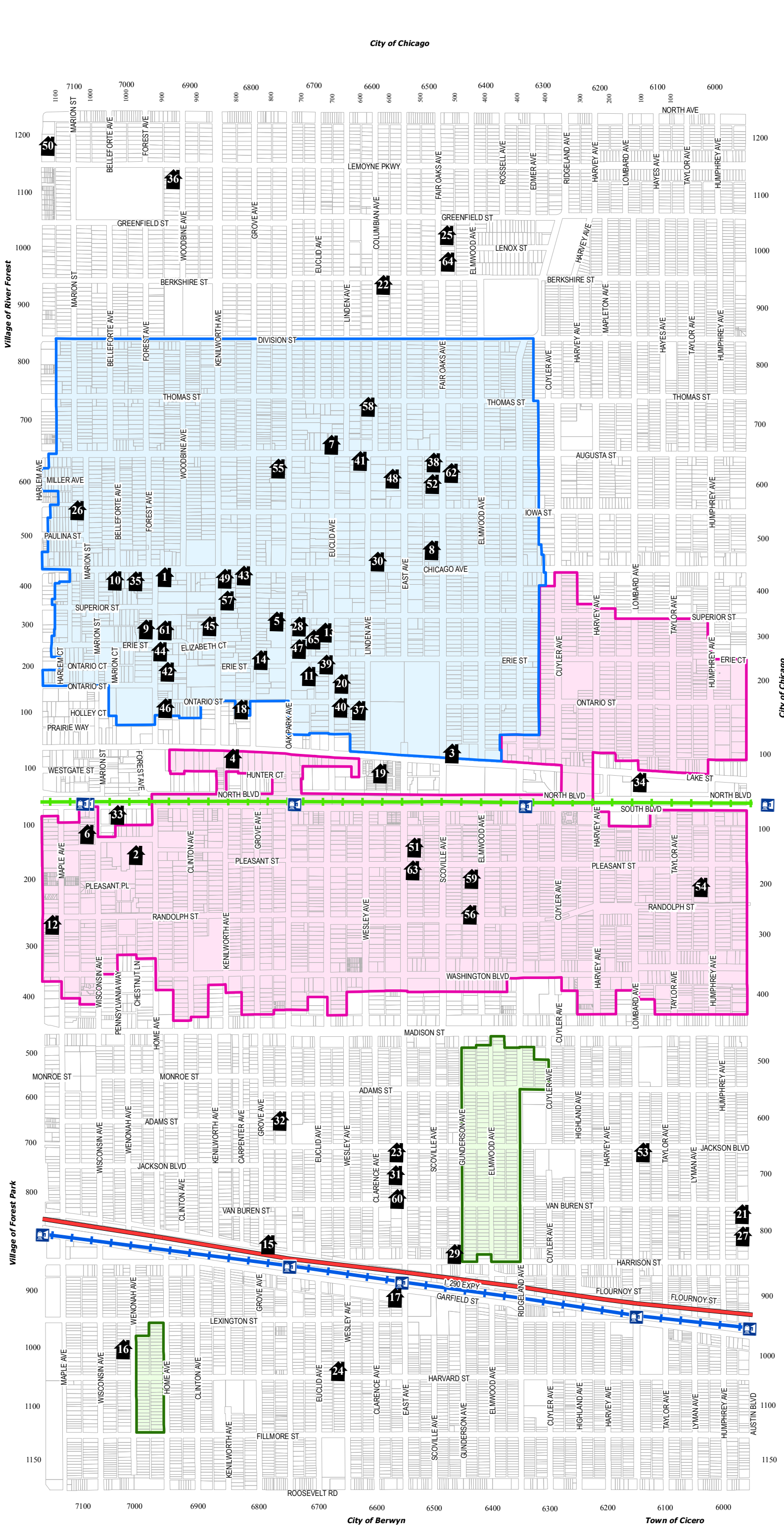


## Development Customer Services

Corrected to November 29, 2016  
 Population as of 2000 Census: 52,524  
 Estimated Population as of 2005 from the U.S. Census: 50,757

File Name: Historic Landmarks Map 2016-11-29

DISCLAIMER: This drawing is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey, and is not intended to be used as such. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data located in various village, county and state offices, and other sources, affecting the land area displayed and is to be used for reference purposes only. The Village of Oak Park shall not be responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained. If discrepancies are found, please contact the Oak Park Development Customer Services Department.



City of Chicago

Village of River Forest

Village of Forest Park

City of Berwyn

Town of Cicero



## National Register Listings in Oak Park

Village of Oak Park, IL

Community Planning & Development

Population as of 2000 Census: 52,524

2005 Estimated Population from the U.S. Census Bureau: 50,757

### Historic Districts

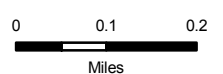
- Ridgeland - Oak Park
- Gunderson
- Scoville Place (Scoville Park)
- Frank Lloyd Wright (National Register)

### Landmarks

- 1 Mrs. Thomas H. Gale House  
6 Elizabeth Ct
- 2 Unity Temple  
875 Lake st
- 3 Pleasant Home (John Farson House)  
217 Home Ave
- 4 Frank W. Thomas House  
210 Forest Ave
- 5 Frank Lloyd Wright Home & Studio  
951 Chicago Ave
- 6 Walter H. Gale House  
1031 Chicago Ave
- 7 Masonic Temple Building  
119-137 N Oak Park Ave
- 8 Marshall Field & Company Store  
1144 Lake St
- 9 Arthur Heurtley House  
318 Forest Ave
- 10 Oak Park Conservatory  
615 Garfield St

### Transportation

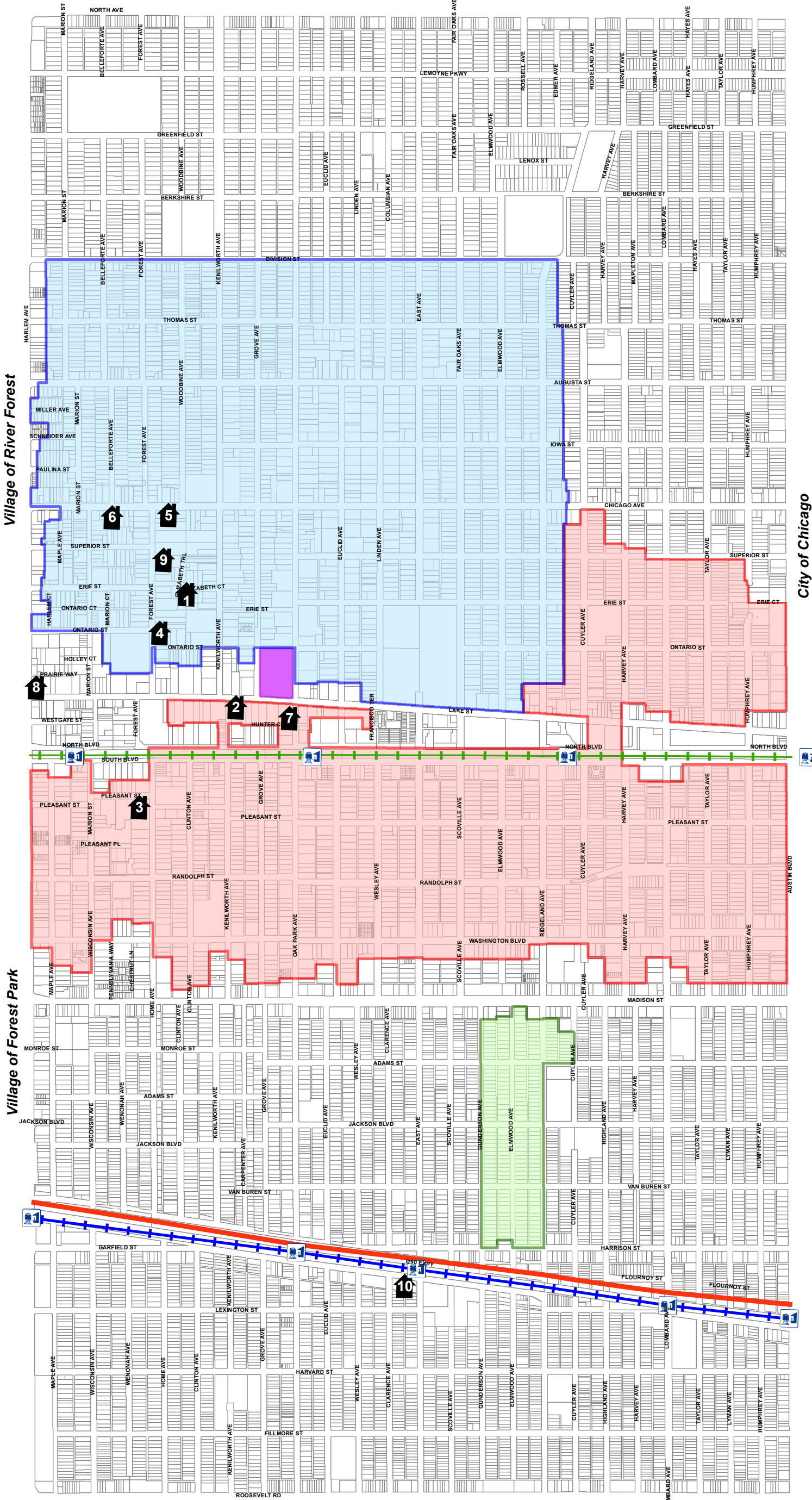
- 1 CTA Stations
- Blue Line
- Green Line
- I-290 Expressway



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Filename: GIS0120091019A03.mxd  
Created: October 20, 2009  
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## City of Chicago



Village of River Forest

City of Chicago

Village of Forest Park

City of Berwyn

Town of Cicero



Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission

# Landmarks List



*Several Oak Park Landmarks (Village photos)*

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



1

**428 Forest Avenue**  
**Frank Lloyd Wright Home & Studio**

**Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright**  
**1889, Shingle**  
**Designated: 1996**

**Interior, Exterior and Improvements**



**951 Chicago Avenue**  
**Frank Lloyd Wright Home & Studio**  
**Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright**  
**1895, Prairie School**  
**Designated: 1996**



2

**217 Home Avenue**  
**John Farson House (Pleasant Home)**

**Architect: George W. Maher**  
**1897, Prairie School**  
**Designated: 1996**  
**Exterior, Walk, Fence**



3

**460 Lake Street**  
**Pilgrim Congregational Church**

**Architect: Patton and Miller**  
**1889-99, Queen Anne**  
**Designated: 1996**  
**Exterior**

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



4

## 875 Lake Street Unity Temple

Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright  
Builder: Paul M. Mueller  
1906-09, Prairie School  
Designated: 1996  
Exterior, Interior



5

## 339 N Oak Park Avenue Ernest Hemingway Birthplace

Architect: Wesley A. Arnold  
1890, Queen Anne  
Designated: 1996  
Exterior, Interior



6

## 123 S Marion Street Plaza Hotel

Architect: George G. Mayo  
1892-94, Victorian Eclectic  
Designated: 1998  
Exterior, Interior Lobby



7

## 710 Augusta Street Harry S. Adams House

Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright  
1913, Prairie School  
Designated: 2002  
Exterior (House and Coach House)



# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



8

**515 Fair Oaks Avenue  
Rollin Furbeck House**

Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright  
1897, Prairie School  
Designated: 2002  
Exterior



9

**313 Forest Avenue  
Hills-Decaro House**

Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright  
1906/1977, Prairie School  
Designated: 2002  
Exterior



10

**1027 Chicago Avenue  
Thomas Gale House**

Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright  
1893, Queen Anne  
Designated: 2002  
Exterior



11

**223 N Euclid Avenue  
George Furbeck House**

Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright  
1897, Prairie School  
Designated: 2002  
Exterior

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



12

## 1139 Randolph Street Oak Park & River Forest Day Nursery

Architect: Charles E. White, Jr.  
Builder: Sides Construction Company  
1926, Tudor Revival  
Designated: 2002  
Exterior



13

## 321 N Euclid Avenue Charles Roberts House

Architect: Burnham and Root  
1885, Queen Anne  
Designated: 2002  
Exterior (House and Garage)



14

## 300-304 N Grove/818 Erie Roberts Building

Architect: E.E. Roberts & E.C. Roberts  
Builder: George Thomson & Sons  
1928, Art Deco  
Designated: 2002  
Exterior



15

## 812-818 Harrison Street Odd Fellows Hall

Architect/Builder: Harry S. Cotton  
1916, Commercial  
Designated: 2003  
Exterior

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



16

**1023 Wenonah Avenue  
Albert & Kittie Ernst House**

Architect/Builder: Albert Ernst  
1906, Queen Anne/Dutch Colonial Revival  
Designated: 2003  
Exterior



17

**615 Garfield Street  
Oak Park Conservatory**

Builder: Foley Greenhouse Manufacturing  
1929, Greenhouse  
Designated: 2004  
Exterior (Original Structure)



18

**173-181 N Grove Avenue  
Park View & Park Grove Manor**

Architect: E. E. Roberts & E. C. Roberts  
1922/1927, Tudor Revival  
Designated: 2004  
Exterior



19

**605 Lake Street  
Bishop Quarter School Addition**

Architect: Gerald Barry  
Builder: Duval Construction Company  
1928, Romanesque Revival  
Designated: 2004  
Exterior

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



**20**

**220 N Euclid Avenue  
Sharpe House / Cheney Mansion**

Architect: Charles E. White  
Builder: Harper & Butendorff  
1913, Tudor Revival  
Designated: 2004  
Exterior (House, Greenhouse, Fence,  
Coach House)



**21**

**408-410 S Austin Boulevard  
Poley Building**

Architect: Charles Kristen  
Builder: John Lind  
1928, Tudor Revival  
Designated: 2004  
Exterior



**22**

**950 Columbian Avenue  
Harold C. Lewis House**

Architect: Kenneth T. White  
Builder: Advance Construction Company  
1928, Spanish Revival  
Designated: 2004  
Exterior



**23**

**701 S East Avenue  
Andreas Brisch House No. 2**

Architect/Builder: Andreas Brisch  
1919, Chicago Bungalow  
Designated: 2004  
Exterior

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



24

**1045 Wesley Avenue  
George & James Tough House**

Architect/Builder: Joseph Bristow, Jr.  
1913, American Foursquare  
Designated: 2004  
Exterior (House and Garage)



25

**1036 Fair Oaks Avenue  
Margaret Morse House**

Architect: John S. Van Bergen  
Builder: Frank Coombs  
1926, Prairie School  
Designated: 2005  
Exterior



26

**553 N. Marion Street  
Albert Schneider House**

Architect: Unknown  
c. 1899, Queen Anne  
Designated: 2005  
Exterior



27

**424-426 S. Austin Boulevard  
Dorothy Manor Apartments**

Architect: William F. Pagels  
Builder: John Lind  
1927, Beaux Arts  
Designated: 2005  
Exterior

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



28

**324 N Oak Park Avenue  
First Methodist Episcopal Church**

Architect: Tallmadge and Watson  
Builder: Guy and McClintock  
1923, Gothic Revival  
Designated: 2005  
Exterior



29

**845 Gunderson Avenue  
South Branch Library (Maze)**

Architect: Elmer C. Roberts  
Builder: Milton W. Pillinger  
1936, Classical Revival  
Designated: 2005  
Exterior, Interior (Main Floor, Foyer)



30

**500 Linden Avenue  
Howard W. Jenkins House**

Architect: Tallmadge & Watson  
1919, Colonial Revival  
Designated: 2006  
Exterior (House and Garage)



31

**705 S East Avenue  
Dr. Harry Bernhardt Cottage**

Architect: Jarvis Hunt  
Builder: Harry Meincke & Brothers  
1919, Craftsman Bungalow  
Designated: 2006  
Exterior (House and Garage)

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



**32**

**625 S Oak Park Avenue  
Charles W. Eils House**

Architect: E. E. Roberts  
Builder: T. A. Holm  
1910, American Foursquare  
Designated: 2006  
Exterior (House and Garage)



**33**

**1033 South Boulevard  
Boulevard Arcade Building**

Architect: E. E. Roberts / Arthur Jacobs  
1906 / 1922, Commercial style  
Designated: 2007  
Exterior



**34**

**129 Lake Street  
Cicero Fire House No. 2**

Architect: William J. Van Keuren  
1898, Romanesque/Italianate  
Designated: 2008  
Exterior



**35**

**1019 Chicago Avenue  
Robert Parker House**

Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright  
1893, Queen Anne  
Designated: 2009  
Exterior

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



36

## 1139 Woodbine Avenue Benson/Armstrong House

Architect: George E. Pearson  
1929, Renaissance Revival  
Designated: 2009  
Exterior (House and Garage)



37

## 171-181 Linden/643-645 Ontario Linden Apartments

Architect: John S. Van Bergen  
Builder: Guy & McClintock  
1916, Prairie School  
Designated: 2009  
Exterior (Building and Garage)



38

## 639 Fair Oaks Avenue Charles Schwerin House

Architect: E. E. Roberts  
1908, Prairie School  
Designated: 2010  
Exterior (House and Garage)



39

## 231 N Euclid Avenue Edward And Caroline McCready House

Architect: Spencer and Powers  
1907, Prairie School  
Designated: 2010  
Exterior (House, Garage, Retaining Wall)



# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



**40**

**178 N Euclid Avenue  
Russell Wallace House**

Architect: E. E. Roberts  
Builder: William A. Pillinger  
1906, Prairie School  
Designated: 2010  
Exterior (House and Garage)



**41**

**647 Linden Avenue  
Charles S. Castle House**

Architect: Frederick Schock  
1924, Italian Renaissance Revival  
Designated: 2010  
Exterior (House and Garage)



**42**

**228 Forest Avenue  
Joseph D. Everett House**

Architect: Wilson, Marble & Lamson  
1888, Queen Anne  
Designated: 2010  
Exterior



**43**

**845 Chicago Avenue  
Chester Flitcraft House**

Architect: John S. Van Bergen  
c. 1914, Prairie School  
Designated: 2010  
Exterior

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



44

**250 Forest Avenue  
Paul Blatchford House No. 1**

Architect: Unknown  
1887, Stick  
Designated: 2010  
Exterior



45

**317 N Kenilworth Avenue  
William A. Douglass House**

Architect: Patton & Fisher  
1893, Queen Anne  
Designated: 2010  
Exterior (House and Coach House)



46

**178 Forest Avenue  
Nineteenth Century Club**

Architect: James L. Fyfe  
1928, Neo-Classical  
Designated: 2010  
Exterior



47

**308 N Oak Park Avenue  
Rutherford-Dodge House**

Architect: Unknown  
c. 1872, Italianate  
Designated: 2011  
Exterior

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



48

**633 N East Avenue**  
**Vernon W. Skiff House**

Architect: Nimmons & Fellows  
1909, Prairie School  
Designated: 2011  
Exterior (House, Coach House, Fence)



49

**432 N Kenilworth Avenue**  
**Charles E. Matthews House**

Architect: Tallmadge & Watson  
1909, Prairie School  
Designated: 2011  
Exterior (House and Garage)



50

**1515 N Harlem Avenue**  
**Harlem Office Building**

Architect: W. B. Cohan Associates  
1958, Mid-Century Modern  
Designated: 2011  
Exterior



51

**130 S East Avenue**  
**John D. Caldwell House**

Architect: George H. Borst  
1890, Queen Anne  
Designated: 2011  
Exterior

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



52

**629 Fair Oaks Avenue  
Charles W. Helder House**

Architect: Charles E. White, Jr.  
1906, Prairie School  
Designated: 2011  
Exterior (House and Garage)



53

**700 S Lombard Avenue  
Freeman Landon House**

Architect: J. J. Cerny  
1922, Eclectic (Prairie/Colonial Revival)  
Designated: 2011  
Exterior (House and Garage)



54

**217 S Humphrey Avenue  
George & Mary Sheppard House**

Builder: F. A. Hill & Company  
1904, American Foursquare  
Designated: 2011  
Exterior



55

**639 N Oak Park Avenue  
George Hemingway House**

Architect: E. E. Roberts  
1896/1916, Queen Anne  
Designated: 2011  
Exterior (House and Garage)

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



56

**241 S Elmwood Avenue  
William J. Ehlers Flats**

Architect: E. E. Roberts  
1909, Prairie School  
Designated: 2012  
Exterior (House and Garage)



57

**410 N Kenilworth Avenue  
Edwin H. Ehrman House**

Architect: Lawrence Buck  
1908, English Arts and Crafts  
Designated: 2012  
Exterior



58

**743 Columbian Avenue  
George L. Smith House**

Architect: John S. Van Bergen  
1915, Prairie School  
Designated: 2012  
Exterior, Garage



59

**209-211 S Elmwood Avenue  
Charlton H. Catlin Flats**

Architect: E. E. Roberts  
1905-1915, Prairie School  
Designated: 2013  
Exterior, Garage

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



60

**745 South East Avenue  
Andreas Brisch House No. 1**

Builder: Andreas Brisch  
1914, Chicago Bungalow  
Designated: 2013  
Exterior



61

**300 Forest Avenue  
Purcell-Yager House**

Architect: Charles C. Miller (attributed)  
1893, Queen Anne  
Designated: 2014  
Exterior, Garage



62

**636 Fair Oaks Avenue  
Edward B. Kittle House**

Architect: Tallmadge & Watson  
1909, Prairie School  
Designated: 2014  
Exterior, Garage



63

**200 South East Avenue  
Walter S. Gerts House**

Architect: Frank D. Thompson  
1897, Eclectic: Queen Anne/Prairie School  
Designated: 2014  
Exterior

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



64

**636 Fair Oaks Avenue  
Edward B. Kittle House**

Architect: Tallmadge and Watson  
1909, Prairie School  
Designated: 2014  
Exterior



65

**1010 Fair Oaks Avenue  
I.M. and Fannabell Fixman House**

Builders: Schurecht Inc.  
1953, Mid-Century Modern  
Designated: 2014  
Exterior



66

**317 N Euclid Avenue  
Charles Roberts Stable**

Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright (attributed), c  
1896  
Architect: Charles E. White, Jr., 1929 remodel  
ca. 1896; Tudor Revival, Prairie School  
style  
Designated: 2016  
Exterior



67

**209 Forest Avenue  
James T. Hayden House**

Architect: William K. Johnston  
ca. 1893; Queen Anne style  
Designated: 2017  
Exterior

# Oak Park Historic Landmarks

Updated May 9, 2022



68

**414 Augusta Street  
Edgar Rice Burroughs House No. 1**

Builder: Walter C. Franck  
1911; Tudor Revival style  
Designated: 2017  
Exterior



69

**400 N Kenilworth Ave  
John J. Schmidt House**

Architect: E.E. Roberts  
ca. 1872, Italianate  
Designated: 2018  
Exterior



70

**408 N Kenilworth Ave  
Robbins-Chapman House**

Architect:  
1890 Patton & Fisher  
1910 Tallmadge & Watson  
Prairie style  
Designated: 2019  
Exterior



71

**609 Linden Ave  
Telfer MacArthur House**

Architect: White & Weber  
Tudor Revival, English Arts & Crafts  
Designated: 2020  
Exterior





**Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission**

# Article Establishing the Historic Preservation Commission



*1886 house (Oak Park-River Forest Historical Society)*

**CHAPTER 2, ARTICLE 23 OF THE VILLAGE CODE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

**2-23-1: ESTABLISHMENT; COMPOSITION:**

- A. There is hereby established in and for the Village a commission to be known as the Historic Preservation Commission.
- B. The Commission shall consist of a chairperson and ten (10) members, to be appointed by the Village President with the consent of the Board of Trustees. Appointments shall be on a staggered basis for terms of three (3) years, with the chairperson and three (3) members appointed during one year and no more than four (4) members and no fewer than three (3) members appointed in each of the two (2) succeeding years.
- C. At least eight (8) members of the Commission shall have demonstrated expertise in the discipline of history, architectural history, art history, architecture, engineering, planning, law, real estate, historic preservation or related field. One (1) member of the Commission shall be a homeowner or business owner or representative located in a designated Oak Park Historic District. Citizens without such demonstrated expertise or residence shall have a priority with regard to the appointment of members to the two (2) remaining slots on the Commission, except that all commissioners shall have a demonstrated interest, competence or knowledge in historic preservation. (Ord. 1999-0-8, 3-15-99)

**2-23-2: DUTIES:**

The Commission shall have the following duties:

- A. To conduct an ongoing survey and inventory for the purpose of identifying those historic landmarks within the Village that exemplify the architectural, social, cultural, economic and political history of the Village, State or Nation;
- B. To receive or make nominations for designation of historic landmarks; to review and recommend designation criteria to the Village Board; to hold hearings; and to recommend to the Board of Trustees such designations;
- C. To recommend to the Village Board the adoption of specific guidelines, based upon the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, to be used in the application of the Village's Historic Preservation Ordinance to the alteration, construction, relocation, removal or demolition of historic landmarks or of properties and/or improvements within historic districts;
- D. To review permit applications for alteration, construction, relocation, removal or demolition affecting historic landmarks, and properties and/or improvements in historic districts and to request the presentation of such drawings (floor plans,

elevations and details), specifications and other information as may be necessary to review those applications;

- E. To approve, modify or deny applications for certificates of appropriateness and certificates of economic hardship for historic landmarks, in accordance with [Article 9, Chapter 7](#) of the Village Code, and to respond to appeals of such decisions to the Village Board; (Ord. 1993-0-60, 6-7-93)
- F. To review proposed zoning amendments, applications for special use permits including planned use developments, subdivisions and applications for zoning variances that affect nominated, proposed or designated historic landmarks and historic districts, and may present evidence at public hearings in support or opposition or make recommendations thereon to the Zoning Board of Appeals, Plan Commission, Community Design Commission and Board of Trustees; (Ord. 1999-0-8, 3-15-99)
- G. To recommend to the Board of Trustees the adoption of an appropriate system of historically and architecturally compatible streetscape elements, including, but not limited to, paving materials, curbs, sidewalks, streetlights, street and historic district signage, and to make recommendations for the design and implementation of such streetscape elements;
- H. To advise the Village Board, Village Manager, any commission, or other agency on matters affecting nominated, proposed or designated historic landmarks or historic districts;
- I. To provide general guidance to interested parties on technical and financial aspects of historic preservation and to indicate to such parties that they may only rely upon independent professional advice and consultation as a basis for final decisions with regard to these matters;
- J. To advise and assist interested parties on procedures for inclusion in the National and State Registers of Historic Places;
- K. To nominate properties and/or structures, improvements or areas to the Illinois and National Registers of Historic Places;
- L. To maintain a library of preservation-related documents and to keep such materials available for public use;
- M. To inform and educate the citizens of Oak Park concerning the historic and architectural heritage of the Village by publishing, with Village Board authorization and Village staff assistance, appropriate maps, newsletters, brochures, books and pamphlets, and by holding programs and seminars;

- N. To call upon assigned Village staff members as well as other expert volunteers for technical advice and assistance;
- O. To request the Village Board to retain such specialists or consultants and to request the Village Board to appoint such citizen advisory committees as may be required from time to time;
- P. To investigate, review and recommend to the Village Board the acceptance of any gifts of property, transferred to the Village by an entity for the purpose of preserving or enhancing the historically significant aspects of properties, improvements or areas;
- Q. To conduct annual inspections on behalf of the Village and to prepare condition reports to the Village Manager and Village Board on all properties, easements or development rights transferred to the Village for the purpose of preservation;
- R. To recommend and assist in the application for funds on behalf of the Village from Federal, State and private sources with the Village Manager's prior approval, to further the goals of historic preservation herein set forth;
- S. To confer recognition, from time to time, as appropriate, upon owners of historic landmarks or property or structures within historic districts by means of award certificates, plaques or markers;
- T. To assume whatever responsibilities and duties may be delegated to it by the Village Board with regard to the Certified Local Government provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended;
- U. To perform, in a timely and thorough manner, all of the duties delegated to the Commission under the Historic Preservation Ordinance set forth in [Chapter 7 Article 9](#) of the Village Code.
- V. To recommend to the Board adoption of the Commission's Rules and Procedures, or amendments thereto. (Ord. 1993-0-60, 6-7-93)



**Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission**

# Rules of Procedure for the Historic Preservation Commission



*Oak Park alley stop sign (Village photo)*

**RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR  
THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

ARTICLE 1

***GENERAL PROVISIONS***

Section 1.1           The following procedural rules are intended to supplement the basic procedures set forth in Chapter 7, Article 9 of the Village code entitled “Historic Preservation.” No rule shall be proposed or adopted herein which conflicts with any provision in Chapter 7 Article 9 of the Village Code. If a conflict does arise between any provision of Chapter 7 Article 9 of the Village code and any provision of these rules, the provision set forth in Chapter 7 Article 9 shall prevail.

Section 1.2           Any Commission member who has a proprietary interest or other conflict of interest, in any matter before the Commission shall not vote thereon and shall remove himself or herself from any meeting or hearing at which said matter is under consideration. If more than four members of the Commission remove themselves from a hearing, the Commission shall refer the matter to the President and board of Trustee for their direction.

Section 1.3           The Commission shall hold its hearings in the Oak Park Village Hall, unless, in a particular case, Chapter 7 Article 9 of the Village Code or the applicable statutes of Illinois requires a hearing or hearings of the Commission to be held in another location, or unless the Commission, for good cause shown, determines that a particular hearing be held elsewhere.

ARTICLE II

***OFFICERS AND DUTIES***

Section 2.1           The officers of the Commission shall be a Chair, an Acting Chair, and a Secretary.

Section 2.2           The Chair shall be designated by the President of the Village of Oak Park, with the consent of the Village Board. The Commission shall elect from among its members an Acting Chair to preside whenever the Chair is absent. The Secretary shall be an employee of the Village who has experience in taking minutes and record keeping. In the event of death, removal for cause, or resignation of any of the above-mentioned officers, a successor shall be named by the respective appointing authority.

Section 2.3           The Chair shall supervise the affairs of the Historic Preservation Commission. He or she shall preside at all hearings or meetings of the

Commission, shall appoint such committees and subcommittees of the Commission as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the Commission, and shall administer or authorize the administration of oaths. The Chair shall be an ex officio member of all committees and subcommittees appointed.

Section 2.4 In case of the absence or disability of the Chair, the Acting Chair shall perform all the duties and exercise all the powers of the Chair.

### ARTICLE III

#### *MEETINGS*

Section 3.1 Regular meetings shall be held on the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. and at such other times as the Chairperson or any six (6) members of the Commission may direct.

Section 3.2 Regular meetings may be cancelled by the Chair when there are no cases pending or when it is apparent that there will not be a quorum, in which event notification of said cancellation shall be given to members of the Commission.

Section 3.3 The Commission may hold special meetings at the call of the Chair or at the written request of six (6) members of the Commission, provided at least 48 hours notice of any such meeting is given in person or by mail to each member.

Section 3.4 All regular meetings, including public hearings, of the Commission shall be open to the public and no official action shall be taken except in public and in accordance with Article X hereof.

Section 3.5 No public hearing shall be held or official action taken unless a quorum is present. A quorum shall consist of six (6) members of the Commission.

### ARTICLE IV

#### *ESTABLISHMENT OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE*

Section 4.1 The Chair will appoint an Architectural Review Committee consisting of the five (5) Commissioners.

Section 4.2 The Architectural Review Committee and/or staff may approve applications for Certificates of Appropriateness and Certificates of Advisory Review when the proposed work involves (1) restoration of original conditions, (2) no changes in materials, (3) changes not visible from the street, (4) a non-contributing structure, or (5) other types of activities determined by the Commission to have limited effect on the historic, architectural, or aesthetic qualities of Landmarks or districts.

Section 4.3 The Review Committee and/or staff shall use the guidelines listed in Section 7-9-12(A) of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and other guidelines adopted by the Commission to determine if the proposed work is appropriate-under said guidelines.

Section 4.4 A Certificate of Appropriateness may be issued upon the concurring vote of a majority of a quorum of the Architectural Review Committee.

Section 4.5 If the Architectural Review Committee can not reach a decision within five (5) working days from receipt of the application by the Commission or votes to deny the application it shall refer the matter to the full Commission in a timely fashion so that the time limits established by the Historic Preservation Ordinance may be met by the Commission.

Section 4.6 If two (2) members of the Architectural Review Committee concur in a decision to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness or Certificate of Advisory Review, the Committee shall issue the appropriate certificate and shall notify the applicant and appropriate Village staff of its decision and shall provide the original certificate to the applicant and copies thereof to appropriate Village staff as soon as possible.

Section 4.7 Except in the case of Landmarks, applications for Electric Permits, Plumbing Permits, Fence Permits, and Street Obstruction Permits will be considered to have limited effect on the historic, architectural or aesthetic qualities of the building and will automatically be granted a Certificate of Appropriateness with no review by the Commission.

## ARTICLE V

### ***ORDER OF BUSINESS***

Section 5.1 The order of business of the Commission shall be as follows: unless otherwise set by the Chair:

- (a) Roll call and declaration of a quorum;
- (b) Approval of minutes of previous meeting(s);
- (c) Introduction of guests
- (d) Call of cases of agenda and hearing of requests for continuances;
- (e) Consideration of nominations for preliminary eligibility for designation, advisory reviews of permit work within Historic Districts, reviews of the impact of requests for zoning variations, zoning ordinance amendments and special use permits on Historic Preservation, hearings for Historic Landmark designation, hearings on applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, and hearings on applications for Certificates of Economic Hardship.
- (f) Any other business presented by members of the Commission.



(g) Adjournment

## ARTICLE VI

### ***CONTINUANCES***

Section 6.1 Continuances may be granted at the discretion of the Commission and only upon good cause shown. It is recognized that where notice of a hearing has been published, considerable inconvenience may result to many interested persons in the event continuances are freely granted. Except in extreme circumstances, once a hearing is commenced, every effort shall be made to take all evidence and close testimony on the night the hearing is set.

## ARTICLE VII

### ***FAILURE OF NOMINATOR OR OWNER/APPLICANT TO APPEAR***

Section 7.1 Whenever a nominator or owner/applicant or the nominator's or owner/applicant's representative fails to appear, the Chair may entertain a motion from the Commission to dismiss the case for want of prosecution. In the absence of such a motion, the Chair will rule.

Section 7.2 In cases which are dismissed for want of prosecution, the nominator or owner/applicant shall be furnished written notice by the Secretary of the Commission.

Section 7.3 Dismissal for want of prosecution is not a determination on the merits and shall not of itself bar the filing of a new nomination or owner's application for Certificate of Appropriateness or Certificate of Economic Hardship.

## ARTICLE VIII

### ***PROCEDURES FOR APPEAL***

Section 8.1 The Commission recommends the designation of Historic Landmarks to the Village Board which has exclusive and final authority to make such designations. Nominators, owner(s) of record and other interested persons who either agree or disagree with the recommendation of the Commission shall have an opportunity to express their views at the public meeting of the Village Board at which the recommendation of the Commission is considered. Therefore, with an avenue of direct access to the Village Board already in place for Commission recommendations for designation, an appeal process for the recommendation of the Commission to the Village Board is neither necessary or warranted and none shall be had.

Section 8.2 The denial by the Commission of a nomination for designation of a site, property, improvement, or structure as a Historic Landmark shall be a final administrative decision and no appeal may be had to the Village Board.

Section 8.3 An appeal may be taken to the Village Board by an aggrieved owner or owner(s) of record of a denial by the Commission of a Certificate of Appropriateness or a Certificate of Economic Hardship with regard to such owner's property, improvement or structure.

Section 8.4 An appeal shall be considered by the Village Board only if filed in the Office of the Village President located in the Village Hall within 15 days after the date of the alleged erroneous decision of the Commission, with notice thereof being filed simultaneously with the Secretary of Commission. The appeal shall be on such forms and in such number of copies as are prescribed by the Commission.

Section 8.5 Upon receiving notice of appeal, the Secretary to the Commission shall promptly transmit to the Office of the Village President all papers constituting the record upon which the Commission made the decision appealed.

## ARTICLE IX

### ***PROCEDURE FOR HEARINGS***

Section 9.1 At the time of the hearing, the nominator or owner/applicant may appear in his or her own behalf or be represented by an agent or attorney.

Section 9.2 All witnesses and owner/applicants shall testify under oath.

Section 9.3 The nominator or owner/applicant or his or her representative may make a brief operating statement, outlining the nature of the request prior to introducing evidence.

Section 9.4 Evidence shall be presented in the following order, except as modified by the Chair:

- (a) All exhibits shall be marked and presented to the Commission fourteen (14) days prior to the hearing, and shall include evidence as described

in Section 7-9-14 of Article 9, Chapter 7 of the Oak Park Village Code. Exhibits submitted to the Commission less than fourteen (14) days prior to the hearing shall be excluded from the hearing, except in those instances where the Chair, for good cause shown, shall, in the Chair's sole discretion, waive the fourteen (14) day requirement.

- (b) A list of witnesses accompanied by a resume or curriculum vitae shall be submitted to the Commission at least fourteen (14) days prior to the hearing.
- (c) The Chair or the Secretary may state the nature of the case and whether a designation of Historic Landmark, a Certificate of Appropriateness, or a Certificate of Economic Hardship is being sought.
- (d) The nominator or owner/applicant presents evidence.
- (e) Commission members cross-examine witnesses as presented.
- (f) Interested citizens present evidence.
- (g) Commission members cross-examine witnesses as presented.
- (h) Questions which are designated for specific witnesses may be submitted to the Commission by the nominator, owner(s) of record or interested citizens, which the Commission may ask of such witnesses on cross-examination;
- (i) Evidence by additional witnesses called by the Commission;
- (j) Rebuttal by nominator or owner/applicant as to new matters presented by any party in opposition to the nominator or owner/applicant;
- (k) Closing of all evidence and consideration by the Commission.
- (l) Once deliberations have begun and testimony is closed, no responses are allowed from witnesses except at behest of the Chair of the Commission.
- (m) Commissioners are strictly prohibited from communicating with any applicants, witnesses or other interested persons prior to or following a hearing until such time as a decision has been reached. Such contact may result in the removal of the Commissioner by the Chair from participation in deliberations and/or voting.

Section 9.5

The Commission shall not be bound by strict rules

of evidence, but it may exclude such irrelevant, immaterial, incompetent or unduly repetitious testimony or other like evidence as appropriate to insure an orderly proceeding. The Chair shall rule on all questions relating to the admissibility of evidence. Any evidentiary ruling by the Chair may be overruled by a majority of the Commission members present.

Section 9.6 Every person appearing before the Commission or in attendance at a hearing shall abide by the order and direction of the Chair. Discourtesy, or disorderly or contemptuous conduct shall be regarded as a breach of order and of the privileges of the Commission and such misconduct shall be dealt with as the Chair deems proper, up to and including ordering the removal of such persons from the hearing room.

## ARTICLE X

### *DECISIONS*

Section 10.1 Final decisions or recommendations shall be made within the time frames set forth in Chapter 7 Article 9 of the Village Code, and if no time frame is set forth therein, then within a reasonable time after the date of the closing of the hearing. A nominator or owner applicant may withdraw his or her nomination or Certificate application at any time prior to the decision thereon by the Commission.

Section 10.2 The Commission shall conduct its vote in a public session. The Commission may vote on any matter before it at the same meeting at which evidence as to such matter is concluded, or, if the Commission considers additional time for deliberation necessary, then the Commission may defer its vote to a subsequent public session.

Section 10.3 Final disposition of any application for a Certificate of Appropriateness or a Certificate of Economic Hardship shall be in the form of a resolution granting or denying the Certificate and shall include the Commission's findings of fact. The Commission may require such conditions, restrictions or limitations as it deems necessary to be imposed upon any Certificate granted, but any such conditions, restrictions or limitations shall be made part of the resolution. The resolution may also request the Code Administration Department to take any action necessary for the effectuation of any Certificate granted.

Section 10.4 Members of the Commission absent and not hearing all the evidence shall not be eligible to vote on any matter, provided that a member who was absent but who has listened to the recording of the meeting, and reviewed any

documentary evidence submitted, and affirms on the record that he or she has listened to the recording of the meeting and reviewed the documentary evidence shall be eligible to vote. The concurring vote of six (6) members shall be necessary for any decision in favor of nominator or an owner/applicant for designation or issuing of a Certificate. If the resolution denying the designation or application shall be formerly entered on the record; however, if the votes of absent but eligible members, when added to the number voting in favor of the nominator or owner/applicant, would total six (6) or more, the matter will be postponed to a subsequent meeting to provide those absent members with an opportunity to hear the tape and review any documentary evidence.

Section 10.5 In the case of nomination for the designation of sites, property, improvements of structures as Historic Landmarks, the concurring vote of a majority of the members of the Commission shall be necessary for any resolution and recommendation in favor if designation.

Section 10.6 If a summary record (as opposed to a verbatim transcript) of any hearing is made, such summary record shall be approved as to accuracy by the members of the Commission and shall be kept as a part of the public record in the files of the Commission.

Section 10.7 As soon as practicable after a decision of the Commission is reached notice thereof shall be given to the nominator and/or owner(s) of record and to such other parties of record as have requested such notice.

Section 10.8 No order of the Commission permitting construction, or the alteration, or the demolition of a property, an improvement or a structure shall be valid for period longer than 12 months from the date of such order, unless an application for building permit for such erection or alteration is filed within such period and/or such erection or alteration is commenced and proceeds to completion in accordance with the terms of the permit when issued.

## ARTICLE XI

### ***RECORDS***

Section 11.1 A file of decisions, recommendations, and all deliberations relating to each case shall be kept by the Secretary in the office of the Commission as a part of the public records of the Commission.

Section 11.2 All records of the Commission pertaining to recommendations of designation or owner(s) of record applications for Certificates of Appropriateness and Certificate of Economic Hardship shall be maintained as public records.



**Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission**

# Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District



*Frank Lloyd Wright Home & Studio 1990 (Village photo)*

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A)*. Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture Historic District  
other names/site number N/A

**2. Location**

street & number See Continuation Sheet  not for publication N/A  
city or town Oak Park  vicinity N/A  
state Illinois code IL county Cook code 031 zip code 60302

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of  
Architecture Historic District  
Name of Property

Cook County,  
Illinois  
County and State

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as  
apply)

- private  
 public-local  
 public-State  
 public-Federal

### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)  
 district  
 site  
 structure  
 object

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1,714	209	buildings
1	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1,714	209	Total

### Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

### Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

1,255

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE/business

COMMERCE/TRADE/professional

EDUCATION/school

LANDSCAPE/park

RECREATION AND CULTURE/sports facility

RELIGION/religious facility

SOCIAL/clubhouse

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE/business

COMMERCE/TRADE/professional

EDUCATION/school

LANDSCAPE/park

RECREATION AND CULTURE/sports facility

RELIGION/religious facility

SOCIAL/clubhouse

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate/Queen Anne/Stick-  
Eastlake/Shingle/Romanesque/Renaissance

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

REVIVALS/Beaux Arts/Colonial Revival/Classical  
Revival/Tudor Revival/Italian Renaissance

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

AMERICAN

MOVEMENTS/Prairie/Bungalow/Craftsman

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE//BRICK/CONCRETE

walls WOOD-Clapboard/Shingle

STUCCO

BRICK

roof ASPHALT

METAL – Tin

other CONCRETE

BRICK

## Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)



Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of  
Architecture Historic District  
Name of Property

Cook County,  
Illinois  
County and State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations N/A

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** moved from its original location.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

### Period of Significance

CA. 1865 - 1941

### Significant Dates

1889 - 1909

### Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

See Continuation Sheet

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of  
Architecture Historic District

Name of Property

Cook County,  
Illinois

County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreeage of Property** 705 acres

### UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Philip Thomason  
organization Thomason and Associates date February 5, 2007  
street & number 1907 21<sup>st</sup> Ave. S. telephone 615-385-4960  
city or town Nashville state TN zip code 37212

## Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

## Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Multiple  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture  
Historic District  
Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois

Section number 7 Page 1

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## 7. DESCRIPTION

### **SUMMARY**

The Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District is located entirely within the municipal limits of the Village of Oak Park, Illinois. Oak Park is located in Cook County, Illinois, directly west of Chicago's western edge and nine miles from its downtown. Oak Park developed as a railroad community in the 1840s and gradually became a residential suburb of Chicago by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1900, the community contained 10,000 residents and over the next forty years extensive construction and urbanization resulted in population growth to over 60,000. Oak Park continues to be a dense urban community with a population in 2000 of 52,524.

The Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District comprises all or parts of 97 blocks of the Village and is bounded on the north by Division Street, on the west by Harlem Avenue, on the south by Ontario and Lake Streets and on the east by N. Ridgeland Avenue. While there are two clusters of commercial buildings in the district along Chicago Avenue and N. Ridgeland Avenue, the other streets are primarily residential in character. Within this boundary are 1,923 primary buildings, of which 1,714, or 89%, are considered contributing to the character of the district. In addition to these primary buildings, the district contains 820 contributing and 610 non-contributing outbuildings such as automobile garages and sheds.

Buildings in the district are largely single-family dwellings built between ca. 1865 and 1930. As Oak Park grew in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, residential lots were platted in the area north of the railroad line and the commercial corridor of Lake Street. Most lots ranged in width from 30 feet to 50 feet although some on N. Oak Park and N. Linden Avenues were larger to accommodate more stately homes. By 1900, many of the lots in the blocks to the immediate north of Lake Street had been developed for single-family homes. This type of residential development continued into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as building construction moved north to Division Street. The increased density of the Village during this period also led to the construction of multi-story apartment buildings. These are located primarily in the southern blocks of the district along Lake and Ontario Streets and on N. Oak Park Avenue.

Commercial buildings in the district are confined to two primary locations: Chicago Avenue between Harlem Avenue and Belleforte Avenue, and the intersection of Chicago and N. Ridgeland Avenues. The commercial area in the vicinity of Chicago and Harlem Avenues developed in the 1910s and 1920s to provide neighborhood services and stores and this vicinity contains several multi-story buildings with retail on the first floor and apartments on the upper

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture  
Historic District  
Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois

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floors. The buildings clustered at the corner of N. Ridgeland and Chicago Avenues are primarily one-story buildings containing offices and stores.

Scattered throughout the district are several churches built to serve congregants in the Village. Most of these churches were designed in the Gothic Revival style and continue to serve their congregations. In addition to the churches the district contains community and social buildings such as the Oak Park – River Forest High School at 201 N. Scoville Avenue. Built in 1906, this school has numerous additions and the campus also includes a stadium completed in 1924. Buildings originally constructed for social purposes include the Oak Park Club built in 1922 at 721 Ontario Street and the YMCA built in 1904 at 156 N. Oak Park Avenue. The boundary also includes Austin Gardens, a Village park at the corner of Forest Avenue and Ontario Street. This park was dedicated in the 1960s at the site of the estate of Henry Austin Sr., a prominent citizen of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Although there are a number of churches, commercial buildings and other property types, the dominant character of the district is single-family dwellings. The earliest of these date to the 1860s when Oak Park emerged as a railroad community west of Chicago. After the Chicago Fire of 1871 many city residents relocated to Oak Park and a building boom began that continued for the next fifty years. Construction in the 1870s took place close to Lake Street and the railroad line and the oldest dwellings in the district are located in the blocks from Lake Street north to Chicago Avenue. Dwellings from this time period generally reflect the Italianate style and have hipped roofs, bracketed cornices and arched windows.

In the 1880s, Oak Park became a desirable suburb of Chicago and offered large building lots, clean air and water and an absence of noisome industries that characterized many areas of the city. Oak Park was an easy commute by rail and streetcar to the city and provided a lifestyle of working in the city while living in a pleasant suburban environment. Hundreds of dwellings were built in Oak Park during the 1880s and 1890s and new subdivisions were created north of Chicago Avenue and east of N. East Avenue.

From 1880 to 1900 the dominant house type built in Oak Park used the Queen Anne style. These houses were generally of frame construction, two-stories in height and with features typical of this popular American style. These houses were asymmetrical in form and featured projecting bays, corner towers and turrets, a variety of exterior materials such as clapboard and shingles, and large porches with milled columns and decorative millwork. These houses were especially well suited for the large families of the period and the middle and upper class residents who made up Oak Park in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Concentrations of these dwellings are generally found in the southern blocks of the district. Other architectural styles built during this period in Oak Park include Victorian Romanesque, Shingle, Stick, and Chateau.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture  
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In addition to houses erected for Oak Park's wealthier residents, a number of houses were also constructed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century for working class residents. These were concentrated in the blocks to the east of Harlem Avenue such as along Maple Avenue, N. Marion Street and Paulina, Schneider and Miller Streets. These dwellings are characterized as one or one- one-half stories in height, of frame construction, and built in gable front plans. Rectangular in plan, these dwellings had detailing such as window cornices, milled porches and eave brackets. In Chicago, these houses are known as "Worker's Dwellings" and were a common vernacular style built during this period. This collection of dwellings in the west and northwest sections of the district reflects the wide range of incomes and professions of Oak Park residents in its early years.

After 1900, there was a gradual shift away from the Victorian styles to revival styles such as Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and Renaissance Revival. Over the next two decades houses in Oak Park were built to reflect this trend occurring nationwide. The wealth of many of Oak Park's residents resulted in the construction of notable examples of these styles designed by Chicago and regional architects. The district contains hundreds of examples of revival style dwellings from this period. Most Colonial Revival dwellings are of frame construction while many built in the Tudor Revival style are of brick and stucco. These revival style dwellings were built throughout the district as lots were developed north towards Division Street before 1920. Variations of the Colonial Revival style commonly found in the district include Neo-classical and Dutch Colonial. Neo-classical style dwellings are distinguished by their large columned porticos on the main façade while gambrel roof forms are characteristic of the Dutch Colonial style.

Concurrent with the interest in the revival styles was a new form of architecture created by Frank Lloyd Wright and other architects in Oak Park and the Chicago area. Known as the "Prairie School" or "Prairie Style," these buildings were distinguished by their horizontal forms, low pitched roof lines, restrained ornamentation, and open floor plans on the interiors. Wright's home and studio was located at Chicago and Forest Avenues and was the influential center for this style's development in the late 1890s and early 1900s. Some of Wright's finest designs were built in Oak Park such as the Arthur Heurtley House (NHL), the Frank W. Thomas House, and the Laura Gale House. Wright's break with architectural traditions and his new approach to design had a major effect on regional and national architecture. In Oak Park, this was reflected in the dozens of other Prairie School dwellings designed from 1900 to 1920 by architects such as Eben E. Roberts, Tallmadge and Watson and John S. Van Bergen. As a result, Oak Park contains the largest concentration of Prairie School architecture in America and is one of the hallmarks of its architectural heritage.

The Prairie School's popularity waned in the late 1910s and residents turned more towards revival styles as well as the popular Bungalow form and Craftsman style of the period. As lots were developed in the north and east sections of Oak Park, these blocks were characterized by

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one- and two-story frame and brick veneer dwellings dominated by Bungalow and American Foursquare designs. Bungalows built in the district were constructed with horizontal massing, wide eaves, large porches or sunrooms on the main façade and decorative details such as knee brace brackets and exposed eave rafters. These houses are found primarily in the 600-800 blocks of the district.

Of particular importance to the district's architecture are the hundreds of American Foursquare designs and variations. The American Foursquare was noted for its simplicity of form and detail. These houses were built in rectangular or square plans with hipped roofs, hipped dormers at the roofline and often broad one-story porches or sunrooms on the main façade. Decoration on these dwellings was often limited to art glass or stained glass windows and entrances with sidelights and transoms. Square brick or frame porch columns were widely used rather than classical or milled columns. In Oak Park, many of the district's American Foursquares reflect the influence of the Prairie style in their wide eaves, stucco exteriors and geometric inlay on the main façade. Hundreds of these type dwellings were constructed by both owners and developers in the blocks in the north section of the district from the early 1900s to the 1920s. On some blocks such as the 700-800 blocks of N. Ridgeland and N. Kenilworth Avenues these are the dominant house types. The Prairie-influenced American Foursquares are an important house type in the district.

As the population of Oak Park continued to grow by thousands of residents in the 1920s, most of the buildable lots in the Village were developed with American Foursquares, Bungalows, and houses with various revival styles. The development pressures of this decade also led to the demolition of a number of 19<sup>th</sup> century homes to make way for apartment buildings and flats. This apartment construction was largely confined to the blocks between Lake and Erie Streets near the rail line. Most of these apartment buildings were constructed in revival styles such as the Tudor Revival Santa Maria Apartments built in 1924 on N. Oak Park Avenue. Other three- and four-story apartment buildings were constructed on adjacent blocks, most of which reflected the Tudor or Colonial Revival styles.

By the end of the 1920s, the great majority of the buildings in the district had been constructed and only a few vacant lots were scattered throughout this section of Oak Park. Due to the Depression and World War II, construction on these lots was limited and building activity did not resume until the late 1940s. In the mid- to late-20<sup>th</sup> century, demolition of buildings and new construction was not widespread in the district except along the commercial areas of Harlem Avenue and sections of Chicago Avenue. The residential blocks in the district remained largely intact during these decades and continued to display their historic and architectural character. Following an architectural inventory, the Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973. Since this time the

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### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - INTRODUCTION

The Village of Oak Park, Illinois, was first settled in 1835 and incorporated as a village in 1901. Following the Chicago Fire of 1871, Oak Park became popular as a rural suburb of the city and its population increased from 500 in 1870 to almost 10,000 in 1900. By the 1910s the village boundary had been largely subdivided and its population eventually grew to over 40,000 residents by 1920. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Oak Park was home to architect Frank Lloyd Wright and his family. One of America's most innovative architects, Wright created a new style of architecture which was termed the "Prairie School" or "Prairie Style" and he influenced many architects throughout the Midwest and across America. Wright designed over two dozen buildings in Oak Park and other architects working concurrently with Wright designed dozens of others. Between 1900 and 1920, almost ninety Prairie style buildings were constructed in Oak Park which is believed to be the largest concentration of this style in America.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the Prairie style buildings, the district also contains an impressive collection of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Victorian and Revival style buildings as well.

The Village of Oak Park commissioned a study of its architectural legacy in 1970 which resulted in the inventory of 328 buildings identified as possessing architectural merit. As a result of this study, the Oak Park Historic District was created by the Village in 1972 to encourage the preservation of significant buildings and formally recognize the district's importance in architectural history. The newly created Oak Park Landmarks Commission then prepared a National Register nomination for the Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture Historic District which was listed on the National Register on December 4, 1973.

The Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture Historic District was listed on the National Register under criterion C for its architectural significance. As in the case with many early submittals to the National Register, the nomination contained only a brief overview of the district's significance, primarily emphasizing its association with Wright and the Prairie School. The description was also brief and did not include any building inventory or a list of contributing

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<sup>1</sup> The author has not identified any source which provides a comprehensive list of Prairie style buildings nationwide. From the available books and literature it appears that the largest concentrations of this style are in Minneapolis/St. Paul MN, Madison, WI, and Chicago and its suburbs. Interviews with Carol Ahlgren, City Planner with Minneapolis and Jim Draeger, Wisconsin Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer indicate that the number of architect designed Prairie style buildings in these cities is substantially less than those in Oak Park. Brian Goeken, Deputy Commissioner of the Landmarks Division of Chicago, thinks that the City of Chicago has an overall larger number of architect designed Prairie style buildings but that they are scattered throughout the city. In his opinion, Oak Park has the largest concentration of Prairie style architecture in the Chicago region.

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and non-contributing resources. The original boundary for the district was drawn to include a large section of the Village of Oak Park. The architectural survey of 1970 identified almost one hundred Prairie School buildings within this boundary including all of those designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in Oak Park.

In 2006, the Village of Oak Park sought to update the nomination through a comprehensive inventory of every property within the district and to reexamine the district boundaries. This effort was undertaken through volunteers and a preservation-consulting firm and resulted in the completion of inventory forms and photographs of approximately 1,923 primary buildings. Following review of the existing boundaries and consultation with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, an expansion of the district boundaries resulted in the addition of 453 properties into the district.

The revised boundaries provide a more consistent approach to the district, as they include buildings similar in style, age, and integrity to those included in the 1973 listing. Major geographic features like Division Street, Harlem Avenue, and Lake Street, as opposed to seemingly arbitrary mid-block divisions, define the updated district boundaries. As with the buildings included in the 1973 listing, the new inclusions provide valuable context for the development of the Prairie style by showing not only the Prairie style, but also the Victorian styles that preceded it and the Revival styles that challenged and, ultimately, prevailed in popularity following it.

This study also updated the nomination to clarify the district's significance on the national level under the following criteria:

**Significance under National Register criterion B** – The Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture Historic District contains Wright's home and studio where he resided with his family for twenty years. During this time period Wright gained national attention through the development of the Prairie style and many of his finest designs were built in Oak Park. Wright's studio, adjacent to his home, was the center for experimentation and innovation as he developed the Prairie style. Architects and draftsman such as Walter Burley Griffin and John S. Van Bergen worked with Wright in his studio and later had notable and successful careers. Wright left Oak Park in 1909 and went on to create approaches to architecture which continue to influence building construction and design today. Wright is recognized as one of America's most talented and innovative architects and his home and studio remain as a testament to his early career.



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**Significance under National Register criterion C** – The Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture Historic District was listed on the National Register in 1973 for its architectural significance. Since this time Oak Park's architecture and the Prairie School in particular have been studied in greater detail by numerous historians and architectural historians. As a result, Oak Park is now recognized as having the largest concentration of Prairie School buildings in America. In addition to 26 buildings designed or remodeled by Wright, the district also contains approximately seventy additional buildings designed in the Prairie style. The majority of these are residences which were built between 1900 and 1920 and designed by architects who worked with Wright or were influenced by him. The original nomination also mentioned that the district contained "excellent specimens of architectural styles from Italianate residences of the 1860s to revived classical and medieval types of the 1920s."<sup>2</sup> The vast majority of the buildings in the district are dwellings built between ca. 1865 and ca. 1930; they reflect both late Victorian styles and the revival styles of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. These buildings reflect the growth and development of Oak Park and assist in placing the Prairie School buildings within their context in American architectural history. As a result, the Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture Historic District provides a unique urban environment for understanding the development of the Prairie style and its place in American architecture.

It is possible that buildings within the Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture Historic District may be eligible as National Historic Landmarks under other criteria. For example, the district contains homes associated with noted authors such as Ernest Hemingway and Edgar Rice Burroughs and famous dancer Doris Humphrey. Oak Park has also been home to many of Chicago's business and civic leaders. Research and assessment of these individuals as well as other aspects of Oak Park's history were beyond the scope of this project which concentrates on the significance of Frank Lloyd Wright and the Prairie School of Architecture.

The period of significance established for the district is ca. 1865 to 1941. This period encompasses the oldest known buildings in the district to those built before the United States' entry into World War Two. The 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings demonstrate the design context that shaped the approach of Prairie architects, buildings designed between the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the 1920s exemplify the development and height of the Prairie style, and buildings from the pre-war years show varying responses to the Prairie innovations. The district contains numerous examples of Victorian styles such as Queen Anne, the first style Wright worked with as he developed his own approach to design. Within the district are hundreds of revival style dwellings built concurrently with and just after the Prairie School, which illustrate differing approaches to architecture in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The end to the period is marked by the

<sup>2</sup> Oak Park Landmark Commission, "Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture Historic District." National Register Nomination on file with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, 1973.

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break in new building that accompanied the war and the changed approaches to design and materials that followed. This period of significance is justified since the range of architectural styles built within this time span provide the built environment and context in which to evaluate and assess the Prairie School of Architecture.

Within the Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture Historic District are three properties listed individually on the National Register and two properties listed as National Historic Landmarks. All of these properties are associated with the Prairie School and Frank Lloyd Wright. These are as follows:

Mrs. Thomas H. Gale House, 6 Elizabeth Court – NR March 5, 1970.  
Walter Gale House, 1031 Chicago Avenue – NR August 17, 1973.  
Arthur Heurtley House, 318 Forest Avenue – NHL February 16, 2000  
Frank Thomas House, 210 Forest Avenue – NR September 14, 1972.  
Frank Lloyd Wright House and Studio – NR September 14, 1972 and NHL January 7, 1976.

This nomination is organized into the following sections:

- The Growth and Development of Oak Park, ca. 1865 - 1929
- Oak Park's Architectural Development, ca. 1865 – ca. 1900
- Oak Park's Architectural Development, ca. 1900 – 1941: Frank Lloyd Wright and the Rise and Decline of the Prairie School
- Frank Lloyd Wright's Career After Oak Park

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### THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF OAK PARK, ca. 1865 - 1929

Oak Park had its origins in the land owned by Joseph Kettlestrings who purchased 173 acres in this section of Cook County in 1833. This property lies along present Lake Street and east of Harlem Avenue. Oak Park, then called Oak Ridge, consisted of a smattering of pioneer homes, squatters' land, and wilderness. Recollections of pioneer life painted a picture of the dynamic prairie landscape ranging from dismal to vibrant. Mrs. Elizabeth Porter Furbeck, who arrived as an infant to the area that became River Forest and Oak Park, remembered severe blizzards, a tornado, and flooding water, alongside Indians passing through peacefully, a seasonal procession of wildlife and migrating birds, and a spectrum of color with the blooming of grasses and wildflowers.<sup>3</sup> The prairie community west of Chicago continued to grow during the 1850s and 1860s, as owners of large tracts of land sold off parcels. Land prices increased following the construction of the Chicago & Galena Railroad through Oak Park in 1848. This railroad connected with Galena, Illinois and eventually became part of the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad. The railroad allowed residents to live in Oak Park while working in Chicago and homes owned by prosperous middle class businessmen appeared, as well as a school and a meeting hall.<sup>4</sup>

As the Midwest converted from prairie to farms, Chicago became the nation's largest grain and cattle market. With Chicago's booming economy came deterioration from industrial pollution, crowding, and noise, the very factors that sent its wealthier residents looking for suburban havens like Oak Park and other peripheral neighborhoods of Chicago. In turn, the rapid expansion of the city's suburbs converted natural landscapes into neighborhoods. The affluent flight from the city had begun as early as the 1850s with the coming of the railroad. In 1857, when Illinois legislation created Townships in the out-lying precincts of Chicago, Augustin Porter suggested the name of Cicero for the local Township, which comprised a handful of small communities, including Oak Park. Under this arrangement, Oak Park was often under-represented. Oak Park residents also discouraged saloons and other vices and found its collective moral standard at odds with those of neighboring communities, especially Cicero, where gambling and drinking enjoyed political support.<sup>5</sup> As Chicago's economy and population boomed, wealthy families seeking to escape urban vice, thus, favored Oak Park.

Oak Park's rail connection and the Chicago Fire of 1871 would both have a major impact on its history. As one Chicago historian noted, "At the very moment that Chicago's markets and railroad networks were bringing a metropolitan economy to the Great West, wealthy Chicagoans

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<sup>3</sup> Jean Guarino, *Yesterday: A Historical View of Oak Park, Illinois, Volume One Prairie Days to World War I*. (Oak Park, IL: Oak Ridge Press, 2000), 13-15.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 5, 8, 15.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 31-32.

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were seeking to recover (or, more accurately, create) an ideal landscape that combined urban comforts with a carefully selected subset of rural amenities.”<sup>6</sup> Following the tenets of Andrew Jackson Downing, designers Calvert Vaux and Frederick Law Olmstead created in Chicago’s suburbs planned communities with large lots, houses set back thirty feet, commons, curbed roads, randomly planted trees, playgrounds, immaculate gardens, specific lanes for horseback and carriage users. The design intended to imitate nature, but a tamed one. Amid the lawns and trees were commuter rails, paved streets, sewer lines and other urban advantages.

The Chicago Fire of 1871 served as a catalyst of re-growth and vigor. It cleared away older, wood frame buildings, allowing for their replacement with buildings of steel that came to dominate and characterize the Chicago skyline. Chicago’s downtown was re-born architecturally and socio-economically. Its high-rises made Chicago real estate too expensive for residential property, pushing the working class to the city’s fringes where villages of wood frame cottages encircled the lumberyards, grain elevators, and stockyards where their inhabitants were employed. While the working class remained in the city, increasingly the middle and upper classes in Chicago moved west and north to suburban communities such as Oak Park and Evanston.

In 1870 Oak Park had approximately 500 residents; by 1872, following the fire, that number doubled. During the next two decades, both city and suburb continued to flourish. Land values rose with the skyscrapers in Chicago, as well as in Oak Park. Whereas an acre sold for \$1,000 in Oak Park in 1871, the price tripled within three years. Oak Park established a high school, whose first graduating class in 1877 consisted of three students. The following year, Oak Park resident James Scoville developed a town reservoir, ensuring its own supply of fresh water. The town’s first bank opened in 1886.<sup>7</sup>

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Chicago ascended as one of America’s greatest cities. Via railroads, the city converted incoming grain, lumber, and livestock of the mid-west into outgoing consumer products. Cities to the west expanded industry under corporate control from Chicago. The mid-western metropolis became New York’s peer as a financial exchange center, as well as culturally, with theaters, libraries, and arts.<sup>8</sup> In 1889 Chicago annexed the comparatively sparse neighborhoods south of the city, including the villages of Hyde Park, Kenwood, and Woodlawn. The 133-square-mile addition, with 225,000 people, boosted Chicago’s ranking to second place among United States metropolitan populations. There were predictions around the turn of the

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<sup>6</sup> William Cronon, *Nature’s Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (NY, NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 1991), 347.

<sup>7</sup> Guarino, *Yesterday: A Historical View of Oak Park, Illinois*, 49, 61, 64, 67.

<sup>8</sup> Cronon, 281, 307-311.

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century that Oak Park would become absorbed by Chicago. However, "Middle- and upper-class suburbs like Oak Park had a much better chance of preserving their independence than did lower-status peripheral communities of the nineteenth century because of changes in incorporation and annexation laws."<sup>9</sup>

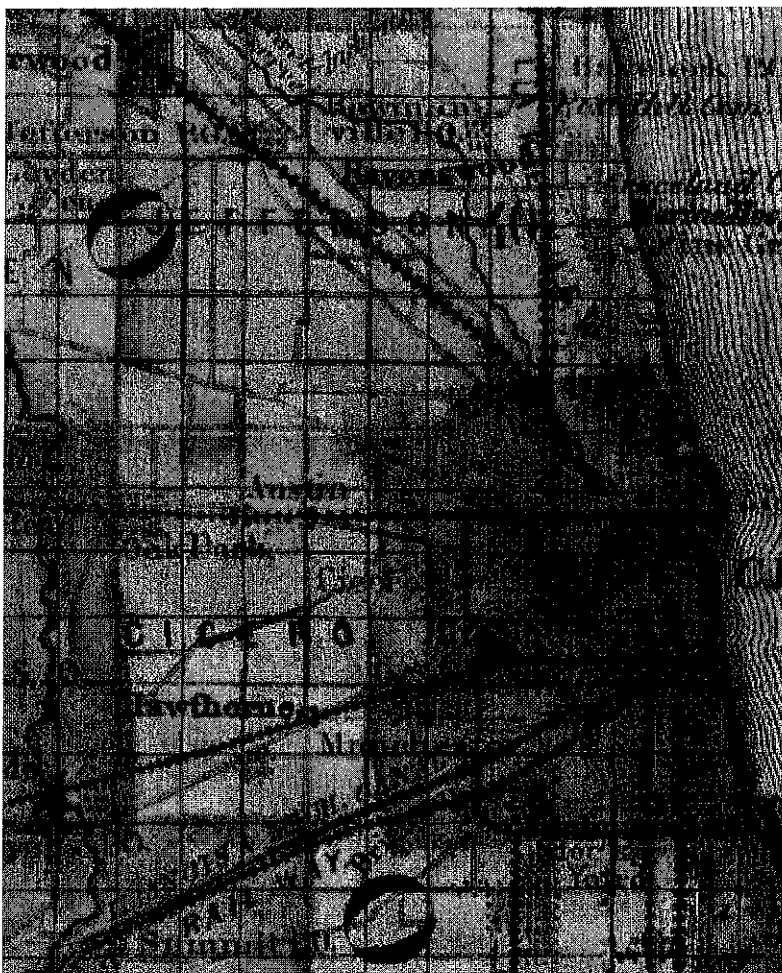


Figure 1: In 1870, Oak Park is shown on the railroad line just west of Austin and Cicero (*Campbell's New Atlas of the State of Illinois, 1870*, David Rumsey Map Collection).

<sup>9</sup> Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 142, 144, 147, 151.

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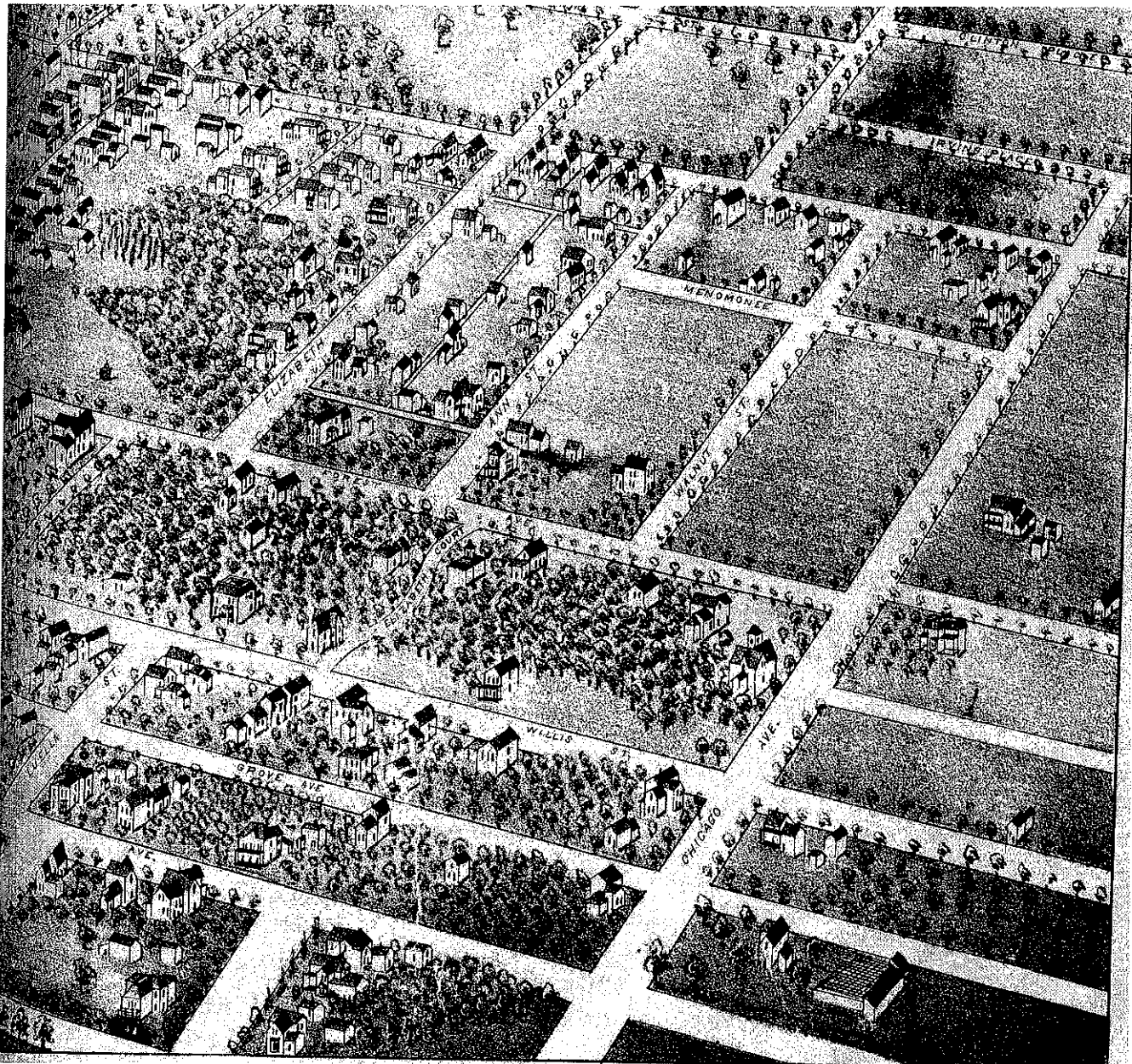


Figure 2: This birds' eye view of Oak Park in 1873 shows a mixture of houses, forest, and open land in the area from Forest to N. Oak Park Avenues (Guarino, *Yesterday: A Historical View of Oak Park, Illinois*, 29)

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Since 1880 Oak Park had been struggling for independence from its multi-member township that included less affluent Cicero and Austin. By law, a single town could not vote itself out of a joint township; such a vote required the participation of all members. Austin, lacking Oak Park's influence and wealth, defeated Oak Park's attempt in an 1895 election to separate. In 1899, Austin was annexed by Chicago, and new legislation in 1901 allowed Oak Park to vote itself out of Cicero's township. By this time, Oak Park had established itself as a model suburban town. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, American philosophies of nature, landscape, gender roles, and domesticity became intertwined, as influential design and education professionals expounded on the virtues of suburban life. In his study *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*, Kenneth T. Jackson illuminates the converging ideologies that influenced the gravitation of "fashionable and respectable addresses" from "close to the center of town" to the suburbs. He writes that designer Andrew Jackson Downing advocated private homes in park-like settings for nuclear families. Downing instructed that a love of one's home equated with domestic happiness, which affected in a man integrity, patriotism, and good citizenship. This sentiment of suburban virtue echoed the widespread belief that cities undermined morality and vigor.<sup>10</sup> Downing was supported by Catharine Beecher, called the "principal architect of the ideology of domesticity." Beecher believed that a solid family, managed by the woman, was the foundation of a safe and healthy home, ideally a microcosm of society. She came to mirror Downing's belief that the nuclear family required a specific physical and psychological space, "the then embryonic suburb."<sup>11</sup>

Edwin Gale was representative of the wealthy suburban businessman of Oak Park who had businesses in both the Village and Chicago. His 1865 Gothic Revival home was a block from one of his numerous stores of an expanding drug store chain, owned with business partners. Gale was also one of thirteen businessmen who commuted daily on one of the two trains that ran to and from Chicago. Gale and his wife Julia had six sons. Their son Walter was one of three students in the Oak Park High School's first graduating class of 1877. Another son Abram, lived with his wife Maude in a Victorian home across the street from his parents; the couple later built a large Queen Anne, a popular style in Oak Park during the waning years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>12</sup>

As the population in Oak Park increased, a large area was subdivided for building lots in 1880 bounded by Harlem Avenue on the west, East Avenue on the east, Augusta Street on the north and Madison Street on the south. As these lots began to fill, another large area to the east was subdivided. Known as the Fair Oaks Subdivision, it required all new owners to build residences

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 15, 19, 63-5, 68.

<sup>11</sup> Margaret Marsh, *Suburban Lives* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 16-17.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 67-9.

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costing no less than \$5,000 to ensure its standing as a middle-class neighborhood.<sup>13</sup> As hundreds of new homes were built, civic improvements followed such as stone sidewalks and the introduction of street lighting in 1891. Powered by electricity, these street lights proved to be too dim for many residents and in 1897 a new contract for stronger electric lights was awarded.<sup>14</sup> A gas works was opened in the village in 1893 and supplied gas to consumers for illumination and cooking.<sup>15</sup> Electricity for street and home lighting was also introduced into the village in the 1890s and continued improvements in these utilities continued on into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first village phone was installed in 1895 and by 1901 there were nearly 1,000 phones in use in Oak Park.<sup>16</sup>

The maturation of the village resulted in its incorporation in 1902. By 1900 the population of Oak Park reached almost 10,000 and the need for a separate municipal government became a major issue for residents. Elections were held to vote on incorporation and elect municipal officers and on January 25, 1902, Oak Park was duly organized as a village. At this time about half of Oak Park was developed with residences mixed with apartment buildings and commercial buildings along Lake Street.

The village's first school rapidly became obsolete as the population soared in the 1880s. To meet this need a new \$60,000 school building was constructed at the corner of Lake Street and East Avenue in 1891.<sup>17</sup> Even this new building soon became overcrowded with students as the population continued to increase during the decade. By 1902, the need for a new building was widely discussed and a large parcel between East and Scoville Avenues was purchased in 1904. The new school building was constructed in 1906 and opened for students the following year. This original building still serves as the main high school for Oak Park and neighboring River Forest and it has been expanded numerous times in its history.

<sup>13</sup> Elizabeth Helsing Dull, *The Domestic Architecture of Oak Park, Illinois: 1900-1930*, (PhD. Dissertation, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, 1973), 145.

<sup>14</sup> Gertrude Fox Hoagland, *Historical Survey of Oak Park, Illinois*. (FWPA Project 9516, on file at the Oak Park Public Library, 1937), 47.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.



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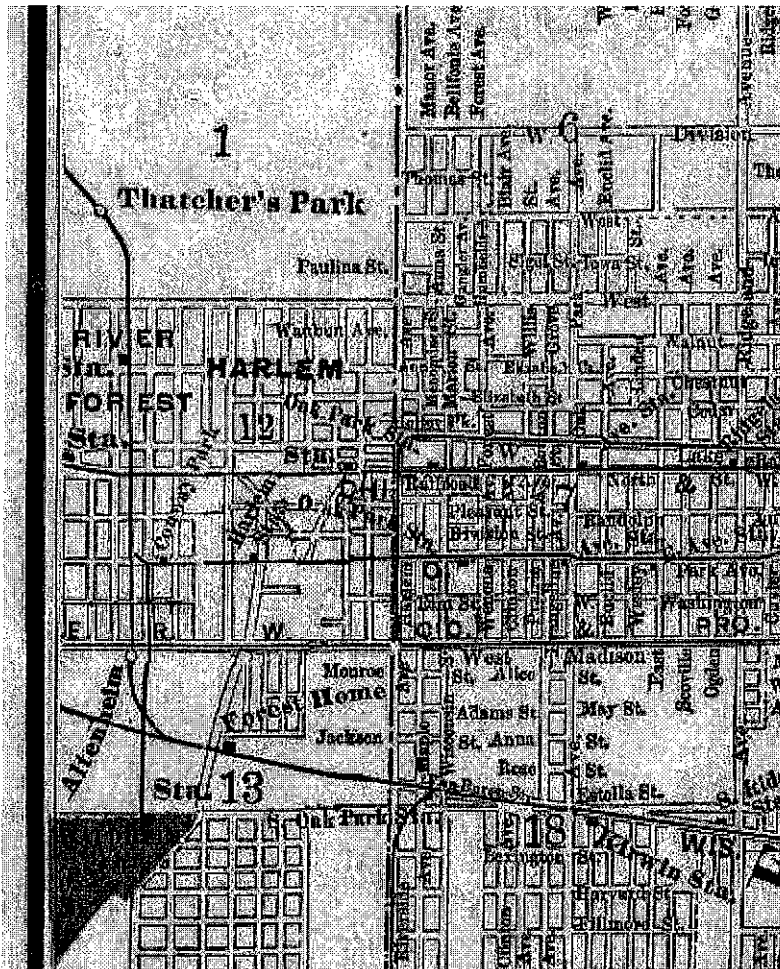


Figure 3: Much of Oak Park was subdivided by 1897 and several commuter rail lines connected with the village and downtown Chicago (*Rand McNally Map of Chicago, 1897, David Rumsey map Collection*).

Oak Park reinforced the image of a suburban countryside, as George Mayo built the Plaza Hotel at 123 S. Marion Street specifically for visitors to Chicago's Columbian Exposition who wished to escape the "dirt and congestion of the city" in favor of accommodations "in the countryside." Built in 1892, the hotel originally was four stories with a lobby and twenty rooms. The following year, Mayo added another thirty-three rooms as his business boomed. Through the 1890s, wealthy owners of racehorses stayed at the hotel during the racing season at the Harlem Race Track in Forest Park. Oak Park residents, too, enjoyed the hotel, which became a fashionable

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social spot for dining out. As Oak Park's first "skyscraper," the hotel afforded residents refined dining without having to go into the city.<sup>18</sup>

As the new century dawned, Oak Park was thriving with culture and refinement. The well-to-do middle class experienced increased leisure time as a result of growing prosperity. Their suburban environs afforded them opportunities of outdoor recreation not available in the city. Oak Park was rich with organized clubs of social, philanthropic, religious, and community purposes. Some clubs even had their own buildings, such as that of the Prairie Cycling Club, which had 150 members around 1890. Members joined as stockholders in a corporation, allowing for the building of a clubhouse in 1891. The building contained rooms for a variety of indoor social activities, including a bowling alley, gymnasium, and handball courts to a ballroom, banquet hall, and billiard rooms.<sup>19</sup> Social clubs were not limited to male-oriented sports. Some clubs catered to family socializing, such as the Colonial Club with such amenities as a bowling alley, parlors, and a ballroom. Architect Eben E. Roberts designed the three-story, Colonial Revival building in 1902. In the same year, Roberts also designed the Phoenix Club, a three-and-one-half-story, Craftsman style building located at the corner of Scoville and Jackson Boulevard. The Phoenix club building also had a bowling alley and ballroom for family socializing, as well as a banquet hall and library.<sup>20</sup>

Leisure activities in Oak Park also included performing arts for families and children. In 1902 Roberts designed the Warrington Opera House at South Boulevard and Marion Street. On October 16 of that year, the 40-piece Theodore Thomas Orchestra performed Rossini's *Stabat Mater* with a 200-member choir. Saturday matinees at the Warrington Opera House provided children with age-appropriate performances by the Hayward Stock Company and the Chester Wallace Players. Oak Park mothers appreciated the reliably wholesome entertainment, such as *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* and *Polly of the Circus*.<sup>21</sup>

Oak Park also enjoyed the cultural and civic center known as the Scoville Institute. In 1883 James Scoville donated \$75,000 for the structure and asked residents to fund the purchase of books via paid membership. The cornerstone was laid in September of 1886, and Scoville Institute, a three-story, Richardsonian Romanesque structure, opened two years later. Within two years of opening, the Institute had issued over 1000 library cards. By 1891, the board initiated another funding drive, as the town was growing so rapidly, and the Institute needed to expand its collection and ensure its ability to offer meeting rooms and lectures, as well. The

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<sup>18</sup> Guarino, *Yesterday: A Historical View of Oak Park, Illinois*, 125-26.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 118-19.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 117-18.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.

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drive raised enough funds for the purchase of 800 new books. Still, with a growing population, Oak Park recognized the need to provide tax revenue for such a valued public institution as the library, and the year following the town's break from Cicero Township (1902), the referendum vote passed.<sup>22</sup>

As Oak Park grew in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the large tract of land south of Madison Street became eyed for development. Weekly reports in the newspaper detailed the sale of lots and the completion of new homes. Builders Thomas Hulbert and Seward Gunderson collectively built 800 middle class homes between 1906 and 1920, ranging in price from \$4,000 to \$12,000. Gunderson's spacious, quality homes came in forty-two models with fifteen different floor plans. His homes featured such details as stained glass windows, bay windows, large porches, solid oak cabinetry, and oak floors. He was innovative in the use of concrete block foundations, steel beam supports, and ergonomic kitchen designs, specifically, raising the standard height of the kitchen sink to prevent back pain in the user.<sup>23</sup>

In 1900, Oak Park was a thriving suburb of Chicago boasting over 10,000 residents. This population would double during the next decade and also witness the rise of a new form of architecture. Oak Park resident and architect Frank Lloyd Wright as well as other architects such as George W. Maher sought to produce building forms that turned away from the Victorian styles of the period. During the 1890s, Wright transitioned from designing homes in the popular Queen Anne style to houses that were much more horizontal in form, had restrained decoration and emphasized an honest use of materials. His designs reached fruition in Oak Park by 1900 and would be known as the "Prairie School" or "Prairie Style." From 1900 until 1909, Wright would design over twenty buildings in this style in Oak Park and he influenced other architects to also work extensively in the Prairie School. This period also witnessed the increased interest in the revival architectural styles such as Colonial and Tudor Revival. In Oak Park, buildings in these contrasting approaches to architecture would often be built on the same block during the decade.

Oak Park's building boom slowed considerably due to America's entry into World War I. In 1916 the number of building permits in Oak Park was 349 but these declined to just 44 in 1918.<sup>24</sup> By the time construction began in earnest again in 1920, there was little interest remaining in the Prairie style and most buildings constructed in Oak Park during the decade reflected the various revival styles of the period. In addition to the construction of hundreds of dwellings in the 1920s, several large apartment buildings were built to accommodate the Village's rapid growth. One of

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 127-28.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 53-4.

<sup>24</sup> Dull, "The Domestic Architecture of Oak Park, Illinois: 1900-1930," 19.

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the most notable of these was the Santa Maria Apartments built on N. Oak Park Avenue in 1924 in the Tudor Revival style. As the density of the Village's population increased north of Lake Street, several multi-story commercial buildings were constructed along Chicago Avenue providing services and shopping for the growing neighborhood.

The decade of the 1920s witnessed the development of most building lots between Lake Street on the south and Division Street on the north. As these blocks were developed, new subdivisions arose north of Division Street and many of these blocks were characterized by large lots and the construction of moderately expensive homes. Almost all of the dwellings built north of Division Street in the Village were designed in revival styles and few allusions to the Prairie style are extant in these areas.<sup>25</sup> Architects who had previously worked in the Prairie style abandoned these forms and shifted their designs to the revival styles. A new wave of architects who practiced in Oak Park in the 1920s such as Lyman Allison, Arthur Maiwurm and George Pearson, also designed almost exclusively in these styles. As the village grew in the 1920s various civic projects were also completed. One of the most expensive projects was the dedication of the villages' new one million dollar lighting plant and 4,000 street lights installed in 1927.<sup>26</sup> During this decade much of the village's streets were paved with asphalt over the original brick and crushed gravel was also used on some streets.

Like the rest of the country, Oak Park residents struggled during the Depression. Following the stock market crash in 1929, Oak Park was unable to collect almost half of its municipal taxes the following year.<sup>27</sup> Schools were forced to sell bonds to stay open and the village was behind in payments to its employees at various times. The Works Progress Administration provided a number of jobs during this decade for projects such as tree planting, repaving and other public works. Despite the economic difficulties of the Depression, the village's population continued to grow during the 1930s and in 1940 Oak Park recorded its largest number of residents at 66,014.

Since 1940, there has been a slow decline in density as some residents moved elsewhere or to suburbs further west developed after World War II. In 1952, a Village Manager form of government was approved by voters. In the 1960s, Village residents were proactive in fighting housing discrimination and creating one of the more racially integrated suburbs in the Chicago area. Civic improvements in the 1970s included not only the construction of a downtown mall but also the recognition of the city's historic and architectural heritage through the creation of the Historical Landmark Commission and Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>26</sup> Hoagland, "Historical Survey of Oak Park, Illinois." 49.

<sup>27</sup> Jean Guarino, *Oak Park: A Pictorial History*, (St. Louis: G. Bradley Publishing Company, 1988),

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Historic District. Today, Oak Park continues to be recognized as one of the most diverse and livable communities in the region and in 2000 the population stood at 52,524 residents.

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### OAK PARK'S ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT, CA. 1865 – CA. 1900

The National Register nomination for the Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture Historic District had its major emphasis on the works of Wright and the other Prairie School architects. However, the nomination also says that district contained other "excellent specimens of architectural styles from Italianate residences of the 1860s to revived classical and medieval types of the 1920s."<sup>28</sup> Concurrent with the design and construction of the Prairie style dwellings in Oak Park was also the building of hundreds of other homes, apartment buildings, and churches in the area which now comprises the historic district. Many of these were built in the revival styles of the period and designed by noted Oak Park and Chicago area architects. These properties also contribute strongly to the rich architectural legacy of the historic district and provide an important context in which to place the Prairie School and its influence.

The oldest dwellings in the district were built in the 1860s and 1870s when Oak Park was emerging from a small railroad town into a suburb of nearby Chicago. These early dwellings were generally of frame construction and reflected the popular styles of the period such as Italianate, Greek Revival and Gothic Revival. As Oak Park prospered in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, many of these original dwellings were demolished or moved to make way for later houses, apartments and commercial buildings. A few of these mid-19<sup>th</sup> century homes survive in the district such as the Gothic Revival Rev. Joseph Edwin Roy House at 8 Elizabeth Court and the Italianate George G. Mayo House at 5 Elizabeth Court built ca. 1875 (Figure 4-5). The Rev. Joseph Edwin Roy House features a high pitched roof and quatrefoil panels in the gable fields. The George Mayo House has a rebuilt porch but still displays its arched windows and detailed cornice. Another fine example of the Italianate style is the ca. 1870 dwelling moved to 511 N. Grove Avenue (Figure 6). The house features a hipped roof, bracketed cornice and arched windows.

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<sup>28</sup> "Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District National Register Nomination."

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Figure 4: Rev. Joseph Edwin Roy House (1871), 8 Elizabeth Court.



Figure 6: 511 N. Grove Avenue (ca. 1870).



Figure 5: George G. Mayo House, (ca. 1875)  
5 Elizabeth Court.



Figure 7: Robert J. Adamson House (1887),  
175 N. Euclid Avenue.

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The great fire of Chicago in 1871 and the resulting growth and development of the city led to a dramatic increase in Oak Park's population in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Between 1870 and 1890 the Village's residents grew from 500 to 4,500 and numerous subdivisions were platted and developed to accommodate this growth. These years coincided with the popularity of Victorian styles such as Queen Anne, Shingle, Stick and Chateausque. Oak Park boasts hundreds of dwellings built in this style throughout the Village.

The Queen Anne style in Oak Park is generally expressed as a two-story frame dwelling built in an asymmetrical plan with large porches, projecting bays and towers, and exteriors of wood siding and shingles. This style is one of the dominant house forms in the historic district in the blocks just north of Lake Street. An example of this style is the Robert J. Adamson House at 175 N. Euclid Avenue (Figure 7). Several notable architects who worked in Oak Park during these years include Henry Fiddelke, Eben E. Roberts and the firm of Patton & Fisher.

The firm of Patton & Fisher was one of the most active firms designing Queen Anne style dwellings in Oak Park in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Founded in Chicago in 1883 by Normand Patton and Reynolds Fisher, this firm designed a number of homes in the Village. Examples of their Queen Anne designs include the David Kennedy House at 309 N. Kenilworth Avenue built in 1888, the John Rankin House built in 1891 at 245 N. Kenilworth Avenue, and the Edwin Osgood House at 205 N. Euclid Avenue built in 1888 (Figures 8-9). Patton went on to design a number of schools and libraries in the Chicago area and the firm worked in many other architectural styles in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.



Figure 8: John Rankin House at 245 N. Kenilworth Avenue (1891) designed by Patton & Fisher.



Figure 9: Edwin Osgood House, 205 N. Euclid Avenue designed by Patton & Fisher (1888).



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Henry Fiddelke was also an active architect in the 1890s in the Queen Anne style. Born in 1865 and apprenticed in the offices of Joseph Silsbee and Adler and Sullivan, Fiddelke opened his own practice in Oak Park in 1896 and designed numerous houses in the historic district. An example of his Queen Anne style dwellings is the W.G. Adams House at 517 N. Euclid Avenue (Figure 10). Fiddelke had his office in Oak Park and continued to design dwellings primarily in revival styles into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.



Figure 10: W.G. Adams House (1898), designed by Henry Fiddelke, 517 N. Euclid Avenue.

Another prolific architect was Eben E. Roberts who moved to Illinois in the 1880s and established his practice in Oak Park in 1893. Roberts is credited with designing over 200 buildings in Oak Park and worked in a variety of styles during his practice which lasted from the 1890s to the 1920s. Examples of his Queen Anne style designs include the Sampson Rogers House at 537 N. Euclid Avenue built in 1895 and the F.E. Hoover House at 521 N. Euclid Avenue built in 1896 (Figures 11-12). The Sampson Rogers House is distinguished by its large projecting bays on the main façade while the F.E. Hoover House features a prominent corner tower and wraparound porch.

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Figure 11: Sampson Rogers House, (1895)  
at 537 N. Euclid Avenue.



Figure 12: F.E. Hoover House, (1896) at 521  
N. Euclid Avenue.

Other designs constructed in Oak Park in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century also included examples of the Stick, Shingle and Chateausque styles. Both the Stick and Shingles styles are related to the asymmetrical Queen Anne form but differ in their expression of materials. The Stick style is distinguished by the exuberant use of milled wood on the exterior in its porch columns and railing, gable fields, and mixture of shingles, siding, and applied decoration. The Gordon Ripley House built ca. 1885 at 305 Forest Avenue is a fine example of this style and also features a bay window on the main façade (Figure 13). The William M. Luff House at 520 N. Oak Park Avenue is a particularly intricate example of this style with a two-story projecting bay on the main façade, large milled support brackets and porch with diagonal bracing (Figure 14).

By contrast, the Shingle style was generally more restrained and expressed its materials through a sheathing of wood shingles. Sometimes these shingles were used to wrap corners as well provide a smooth and consistent surface. The Corydon T. Purdy House at 503 N. Grove Avenue is a representative example of this style with its exterior of wood shingles and wraparound front porch (Figure 15). The Chateausque style was based on medieval forms and utilized elements such as cross gables, corbels and stepped parapet walls at the roofline. Examples of this style in the district include the stone veneer houses in the 200 block of N. Marion Street and most notably the Burton F. Hales House at 509 N. Oak Park designed by Henry Fiddelke in 1904 (Figures 16-17).

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Figure 13: Gordon Ripley House (ca. 1885),  
350 Forest Avenue.



Figure 15: Corydon T. Purdy House (1893),  
503 N. Grove Avenue.



Figure 14: William M. Luff House (ca. 1888),  
520 N. Oak Park Avenue.



Figure 16: 208 N. Marion Street (ca. 1890).

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Figure 17: Burton F. Hales House designed in 1904 by Henry Fiddelke in the Chateausque style at 509 N. Oak Park Avenue.

By the mid-1890s, architecture in Oak Park was also influenced by the renewed emphasis on designs derived from Colonial America. The Colonial Revival style was a return back to symmetrical building forms based on the Georgian and Federal designs of America from the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Columbian Exposition of 1893 heralded this return to classicism and throughout the 1890s the style gained popular acceptance across the country. An early example of this return to classicism is the George C. Page House designed by Harvey Page in 1896 (Figure 18). This two-story dwelling was built with a full height pedimented portico with Ionic columns on the main façade and corner pilasters. The popularity of the Colonial Revival style and related revival styles such as Tudor would have a major impact on the architecture of Oak Park in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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Figure 18: George C. Page House (1896) 637 N. Euclid Avenue.

In addition to the high style dwellings of the period, a number of smaller homes were also built in the Village, especially in the blocks near Harlem Avenue. Commonly known as "Worker's Cottages," these dwellings were generally built in gable front plans, with porches on the main façade. These one- and two-story houses were built primarily of frame construction and were decorated with milled or classical porch columns and railings on the main façade. These dwellings were built throughout the Chicago area and became a dominant housing form for the city's working class residents because they were well suited for narrow city lots.<sup>29</sup> Lot widths of 25' and 30' were common in the blocks between N. Marion Street and Harlem Avenue and dozens of examples of this house form are located in these blocks.

One- and one-half story examples of Worker's Cottages include the dwellings at 1114 Paulina Street and 831 Forest Avenue (Figures 19-20). Both houses were built in gable front plans with dormers providing additional living space in the half-story. Both retain their original, full-width porches on the main façade. A two-story example of a Worker's Cottage is the house at 821 Belleforte Avenue which also features an original porch on the main façade (Figure 21). Worker's Cottages are an important vernacular house form throughout the Chicago area and those in Oak Park are representative of the variety of residents who moved to the Village at the turn of the century.

<sup>29</sup> Joseph Bigott, "Historical Significance of Worker's Cottages (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 44.

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Figure 19: 1114 Paulina Street, (ca. 1900).



Figure 21: 821 Belleforte Avenue, (ca. 1895).



Figure 20: 831 Forest Avenue, (ca. 1900).

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### OAK PARK'S ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT, CA. 1900 – CA. 1941: FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT AND THE RISE AND DECLINE OF THE PRAIRIE SCHOOL

The Village of Oak Park's architectural development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century mirrored those of many American communities across the country. Popular styles such as Italianate, Queen Anne, and Shingle dominated the designs built by America's middle-class, professionals, and upper-class citizens into the 1890s. However, during this decade Oak Park became the center for two competing architectural trends; the emergence of the Prairie School led by Frank Lloyd Wright and the movement away from the styles of the Victorian era into the revival styles such as Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival. From the late 1890s to World War I, Prairie style houses and revival style houses were constructed adjacent to one another in the Village, sometimes by the same architect.

Oak Park became the center of the Prairie School due to a number of factors. Of primary importance was the presence of Frank Lloyd Wright, the architect who became the most closely associated with this style. Other Chicago area architects such as George W. Maher and Eben E. Roberts also began designing dwellings with a particular emphasis on horizontality and restrained ornamentation concurrent with Wright. Another factor was Chicago and Oak Park's prominence in social advances at the turn of the century. Chicago was a center in discussing new approaches to domestic space and household life. Chicago's Hull House, established in 1889, was one of the first to pioneer new approaches to social work in America. In 1893, the National Household Economics Association was founded by the Women's Congress at the Chicago Exposition of 1893 in order to promote scientific principles for home economics. The University of Chicago also had prominent schools of educational and social reform.<sup>30</sup> As one of the wealthier suburbs of Chicago, the Village's residents included men and women who were open to new ideas and experimentation including new architectural forms. Civic organizations such as the Nineteenth Century Woman's Club and the Suburban Civics and Equal Suffrage Organization provided forums to discuss progressive ideas for social and domestic life.<sup>31</sup> In particular there was an increased emphasis on simplicity, cleanliness, and utilization of new technology for household improvements.

These new trends in domestic space assisted in accepting and embracing the Prairie School. One of these trends was the "democratization" of the house which did away with ornate entrance halls and parlors and instead replaced these spaces with a large living room.<sup>32</sup> The highly

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<sup>30</sup> Terence Riley, ed. *Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect*, (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1994), 60.

<sup>31</sup> Guarino, *Yesterday: A Historical View of Oak Park, Illinois*, 98.

<sup>32</sup> Alan Gowans, *The Comfortable House*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1986), 28.

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decorated and sumptuous interiors popularized during the Victorian era began to fade in popularity in favor of interiors which were "...simple, efficient, neat and natural."<sup>33</sup> The stiffness and formality of the Victorian era was also gradually replaced by a more informal and relaxed lifestyle. Popular magazines of the turn of the century such as the *Ladies Home Journal* described middle-class families as placing a premium on naturalness and conviviality, openness and informality.<sup>34</sup> This increased emphasis on relaxation and informality was made possible by new technology which created more leisure time, especially for women. The availability and widespread use of gas hot water heaters, indoor plumbing, sewing machines, and mechanical washing machines reduced the housekeeping burden for the middle class. Smaller family sizes and a wider variety of goods on grocery shelves also helped defray the traditional 19<sup>th</sup> century chores of housekeeping.<sup>35</sup>

This simplicity and honesty was also expressed through the popularity of furniture and interior design during the early 1900s. Popularized by furniture maker and designer Gustav Stickley, his *Craftsman* magazine rejected the busy and ornate interiors of Victorian homes and stressed instead straightforward and practical furniture, integrated bookcases and fireplaces, and plain plaster walls. Known as the Arts and Crafts movement, this philosophical approach to living emerged out of England by William Morris in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century but did not gain widespread acceptance in America until the 1890s. In 1897, the Chicago Arts and Crafts Society was founded to promote this movement and the Arts and Crafts movement dovetailed with the emerging approach to architectural design in Chicago.<sup>36</sup>

The Prairie School and the Arts and Crafts movement were further popularized by the magazine *House Beautiful* which was first published in 1896. This magazine was published in Chicago and reflected and influenced Midwest tastes. The first two articles published about Frank Lloyd Wright appeared in this magazine in 1897 and 1899 and in the early 1900s the Prairie School was given extensive publicity through articles by architect Robert C. Spencer Jr.<sup>37</sup> He wrote more than 20 articles between 1905 and 1909 extolling the virtues of the simple and practical Prairie style home.

The Prairie House was also ideally suited to the new suburban residential development and lifestyle of the Midwest. The expanse of available land in developing suburbs provided large lot

<sup>33</sup> Clifford Edward Clark Jr., *The American Family Home*, (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 132.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 135.

<sup>36</sup> Brooks, *The Prairie School*, (New York, W.W. Norton, 1972), 17.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 24.



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sizes capable of accommodating the large, horizontal dwellings, and the growing middle class favored their design and size. As one architectural historian noted "The Prairie House appealed to a progressive segment of Chicago's middle class because it represented a practical, new way of life – full of "light air and prospect" – in contrast to the claustrophobic, cluttered rooms of the Victorian House."<sup>38</sup> The Prairie style appealed to women as representing "... a model environment in which important social values would be instilled."<sup>39</sup> The Prairie style appealed to the Midwest's wealthy businessmen who were willing to embrace this new architecture for its newness and lack of historic references. Wright said of his early clients that "I found them chiefly among American men of business with unspoiled instincts and ideals...He has rather liked the "idea" and much of the encouragement this work receives comes straight from him because the "common sense" of the thing appeals to him."<sup>40</sup> In 1904, one author noted that of the Prairie School "their clients, the well-to-do western gentlemen for whom the houses are built, do not seem to demand the use of European styles and remnants to the same extent as do the eastern owners of expensive buildings."<sup>41</sup> The Prairie School's emphasis on simplicity, common sense and honesty found a ready client base in the bustling economy of Oak Park and the Midwest.

The wealth of Oak Park, new approaches to house design and function and the presence and influence of Frank Lloyd Wright all converged to make Oak Park the center of the Prairie School of Architecture in the early 1900s. The most important of these factors was Wright himself who emerged as the most successful and influential architect of the Prairie School. Wright moved to Oak Park in 1889 and over the next twenty years he practiced architecture in the Village at his studio on Chicago Avenue. Wright's commissions in Oak Park and elsewhere inspired many other architects in the Chicago area to follow him and this legacy remains evident in the built environment of the Village.

Much of Frank Lloyd Wright's creativity, concepts, and approaches to architecture stem from his background and early experiences in life. Both his family and his surroundings were extremely strong and important components of his life that had a lasting influence on him. Wright grew up in the rolling farmland of Wisconsin. His maternal grandparents, Welsh immigrants Richard and Mary Lloyd-Jones, settled along the Wisconsin River near Spring Green in 1844. Like much of the surrounding Welsh community, the Lloyd-Joneses were industrious farmers and held the land in high regard. They were a large, close-knit family that was deeply religious, revered education

<sup>38</sup> Kathryn Smith, *Frank Lloyd Wright, America's Master Architect*, (New York: Abbeville Press, 1998), 29

<sup>39</sup> Dennis P. Doorman, *Twentieth Century Architecture*, (New York: Harry N. Abrams Publishers, 2002), 51.

<sup>40</sup> H. Allen Brooks, *The Prairie School*, (New York, W.W. Norton, 1972), 16.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

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and had a strong interest in music, art, and literature. Anna, one of Richard and Mary's ten children, married William Russell Cary Wright in 1866. Anna, a tall, dark-haired woman in her mid twenties, was confident, erudite, and strong-willed. Prior to her marriage she had been earning a living as a school teacher, traveling around to various communities on horseback and boarding with area families. William Wright was a widower eleven years Anna's senior. A handsome, charming man of slight build, he was a strong orator and gifted musician, and was socially and politically active in the community. Originally from Hartford, Connecticut, William had left his first career as a lawyer to become a preacher. He traveled often and in 1859 settled in Wisconsin, where his first wife died soon after giving birth to their third child.<sup>42</sup>

Frank Lloyd Wright, Anna and William's first child, was born June 8, 1867.<sup>43</sup> Two sisters, Jane and Maginel, soon followed. William had a difficult time making a living and the family, which now consisted of six children, moved frequently. Money and food were often scarce and the family was repeatedly dependent upon the charity of William's parishioners. Moving every few years the family lived in various locations throughout New England and the Midwest before returning to Wisconsin in 1877 where they established a home in Madison. Anna and William's relationship was tumultuous and increasingly rife with conflict. The marriage ended in divorce in 1885. William left Wisconsin, and Frank, who was eighteen at the time, never saw his father again.

Despite what was most likely a difficult and turbulent household during his childhood, young Frank received a rich and diverse, if not formal, education. Wright's mother was exceedingly dedicated to her son and throughout her life made tremendous efforts and sacrifices to ensure his intellectual development and future success. Another major influence on Wright in his youth was his tenure at his uncle's farm. Wright began spending his summers working on his Uncle James' farm near Spring Green, Wisconsin when he was eleven years old. At the time, young Frank detested the rigorous work which "piled tired on tired" and he even ran away on more than one occasion. But those summers established strong work habits and stamina that persisted throughout his life. More importantly, his time on the farm also generated a great love and respect for nature's beauty, from which he later drew inspiration for his architectural designs. He also gained a strong sense of family solidarity as a large gathering of aunts and uncles came together for Sunday worship followed by a massive family picnic in the picturesque

<sup>42</sup> Alexander O. Boulton, *Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect. An Illustrated Biography* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1993), 17-18; Ada Louise Huxtable, *Frank Lloyd Wright* (New York: The Penguin Group, 2004), 1-3.

<sup>43</sup> Wright erroneously claimed that his birth date was 1869, perhaps to make his early success appear even more impressive and/or to give a more youthful impression in later life. Huxtable, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 1-2.

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countryside with wagons brimming with rich, homemade foods – a practice he later tried to replicate with his Taliesin Fellowship.<sup>44</sup>

Following his father's departure Wright needed to assume more responsibility for providing for the family. In 1885 he took a part-time job as an assistant to Allan Conover, a practicing civil engineer and professor at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Here he gained his first experience in engineering. Records indicate that Wright never completed high school, yet he was able to enroll in some classes at the University of Wisconsin while working for Conover. But Wright was too impatient, independent, and nonconforming to stick with a traditional line of study. Anxious to enter the "real" world, he set his sights on Chicago. He persuaded his reluctant mother to contact his Uncle, Jenkin Lloyd Jones, who was a prominent preacher at a Chicago Unitarian church about the move. The uncle replied with a firm "No!" and stated that under no circumstances should Anna allow her boy to come to Chicago, where he was sure to spend his earnings on girls and fine clothes. He recommended that the young man remain in Wisconsin and finish his education at the university. Determined to go, Wright went anyway. He secretly sold his most valuable possessions, and purchased a train ticket.<sup>45</sup>

Twenty-year-old Frank Lloyd Wright arrived in Chicago in the spring of 1887. Chicago at this time was one of the fastest growing cities in the United States and was the center of new and emerging ideas. Chicago embodied a renewed American spirit and brought new vision to many fields including architecture and construction. The city was being rebuilt and reinvented following the devastating fire of 1871 and around this same time advancing technology allowed for construction of taller buildings. Elevators and steel frame construction assisted the development of these new skyscrapers. Chicago architects were openly critical of the Eastern cities with their traditional European styles and sought new and innovative designs.<sup>46</sup> It was an exciting and opportunistic time and place for an up-and-coming young architect to begin his career.

Wright soon secured a job as a tracer for Joseph L. Silsbee, a leading residential architect in the city. Silsbee had designed the Lloyd-Jones family chapel back in Wisconsin, and he was also designing the new All Souls Unitarian Church in Chicago for Wright's Uncle Jenkin. Under Silsbee, Wright had room to grow and develop and he gained a respect for and interest in residential architecture.<sup>47</sup> His first project was to design a building for Hillside Home School, which his Aunts

<sup>44</sup> Tafel, *Apprentice to Genius*, 30; Huxtable, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 13-19.

<sup>45</sup> Huxtable, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 38-41.

<sup>46</sup> Boulton, *Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect*, 25.

<sup>47</sup> Yona Zeldis McDonough, *Frank Lloyd Wright*. (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1992), 32-

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had founded on the Lloyd-Jones farm in Wisconsin. Constructed in 1887, the shingle style building housed living quarters for students and a library.<sup>48</sup>

After working for Silsbee for several months, Wright joined the firm of Adler and Sullivan, which was the cutting-edge leader of Chicago's progressive architectural field. Partners Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan were innovators of the Chicago School of architecture and its ground-breaking skyscrapers. With opposite personalities Adler, a serious, businesslike, practical engineer, and Sullivan, a brilliant but egocentric and often petulant designer, made a remarkable team that was one of the city's most successful architectural firms. In Sullivan, Wright found a mentor, and the young architect quickly became Sullivan's protégé. Sullivan opposed traditional classicism and sought a radical change in architecture to create a new, purely American style. Wright referred to Sullivan as his *Leiber Meister* or beloved master and he would listen to Sullivan for hours at night expounding on his architectural philosophies. He soon became Sullivan's chief assistant and gained a private office near his mentor.<sup>49</sup>

Wright's personal life was also quickly moving forward. At a dance at his uncle's church Wright met Catherine Lee Tobin, the daughter of a prominent Chicago businessman. A romance blossomed between the two in spite of family objections on both sides, and the two married in June of 1889. As his marriage was approaching, Wright signed a five-year contract with Adler and Sullivan at the highest salary of any draftsman in Chicago. Sullivan also gave Wright a \$5,000 loan in order to build a house, which would be repaid out of his paycheck.<sup>50</sup> The newlyweds built a house at the corner of Forest Street and Chicago Avenue in the new suburb of Oak Park just thirty minutes by rail from downtown Chicago. Their first child, Lloyd, was born in 1890. Another five children followed by 1903.

In his early years in Oak Park, Wright commuted to the city where he was employed with Adler and Sullivan. While employed there, Wright indulged his penchant for domestic architectural design via so-called bootleg houses, done as moonlight jobs on the side of his employment. His own home reflects the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement. The shingle style dwelling featured artisanship throughout: high-back dining-room chairs, built-in furniture, a prominent fireplace with inspirational carvings, leaded glass windows with natural motifs.

Wright, however, was not good at handling finances. He never thought about costs and refused to let money stand in the way of what he wanted to do. He never referred to his accounts before purchasing furniture or expensive works of art, or building a new addition to his home. As a result, the family was consistently in debt and creditors were often at the door. When forced into

<sup>48</sup> Boulton, Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect, 26-27; Kristin Visser, *Frank Lloyd Wright and the Prairie School in Wisconsin* (Madison, WI: Prairie Oak Press, 1994), 167.

<sup>49</sup> McDonough, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 34-35; Boulton, *Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect*, 29-30.

<sup>50</sup> Boulton, *Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect*, 26-27, 36.

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a corner, Wright would quickly sell a valuable piece of art to pay off his creditors, and then immediately embark on a shopping spree that left him even further in debt.<sup>51</sup>

He became an indispensable figure at Adler and Sullivan and was involved in many of their high-profile projects. The firm, however, primarily focused on commercial buildings and only rarely designed residential properties for special clients. Sullivan began to hand these residential projects to Wright, who was eager to take on new challenges. Wright's first residential project was the James Charnley House in downtown Chicago. Charnley was a Chicago lumberman and wanted something different. Wright's design featuring "stark simplicity of massing and interior complexity" was a melding of his and Sullivan's architectural ideas. The three-story, brick house was situated on Astor Street, a new corridor that soon became the site of some of Chicago's finest homes (Figure 22). The location was a very visible one for Wright's work and he designed around ten more residences over the next two years.<sup>52</sup>

Wright's reputation grew and soon he was taking on private commissions for residential architecture on his own time. This "moonlighting" was a breach of his contract with Adler and Sullivan, and once the partners found out about it they confronted Wright. Sullivan was furious and an explosive argument took place. Different versions exist as to whether Wright walked out or was fired, but the end result was the same – Wright no longer worked for the firm, and he and Sullivan did not speak again for years.<sup>53</sup>

Wright then struck out independently and established his own firm. The business got off to a slightly shaky start, but he soon acquired a substantial number of commissions for residential construction, many from his friends and acquaintances in his own neighborhood of Oak Park. His first project after Adler and Sullivan was the Winslow House located in River Forest just beyond Oak Park. The house was the home of William H. Winslow, president of Winslow Ornamental Iron Works (Figure 23). In addition to being a businessman, Winslow was a musician and inventor with modern tastes and interests. Wright's design for Winslow's house was a radical change from the traditional Victorian, European-based homes commonly constructed in the early 1890s. Wide eaves and bands of leaded glass windows along with a tall, angled stair tower gave the house an air of formality and elegance with well proportioned symmetry. The main entrance was emphasized with an ornamental door of carved wood that reflected Sullivan's modern style. The design provoked much discussion and interest in the surrounding neighborhoods and became the subject of local debates on style and taste. Many heavily criticized the design, but the shapes and forms that Wright later perfected – the low-pitched roof and horizontal emphasis – were

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 36-39; McDonough, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 41-42.

<sup>53</sup> McDonough, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 41; Tafel, *Apprentice to Genius*, 52.

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beginning to emerge. The Winslow House was a “forerunner of the strong, sophisticated Oak Park homes” that Wright designed in the coming decades.<sup>54</sup>



Figure 22: James Charnley House, 1365 N. Astor Street, Chicago.

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<sup>54</sup> Tafel, *Apprentice to Genius*, 55-57.

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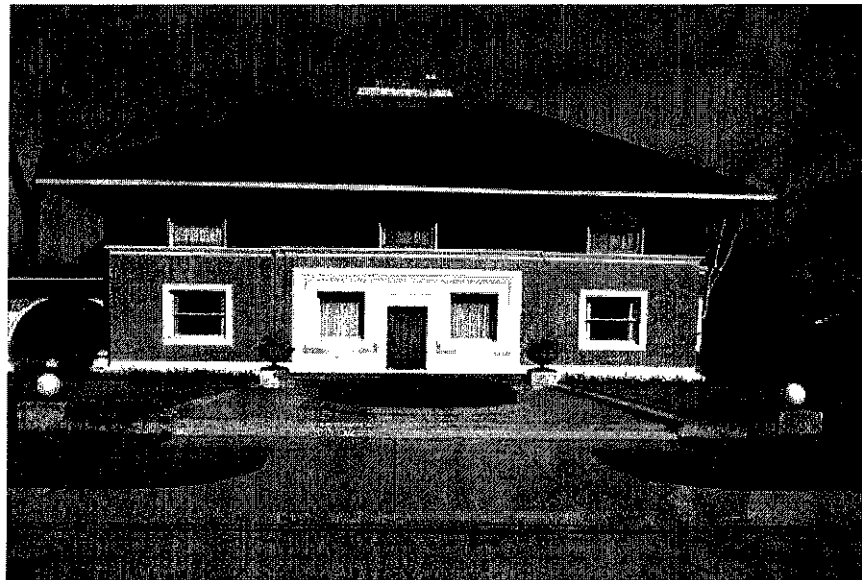


Figure 23: William H. Winslow House, River Forest, Illinois, 1894.

The ideals and approach to architecture that would become the Prairie School began to form through the cross pollination of meetings, exhibits and luncheons in Chicago in the early 1900s. In 1900, Wright was 33 years old and he helped organize a group to discuss and reflect on architecture at Steinway Hall, an eleven story office building downtown where several architects rented space. Helping to form the group were three other architects in their 30s: Dwight Perkins, Robert Spencer Jr. and Myron Hunt. Other architects who worked in the building or nearby and joined the group included Henry Tomlinson and Walter Burley Griffin. Eventually a lunch group of between sixteen and eighteen architects met for several years and discussed the merits of the new forms of architecture versus the historical styles.<sup>55</sup> Other venues for these architects to discuss their designs included local exhibitions and lectures at the Chicago Architectural Club and the nationwide forum offered by the Architectural League of America founded in 1899. The Architectural League's first convention was held in Cleveland but then moved to Chicago for its second convention in 1900.

The meeting of the Architectural League in Chicago was held over three days and included Louis Sullivan as a guest speaker and papers from Wright and other Steinway Hall architects. The meeting highlighted the differences among the architectural community as they debated the merits of "pure design and form" versus adherence to the historical styles of the day. This

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 31.

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convention brought into the mainstream the philosophies of the Chicago architects but their influence waned at Architectural League conventions held over the next several years when this approach to architecture failed to win many new adherents.

In the years both before and after the Architectural League convention of 1900, several architects experimented with new building forms which would mature and emerge into the Prairie style. Although not a member of the group meeting at Steinway Hall, George W. Maher was one of the first Chicago architects to move towards large horizontal forms for dwellings while still retaining traditional historical elements. His designs for the Edgar G. Barrett House in Kenilworth in 1896 and the John Farson House in Oak Park in 1897 both stressed large hipped roofs with prominent horizontal lines and broad porches. Hugh Garden was another architect in Chicago who designed buildings with strong massing, simplified forms and horizontal lines. His Albert F. Madlener House built in 1902 at 4 W. Burton Place in Chicago features strong horizontal belt courses of stone interspersed on the brick façade and window surrounds with minimal ornamentation. Other architects who designed in a similar fashion included George Elmslie, George R. Dean, William Drummond, Walter Burley Griffin and Robert Spencer Jr.

The decade of the 1890s was a period of experimentation for Wright as he moved towards the designs which would become known as the Prairie style. Wright resided in Oak Park from 1889 to 1909 while he was in his twenties and thirties. It was here that his vision for American architecture unfolded and gained international attention. As author Patrick Cannon notes, "Frank Lloyd Wright and Oak Park, Illinois, are inextricably entwined. If Madison, Wisconsin, held an emotional place in Wright's heart as his point of departure, Oak Park was where he actually lived during the crucial decades when he first envisioned a new architecture that was both American and modern."<sup>56</sup> In Oak Park, one can trace his first experiments with developing a new vocabulary of architecture to its full fruition in the mature Prairie form. Altogether Wright designed or remodeled 26 dwellings in Oak Park during these years.

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<sup>56</sup> Patrick F. Cannon. *Hometown Architect, The Complete Buildings of Frank Lloyd Wright in Oak Park and River Forest, Illinois*, (Petaluma, California: Pomegranate Communications, 2006), 9.



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Figure 24: Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio, 951 Chicago Ave.

The first house that Frank Lloyd Wright designed was his own Oak Park home at 428 Forest Avenue. Built in 1889, this dwelling began as a modest example of the Shingle style then widely built in New England. As his family grew, Wright enlarged the house in 1895, and in 1898 he built his own studio adjacent to the house with an entrance at 951 Chicago Avenue (Figure 24). His studio was designed with a central lobby space serving two flanking spaces containing drafting rooms, an office and library. The lobby was designed with Wright's distinctive art glass skylights creating a dramatic and impressive space for his clients.

Wright designed and built his studio after he left the firm of Adler & Sullivan. Wright resigned (or was fired depending on whose account you believe) after Sullivan discovered that Wright was designing houses on his own after hours which was a violation of company policy. Four of the "bootleg" houses were built near Wright's own home and were completed in 1892 and 1893. The Thomas H. Gale House at 1027 Chicago Avenue (Figure 25) and the Robert F. Parker House at 1019 Chicago Avenue were both built in the popular Queen Anne style of the period but vary somewhat from the style in their angularity and large window treatments. The Walter H. Gale House at 1031 Chicago Avenue and the Francis J. Wooley House at 1030 Superior Street are more conventional Queen Anne houses in their design.

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Figure 25: Thomas H. Gale House, 1027 Chicago Avenue.

The house considered to be the precursor to the Prairie style, the William H. Winslow House, was completed in 1894 in the adjacent suburb of River Forest (Figure 23). This house was designed with a broad hipped roof, wide eaves, low chimney and a conspicuous limestone water table dividing the two floors. Of particular note was Wright's design for the rear façade which featured a circular bay and octagonal staircase. Wright himself considered this house to be a turning point. As he wrote in his *Autobiography*, "The Winslow House had burst on the view of that provincial suburb like the *Prima Vera* in full bloom. It was a new world to Oak Park and River Forest. That house became an attraction far and near. Incessantly, it was courted and admired. Ridiculed too of course."<sup>57</sup>

Wright's next major work was back in Oak Park when he designed a house for Nathan G. Moore at 333 N. Forest Avenue. At the request of the client, Wright designed a traditional Tudor Revival style house although he made distinctive variations through the addition of a one-story porch on the main façade. The house was modified into its present appearance by Wright in 1923 following a major fire. These modifications included more subtle half-timbering in the gables and the addition of large prominent chimneys at the roofline. Other houses designed or remodeled by Wright from 1895 to 1897 in Oak Park included the Harrison P. Young House at 334 N. Kenilworth Avenue, the Harry C. Goodrich House at 534 N. East Avenue and the George W. Smith House at 404 Home Avenue. All three of these dwellings were designed in variations of the Queen Anne, Tudor Revival and Shingle styles.

Wright's next departures from traditional architecture were his designs for the Oak Park dwellings of George Furbeck and his brother Rollin in 1897. The house designed for George

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 32.

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Furbeck at 223 N. Euclid Avenue shows Wright experimenting with angularity with the house composed of a long rectangle with octagonal turrets on the main façade flanking a covered porch and entrance (Figure 24). The spandrels in the turrets are decorated with flared stuccoed panels. The Rollin Furbeck House at 515 Fair Oaks Avenue incorporates both traditional elements such as loggias with decorative columns and eave dentil molding while also featuring interplay between a central vertical tower and flanking low, hipped roof wings.



Figure 24: George Furbeck House at 223 N. Euclid Avenue.

The Hills-DeCaro House at 313 Forest Avenue designed by Wright in 1900 displayed elements of the coming Prairie style in its stucco exterior broad porch with flared eaves and stepped hipped roofs. This house burned in 1976 and was extensively rebuilt in keeping with the original design. In 1900, Wright designed the first of what became known as his "Prairie" houses; the B. Harley Bradley and Warren Hickox Houses in Kankakee, Illinois. Both of these dwellings were designed with stucco exteriors, wide eaves and horizontal gable roofs. These designs were refined further when Wright was hired as the architect for the Frank W. Thomas House in 1901 (Figure 25).

The Frank W. Thomas House was the first commission to give Wright an opportunity to design a Prairie style house in Oak Park.<sup>58</sup> The dwelling, built at 210 Forest Avenue, is one of Wright's first and best Prairie style houses. It features a stucco exterior, low-pitched hipped roof, casement windows of art glass, and a façade with horizontal lines accentuated by wood belt

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 67.

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courses. The entrance to the dwelling is reached via an arched opening in a front wall and then through a glassed-in veranda which in turn opens onto a door with art glass.



Figure 25: Frank W. Thomas House at 210 Forest Avenue.

The Frank W. Thomas House was the maturation of Wright's vision that became known as the Prairie School. This school of architecture was characterized as

"In imitation of a certain broad and horizontal disposition of lines individually employed, a school of design has sprung up, for which its authors claim the title "American." The horizontal lines of the new expression appeal to the disciples of this school as echoing the spirit of the prairies of the great Middle West, which to them embodies the essence of democracy."<sup>59</sup>

Prairie school buildings designed by Wright and other architects were characterized by horizontal lines accented by short vertical accents such as inlaid wood, piers and mullions. Ornamentation was limited and the exteriors were generally expressed through surface textures in various combinations and forms. What ornamentation existed found its expression in decorative art glass or stained glass windows or geometric designs on porch piers and columns. Exteriors were generally of brick, wood or stucco with stucco being the material of choice for many Prairie

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<sup>59</sup> Brooks, *The Prairie School*, 4.

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School architects. Concrete was also used, most notably in Frank Lloyd Wright's Unity Temple in Oak Park. However, this material was never widely used in residential construction.

The early years of the movement was typified by a low rectangular building shape against which were placed asymmetrical opposing features such as projecting wings, a lateral extended porch or an articulated entrance opening.<sup>60</sup> As equally important to the exterior design were the interiors. Prairie houses were often designed to maximize the sense of space and create a feeling of spaciousness to enrich the living experience. Designs were employed to open the house to the outside world through large windows and courtyards. Some architects also sought to enhance livability through the employment of various levels in the house to create variety and zones of use.

The treatment of interiors was of particular importance to Wright and his approach influenced other architects. Wright was inspired by Japanese houses which were built with as few rooms as possible, used movable screens instead of walls, and opened the interior to nature.<sup>61</sup> Wright admired Japanese prints because they abstracted life with a form of simplification that he also followed in his geometric patterns for window glass, light fixtures and other furnishings. Wright studied Japanese architecture and he is thought to have been influenced by the Japanese exhibit at Chicago's Columbian World Exposition in 1893. Wright visited the Japanese temple at the exposition on several occasions and admired its spatial arrangement centered on a particular focal point. As one author noted, "His subsequent focus on the masonry mass of the hearth in the Prairie house is highly suggestive of that prototype."<sup>62</sup> Japanese houses also utilized flat-planed and unpainted wood which influenced Wright in his interior designs.

The term "Prairie School" was not a generally accepted name for this movement until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1908, Wright described his work and the works of fellow architects as the "New School of the Middle West."<sup>63</sup> During the same year, architect Thomas E. Tallmadge described the movement as the "Chicago School" because of the prevalence of the architects working in this style in the Chicago area. The Chicago School became the most widely used term to describe this architecture while it flourished before World War I. The first use of "Prairie School" was by architect Wilhelm Miller in 1915; he used this name because of the dominant horizontality of the houses and their placement on the prairie.<sup>64</sup> It took several decades for this

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>61</sup> Diane Maddex, *Frank Lloyd Wright's House Beautiful*, (New York: Hearst Books, 2000), 54.

<sup>62</sup> Jeffery W. Howe, ed., *American House, Domestic Architecture in the USA*, (London: Batsford Publishing, 2002), 334.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 11.

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term to take the place of the "Chicago School" By the 1950s the term Chicago School became increasingly associated with the movement of skyscraper building in Chicago at the turn of the century, and the Prairie School gradually became the most widely accepted name for Wright's designs and those of his contemporaries in the Midwest.

The designs of these architects and Frank Lloyd Wright began to reach a wider audience beyond the architectural community after 1900. Two of Wright's designs were published in the *Ladies' Home Journal* in 1901, one of which strongly resembled his design for the Frank W. Thomas House. Designs by architect Robert Spencer Jr. also appeared in the same publication the same year. The magazine *House Beautiful* in 1902 featured a Spencer design that had broad eaves, a stucco exterior, strong horizontality and a wide porch on the main façade.<sup>65</sup> Other designs by the Chicago architects were published in the *Architectural Record* and other associated professional journals. Architects such as William Drummond and Walter Griffin worked for awhile under the tutelage of Wright and were clearly influenced by his designs. Griffin's William H. Emery House in Elmhurst, Illinois completed in 1902 and widely discussed at the time is considered one of the first mature examples of the Prairie style.<sup>66</sup> However, the most intense exploration and development of the style took place in Frank Lloyd Wright's studio in Oak Park from 1901 to 1908.

During his time at Oak Park, Wright honed his independent style and unique philosophy of architecture. Between 1895 and 1909 his fame and influence grew steadily. Over these years, he designed a "series of houses in Oak Park and neighboring communities that would revolutionize American architecture."<sup>67</sup> In addition he published numerous articles and house plans in both architectural journals and ladies' magazines. He became the most prominent designer of the Prairie style, which brought fundamental changes to both the exterior and interior of houses.

In his autobiography, Wright describes his creation of the Prairie house style:

My first feeling therefore had been a yearning for simplicity. A new sense of simplicity as 'organic' . . . I loved the prairie by instinct as a great simplicity. . . I saw that a little sight on the prairie was enough to look like much more . . . I had an idea that the horizontal planes in buildings, those planes parallel to earth, identify themselves with the ground—make the building belong to the ground . . .<sup>68</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 74.

<sup>67</sup> Boulton, *Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect*, 43-45.

<sup>68</sup> Frank Lloyd Wright, *An Autobiography* (Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1943), as quoted in Visser, *Prairie School in Wisconsin*, 11.

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Where his mentor Louis Sullivan insisted that "form follow function," Wright surmised that "form and function are one."<sup>69</sup> Like Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright believed that America needed an indigenous, authentic architecture of its own. His mission, also the principle idea behind the Prairie School, was "to create and help sustain a genuinely American architecture and style of living, wholly personal and original."<sup>70</sup> As his career progressed Wright continuously deepened and perfected his developing philosophy of "organic" architecture. This approach emphasizes harmony between the natural environment and the built environment. Its key principle is that a house should be truthful to its site, its purpose, and its materials. Wright espoused that a house should appear as if it had grown naturally out of the soil, and he used horizontal lines and earth tones to blend dwellings into their surroundings. Lines between the outside and the inside were to be blurred, combining the domains of man and nature.<sup>71</sup>

Wright also revolutionized residential interior space. He viewed traditional housing styles as consisting of confining boxes that were antithetical to domestic life. He claimed "The American house lies," stating that it had no sense of unity or space.<sup>72</sup> Wright worked toward "the destruction of the box" not only by employing an open floor plan, but also by eliminating traditional corner supporting posts and using lots of windows to open the house to the outside. Wright explained:

My sense of 'wall' was no longer the side of a box. It was enclosure of space affording protection against storm or heat only when needed. But it was also to bring the outside world into the house and let the inside of the house go outside. In this sense, I was working away at the wall as a wall and bringing it towards the function of a screen, a means of opening up space.<sup>73</sup>

Wright envisioned the entire lower floor as one room and then screened portions of the room for specific purposes such as dining, reading, or entertaining. This lack of rigid boundaries gave the home a feeling of continuous space. The Prairie design featured a single, wide central chimney and did not include basements or attics, which Wright declared "useless dead space."<sup>74</sup>

Architectural historian Leland Roth lists nine principles articulated by Wright which found union in his Prairie houses:

<sup>69</sup> Visser, *Prairie School in Wisconsin*, 4, 9.

<sup>70</sup> Tafel, *Apprentice to Genius*, 31.

<sup>71</sup> Boulton, *Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect*, 45; Dell Upton, *Architecture in the United States*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 129.

<sup>72</sup> Tafel, *Apprentice to Genius*, 44.

<sup>73</sup> Frank Lloyd Wright, *An Autobiography* (Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1943), as quoted in Visser, *Prairie School in Wisconsin*, 11.

<sup>74</sup> Tafel, *Apprentice to Genius*, 47.

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"First the number of parts of the house were reduced to a minimum to achieve greatest unity. Second, the house was integrated with its site by extending the horizontal planes. Third, the room as a box was eliminated in favor of spaces defined by screen and panels, with little space wasted on structure. Fourth, the damp basement was eliminated by raising the house up off the ground, placing the major living quarters up one flight with a better view of the landscape. Fifth, windows became banks of "light screens" rather than holes cut in walls. Sixth, the number of materials was reduced to a minimum with ornamentation expressive of the materials and designed for machine production – hence the propensity for straight lines. Seventh, all heating, lighting, plumbing, and mechanical fixtures were incorporated into the fabric of the building and made architectural features. Eighth, all furnishings were made one with the building. And ninth, the "fashionable decorator" was eliminated."<sup>75</sup>

As his career progressed Wright continuously deepened and perfected his developing philosophy of "organic" architecture. This approach emphasizes harmony between the natural environment and the built environment. Its key principle is that a house should be truthful to its site, its purpose, and its materials. Wright espoused that a house should appear as if it had grown naturally out of the soil, and he used horizontal lines and earth tones to blend dwellings into their surroundings. Lines between the outside and the inside were to be blurred, combining the domains of man and nature.<sup>76</sup> These characteristics of the Prairie School of Architecture revolutionized American residential architecture with horizontal, open floor plans spreading from a central nucleus of family life. The design supplanted Victorian compartmentalization and opened the interior to the outdoors with banks of windows, often depicting botanicals in their stained glass design. The distinctly organic style of the home as a whole was integrated into its outdoor setting and evoked the natural landscape of the region, the vast, flat Prairies from which the style took its name.

In addition to the Frank W. Thomas House, two significant early examples of Wright's Prairie design are the Ward Willits House and the Darwin D. Martin House, built in 1902 and 1904 respectively (Figures 26-27). The Willits House built in Highland Park, Illinois was innovative in its spatial arrangement. The large house had four wings arranged in a pinwheel formation with

<sup>75</sup> Leland Roth, *A Concise History of American Architecture*, New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 208

<sup>76</sup> Boulton, *Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect*, 45; Dell Upton, *Architecture in the United States*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 129.



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each mass spreading from a central core. Long, clean rooflines and a projecting wall gave it a horizontal character.<sup>77</sup>

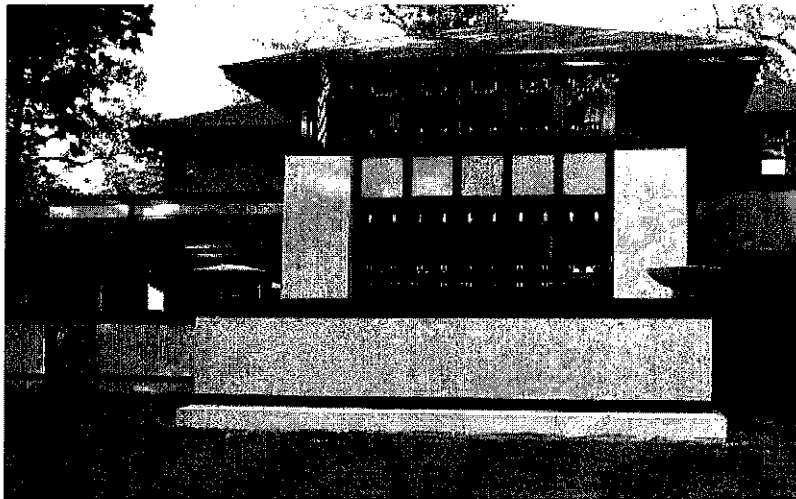


Figure 26. Ward Willits House, 1445 Sheridan Road, Highland Park, IL.

The Darwin D. Martin House constructed in Buffalo, New York was based on the 1901 design Wright published in the *Ladies' Home Journal* only on a much grander scale. A long porte cochere and huge side porch lengthen the building which consists of interlocking spaces that emerge in a shifting directional pattern around a central core.<sup>78</sup> The house also is illustrative for its furniture designed by Wright. In the Darwin D. Martin House, Wright designed barrel chairs, and windows with a tree-of-life motif. As his later apprentice Edgar Tafel explained, Wright chose a "grammar" for each building that was to be used throughout and in every detail. "He insisted that to create a house that is a work of art, the architect, as artist, needs to express a 'consistent thought-language in his design.'" The result was the "total feeling of the house was of one stripe, from the overall plan down to the furniture, the door jambs, and the window frames."<sup>79</sup> Wright, however, never mastered a chair design to his own satisfaction. While always attractive, they were rarely comfortable. Wright himself commented that "I have been black and

<sup>77</sup> Trewin Copplestone, *Frank Lloyd Wright A Retrospective View* (New York: TODTRI Book Publishers, 1997), 29-31; Maria Costantino, *Frank Lloyd Wright Design* (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1995), 34.

<sup>78</sup> Copplestone, *A Retrospective View*, 36.

<sup>79</sup> Tafel, *Apprentice to Genius*, 91.

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blue in some spot somewhere almost all my life from too intimate contact with my own furniture."<sup>80</sup>

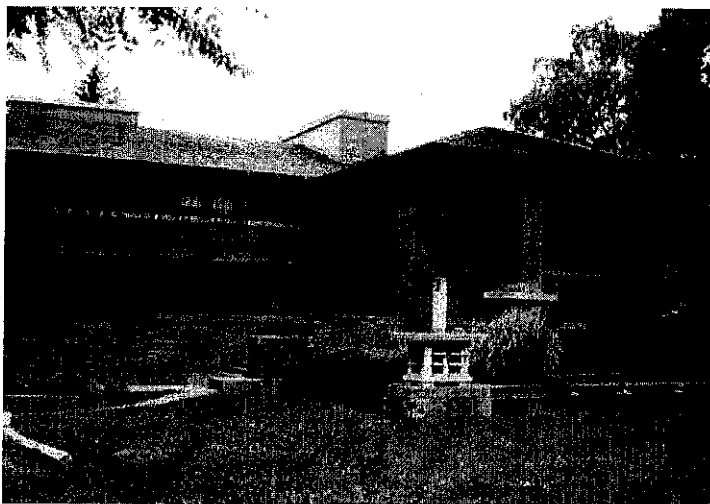


Figure 27: Darwin D. Martin House, Buffalo, 1904.



Figure 28: William G. Fricke House, 540 N. Fair Oaks Avenue.

<sup>80</sup> Copplestone, *A Retrospective View*, 36.

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In Oak Park, Wright followed the Thomas House with a design for William G. Fricke at 540 Fair Oaks Avenue also in 1901 (Figure 28). Although more vertical in form, this house features hipped roofs emerging in a series of stepped down wings from a central three-story main block. The house has a stucco exterior with little ornamentation, horizontal bands above and beneath the casement windows, and wide eaves at the second and third story levels.



Figure 29: Arthur B. Huertley House, 318 Forest Avenue.

Advances in Wright's designs continued with the Ward Willits House in Highland Park, Illinois and the Arthur B. Huertley House in Oak Park, both designed in 1902. The Ward Willits House achieved more symmetry in its vertical and horizontal balance while using the now familiar forms of stucco for the exterior finish, low pitched hipped roofs and art glass casement windows. The Arthur B. Huertley House at 318 Forest Avenue differs in its use of concrete and brick as exterior materials and has one wide, low pitched hipped roof (Figure 29). The horizontality of the dwelling is accentuated by alternating courses of different shades of brick. The entrance is located within a large brick arch on the main façade. Wright considered the design to be "one of my best" and is it widely considered to be one of his more fully realized works.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Cannon, *Hometown Architect*, 81.

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Figure 30: William E. Martin House, 636 N. East Avenue.

In 1903, Wright designed the William E. Martin house at 636 N. East Avenue (Figure 30). This design is similar to the William G. Fricke House in its "stepped" progression of rooflines from three- to one-stories. The main façade has a projecting wall, a stucco exterior and continuous sills beneath the windows. Wright also designed a dwelling for Martin's brother Darwin in Buffalo, New York as well as a factory in Chicago for the two brothers. During the same year as his design for the William E. Martin House, Wright designed a residence for Edwin H. Cheney at 520 N. East Avenue. The main façade of the dwelling makes it appear that it is a one-story home but at the rear another story emerges. The dwelling has a brick exterior with wide eaves, a prominent concrete belt course, and art glass casement windows. The interior was designed with large open spaces flowing into one another from the living room, dining room and library.



Figure 31: Peter A. Beachy House, 238 Forest Avenue.

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Wright's designs in Oak Park and other communities resulted in his becoming one of the most famous architects in America by 1903. This resulted in an immense level of work both in Oak Park and throughout the Midwest. Between 1902 and 1906, Wright designed over seventy-five buildings primarily in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin.<sup>82</sup> In Oak Park, Wright completed designs for the Peter A. Beachy House at 238 Forest Avenue (Figure 31) and Unity Temple at 875 W. Lake Street, both in 1906. The Beachy House is distinguished by its prominent corner brick piers and gabled entry bay on the main facade. Despite the dormers, the house maintains a strong degree of horizontality in the flat roof over the entrance and the projecting one-story porch on the south façade.

The Unity Temple is considered one of Wright's most important designs. Designed for the local Unitarian congregation, its construction followed the loss of the original church by fire in 1905. A member of the congregation, Wright was hired to design the church with an anticipated date of completion in 1906. Due to cost overruns and delays the church was not finally completed until October of 1908. The design for the church called for the use of concrete in its construction and exterior finish and a central lobby serving both the sanctuary and social hall. The building was designed with a flat roof, wide eaves, and windows divided by concrete columns. Light was provided by skylights and clerestory windows of art glass. (Located two blocks south of the Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture Historic District, this building was listed individually as a National Historic Landmark in 1970).



Figure 32: Laura Gale House, 6 Elizabeth Court.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 88.

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In 1907, Wright received the commission to design a new house for Laura Gale, widow of Thomas Gale, whose house Wright designed in 1892 (Figure 32). The design for the Laura Gale House was a precursor of Falling Water with its cantilevered roof forms and porches. Historian Henry Russell Hitchcock called the house "a small masterpiece...closer to what the Europeans who were most inspired by Wright were to come to in the early twenties."<sup>83</sup> Located at 6 Elizabeth Court, the dwelling had typical Wright features including an exterior of stucco, bold horizontal lines, and low pitched roofs but differed in its use of cantilevered roofs and balconies to create outdoor space.

In his last years in Oak Park, Wright was commissioned to remodel a dwelling at 400 Forest Avenue for William H. Copeland and designed two new dwellings for Oscar B. Balch and Harry S. Adams. The remodeling for Copeland in 1908 primarily consisted of interior updates as well as new porch columns on the main façade. Toward the end of his Oak Park years, Wright designed two of his most notable Prairie designs; the Frederick Robie House, built in Chicago in 1909, and the Avery Coonley House in Riverside Illinois, completed in 1908. The Robie House is best known for its revolutionary interior design in which the main areas of the ground- and first-floors are unwallled, thus creating a continuous flow and openness of space (Figure 33).<sup>84</sup> The Coonley House features a sloping glass ceiling over the large living room, and a banded decorative frieze. In addition to the house, Wright also designed a pool, sunken garden, stable, and gardener's cottage. The Robie and Coonley Houses are often regarded as the best examples of the Prairie Style, particularly for their innovative use of space. "Here, clearly and forcefully, is Mr. Wright's revolution in architectural space—free-flowing yet interpenetrating interiors, the play of interlocking horizontal forms with their vertical counterpoint reflected on the exterior, the dissolution of indoors to outdoors, outdoors to indoors."<sup>85</sup>

Wright received two more important commissions in Oak Park after 1910. The Oscar B. Balch House at 611 N. Kenilworth Avenue was commissioned in 1911 and was another classic Prairie style dwelling with wide eaves, bold horizontality and bands of art glass casement windows (Figure 34). Wright's final design in Oak Park was a dwelling commissioned in 1911 for Harry S. Adams at 710 W. Augusta Street. Completed in 1913, the house has a hipped roof, exterior of brick, and a one-story porte cochere on the west façade. The sheltered entrance has an ornate door of art glass and a concrete urn accents the entry bay off the front porch.

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 113.

<sup>84</sup> Copplestone, *A Retrospective View*, 40-43.

<sup>85</sup> Tafel, *Apprentice to Genius*, 59.

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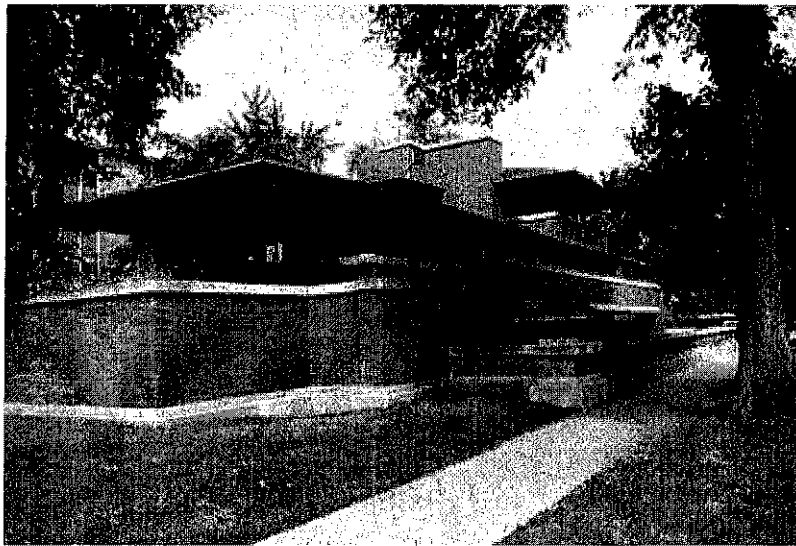


Figure 33: Frederick Robie House, Chicago, Illinois.



Figure 34: Oscar B. Balch House, 611 N. Kenilworth Avenue.

In addition to Wright's personal success and prominence in the 1900s, his Oak Park studio also nurtured and fostered the careers of architects who would gain fame in their own right and design numerous buildings in Oak Park and the Chicago area. The best known of these were Charles White Jr., Walter Burley Griffin, Marion Mahony, Barry Byrne, William Drummond and

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John S. Van Bergen. These individuals generally came to Wright to work as draftsman on his projects and eventually were given more responsibility as their talents improved.<sup>86</sup>

While Wright was the architect most prominently identified with the Prairie School in the 1900s, other firms also became associated with the movement at the same time. Writing for the *Architectural Record* in 1904, Arthur C. David observed that:

"It is true, nevertheless, that there is a group of western architects, resident chiefly in Chicago, who are...departing from the allegiance to the strict European tradition which prevails in the East. The number of the protestants is not as yet very great; several of the architects whose work shows the influence of the different ideal are by no means consistent with their devotion thereto; and the different members of the group differ considerably in the extent to which they push their search for an original vehicle of expression."<sup>87</sup>

In addition to Wright, the Prairie School produced a number of architects who would have a significant effect on building design in Oak Park in the early 1900s. Two of these, Charles E. White Jr. and John S. Van Bergen, worked with Wright in his studio and after forming their own businesses designed dozens of buildings in the Chicago area. Other architects and firms such as Robert C. Spencer Jr., Tallmadge and Watson, George W. Maher, and Eben E. Roberts were influenced by Wright but had their own approach and interpretations of the Prairie School. Along with these formal Prairie style buildings, hundreds of American Foursquare dwellings were also built in the Village with direct influences of the Prairie style such as stucco exteriors, broad roof eaves, and inset horizontal and vertical wood inlay strips. These designs also reflect the Prairie style in their use of materials, simple square porch columns, and emphasis on the horizontal than the more common American Foursquare dwellings with classical or milled columns and shallow eaves. Many of these were built north of Lake Street in the historic district but hundreds more were built south of Lake Street in subdivisions developed by S. T. Gunderson, Thomas H. Hulbert and T.A. Holm. These contractors borrowed elements from the Prairie style to create houses which have "...a sense of solidity and bulk which keep them earth bound and relate them to the Prairie House."<sup>88</sup>

From 1900 to 1909, architects and builders working in the Prairie School had a major impact on the appearance of Oak Park. However, after 1909 Wright was no longer among them. At what

<sup>86</sup> Brooks, *The Prairie School*, 86.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>88</sup> Dull, *The Domestic Architecture of Oak Park, Illinois: 1900-1930*, 14.



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appeared to be the height of his career, Wright abandoned his Oak Park home and business. He had fallen in love with the wife of a client, Mamah Cheney, and left with her to go to Europe, leaving his wife and six children behind. Wright's motives behind this move were not only personal, they were also professional. While he had achieved great success in his career, he felt he was becoming stagnated and needed new inspirations and challenges. As he later put it, "Weary, I was losing my grip on my work and even interest in it."<sup>89</sup>

Wright left the United States because he realized the scandal that would surface due to his abandonment of his family and the impact such an action would have on his professional life. However, he also had a specific purpose in heading to Germany. Berlin publisher Ernst Wasmuth required Wright's help in publishing a major monograph on Wright's work. *Ausgefuehrte Bauten und Entwuerfe* was published in 1911. The volume featured one hundred plates of Wright's architectural plans and details of his designs.<sup>90</sup> The publication declared a new spirit of architecture in Frank Lloyd Wright's work. What the authors found especially intriguing about Wright's designs was:

The absence in these works of any reflection of the European forms to which we have long been accustomed. This turning away from tradition plus the particular manner of arrangement presuppose a unique style, a style that derives from the artist's pleasure in new material forms and in the liberal use of machine technology.<sup>91</sup>

The publication praised Wright's work as "the very epitome of innovative, original architectural design," and noted the "beautifully proportioned measures as can be seen in the Oak Park houses," as well as Wright's "delicately developed sense for the effect of mass and colors."<sup>92</sup> The German publication, as well as his time in Europe, gave Wright international attention and exposure. As biographer Alexander Boulton stated, "In leaving Chicago and Oak Park, he had entered a far larger stage. Over the years he would become the best known and most influential architect in the world, and the publication of his work in Germany was the first step in that direction."<sup>93</sup>

<sup>89</sup> Boulton, *Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect*, 49-52.

<sup>90</sup> Tafel, *Apprentice to Genius*, 62-63.

<sup>91</sup> C.R. Ashbee, "Frank Lloyd Wright: A Study of His Work," in *Frank Lloyd Wright Early Visions, The Great Achievements of the Oak Park Years* (New York: Gramercy Books, 1995. An unabridged reproduction of the *Ausgefuehrte Bauten*, Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth, 1911), 3-4.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>93</sup> Boulton, *Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect*, 53; Copplestone, *A Retrospective View*, 48.

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Outside of Wright, the Prairie School architects who had the greatest impact on Oak Park were Charles E. White Jr., John S. Van Bergen, Eben E. Roberts, Tallmadge and Watson and Robert C. Spencer, Jr. Other architects who also designed several Prairie style dwellings in the Village include George W. Maher, Lawrence Buck and Henry Fiddelke. These architects and their major works in Oak Park follow.

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### Charles E. White Jr.

Chicago architect Charles E. White Jr. worked in various offices before joining Frank Lloyd Wright's studio in 1903 and opened his own practice in 1905.<sup>94</sup> After seven years with his own practice, White partnered with Louis S. Christie in 1912 and they worked together as White & Christie until 1922. White then partnered with Bertram Weber as the firm of White & Weber. In his early career White designed a number of low cost stucco houses and he tended towards the use of Tudor Revival elements applied within overall Prairie massing. Examples of his Prairie style houses in Oak Park include the Simmons House built in 1905 and the Burt L. Wallace House built in 1908 (Figures 35-36). Both have stucco exteriors, hipped roofs and restrained decorative elements.

White also designed larger homes such as the J.F. Skinner House at 605 Linden Avenue which was completed in 1909 (Figure 37). Its exterior is embellished with brick and stucco accents while the interior is arranged around a large central hallway.<sup>95</sup> Between 1910 and 1914, White published almost two dozen articles in *House Beautiful* and illustrated a wide variety of designs including the Prairie School. He also published *Successful Homes and How to Build Them*, another collection that illustrated numerous Prairie style houses, in 1912. After 1912, White and his partners primarily worked in the Colonial and Tudor Revival styles and several of these homes are also in Oak Park. In 1921, White served as the Commissioner of the Oak Park Public Works Department and led the Zoning Commission to adopt Oak Park's first zoning ordinance (1921).

<sup>94</sup> Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission, "A Guide to Oak Park's Frank Lloyd Wright and Prairie School Historic District," 144.

<sup>95</sup> Brooks, *The Prairie School*, 115.

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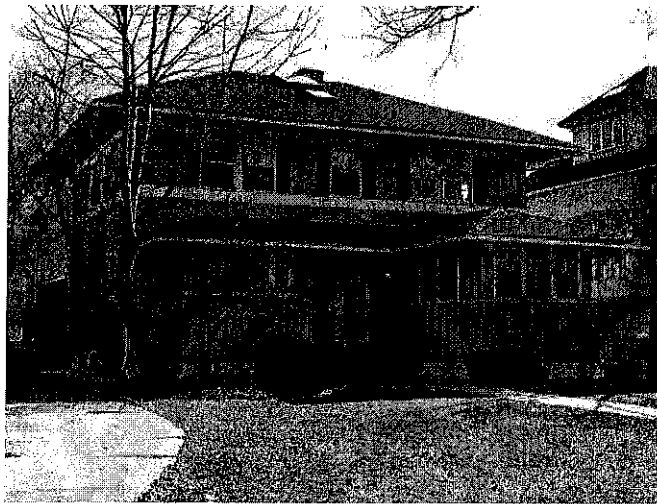


Figure 35: Simmons House (1905), 622 N. Kenilworth Avenue.

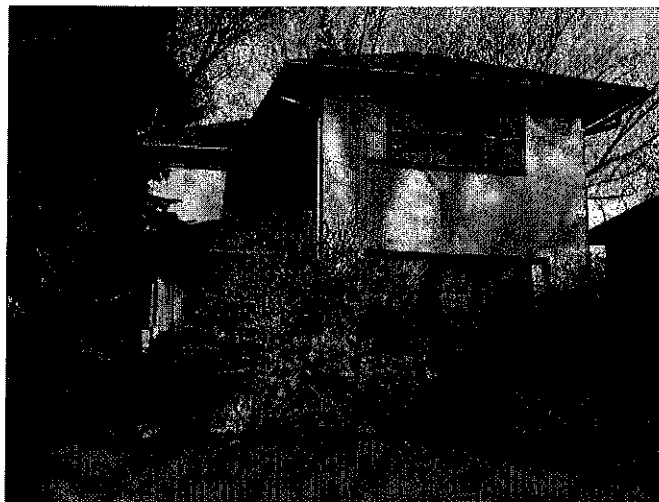


Figure 36: Burt L. Wallace House (1908), 309 N. Elmwood Avenue.

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Figure 37: J.F. Skinner House (1909), 605 Linden Avenue.

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### John S. Van Bergen

John S. Van Bergen was a Wright Studio architect who worked extensively in Oak Park and the Chicago area. Van Bergen was a native of Oak Park and graduated from the Oak Park and River Forest High School. After working as a draftsman for Walter Burley Griffin, Van Bergen joined Wright's Studio in 1909 and completed several of Wright's commissions after Wright left for Europe.<sup>96</sup> Van Bergen opened his own firm in 1911 and is considered to have imitated Wright's designs closer than any other Prairie School architect.<sup>97</sup> Some of his best known works include the three houses he designed in 1914 for Flori Blondeel at 426, 432 and 436 Elmwood Avenue in Oak Park (Figure 38). Similar in design, these three dwellings have broad hipped roofs, stucco exteriors and rows of windows directly below the roof eaves.

Van Bergen has been praised for his sense of proportion and finesse in his designs and many of his designs in Oak Park share similarities such as low pitched hipped roofs, exteriors of stucco, rows of casement windows, and the use of wood strips to create horizontal or vertical patterns on the primary facades.<sup>98</sup> Van Bergen often placed his primary entrances at side bays, or in extended wings on the dwelling. Representative examples of Van Bergen's Oak Park dwellings include the Robert N. Erskine House (1913), the Albert H. Manson House (1914), and the Phillip Greisse House (1915). The Mrs. Charles S. Yerkes House built in 1912 is a rare example of the use of wood siding as an exterior material for a Prairie style house in Oak Park (Figure 40). Its wide clapboard siding accentuates the horizontality of the house. In 1916, Van Bergen also designed the Linden Apartments at 175-181 Linden Avenue in Oak Park which is the only example of a Prairie style apartment building in the Village (Figure 45).

At least two dozen buildings were designed by Van Bergen in Oak Park and most were completed between 1911 and 1918. In 1918, Van Bergen served in the armed forces in World War I and then relocated his practice to Ravinia, Illinois. Van Bergen practiced architecture in Ravinia until 1955 when he moved to Santa Barbara, California.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission, "A Guide to Oak Park's Frank Lloyd Wright and Prairie School Historic District," 143.

<sup>97</sup> Brooks, *The Prairie School*, 279.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, *The Prairie School*, 329.

<sup>99</sup> Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission, "A Guide to Oak Park's Frank Lloyd Wright and Prairie School Historic District," 143.

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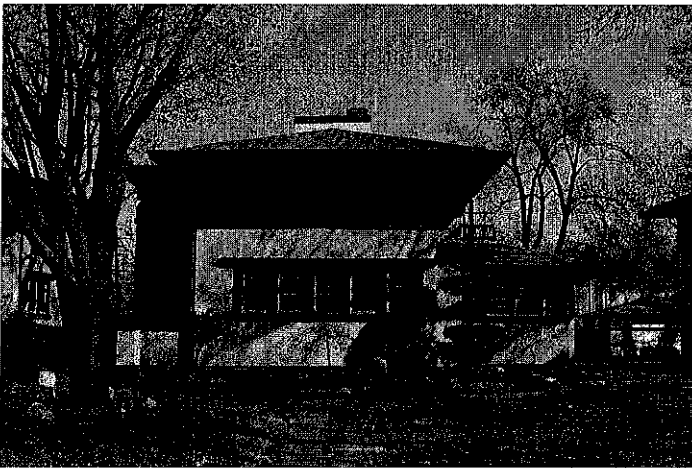


Figure 38: Flori Blondeel House II (1914),  
432 N. Elmwood Avenue.

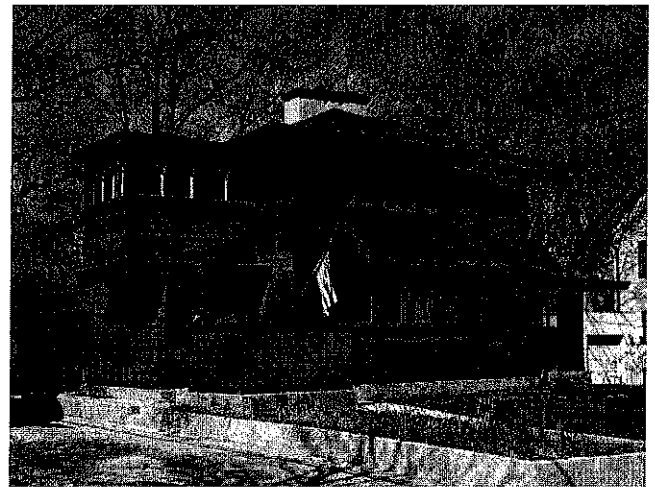


Figure 40: Mrs. Charles S. Yerkes House  
(1912), 450 Iowa Street.



Figure 39: Robert N. Erskine House (1913),  
714 Columbian Avenue.



Figure 41: Albert H. Manson House (1914),  
619 N. Elmwood Avenue.

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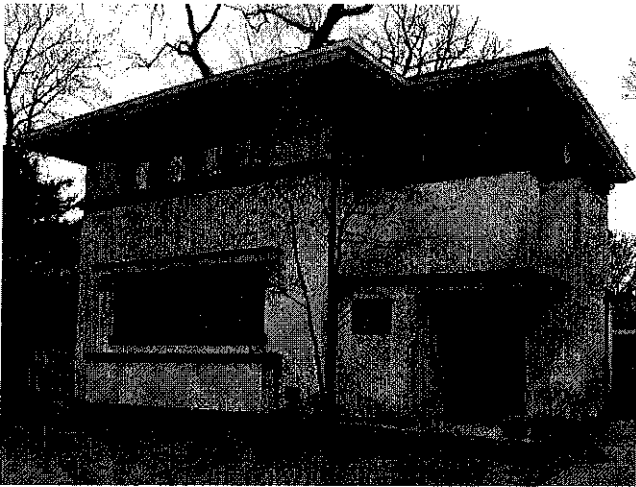


Figure 42: Charles Flitcraft House (1918),  
845 Chicago Avenue.



Figure 44: Philip Greiss House (1915), 716  
Columbian Avenue.

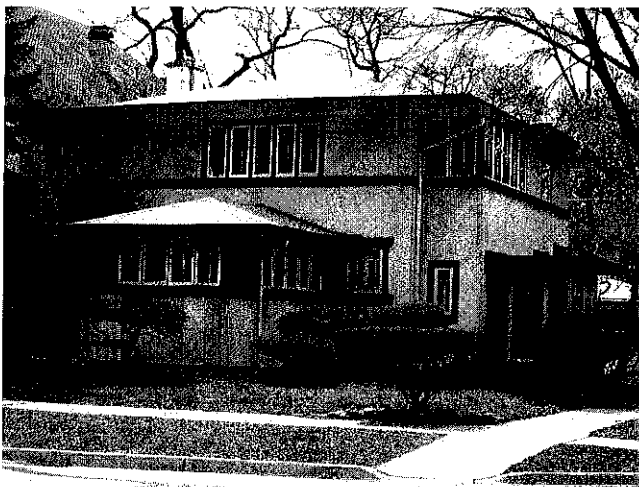


Figure 43: G.L. Smith House (1914), 743  
Columbian Avenue.



Figure 45: Linden Apartments (1916), 175-  
181 Linden Avenue.



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### Eben E. Roberts

A prolific architect in the Prairie School in Oak Park was Eben E. Roberts. Roberts moved to Illinois in the 1880s and established his practice in Oak Park in 1893. Roberts employed numerous drafters and is credited with designing over 200 buildings in Oak Park alone.<sup>100</sup> Roberts worked in a variety of styles and in Oak Park he designed dwellings in the Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Tudor Revival styles as well as Prairie. In 1900, Roberts work underwent a distinct shift with the design of the A.J. Redmond House at 422 Forest Avenue which shows the influence of George W. Maher as well as Wright (Figure 46). This dwelling reflected his adaptation to a more horizontal emphasis, featuring broad windows, hip roofs, wide eaves and large brick, stone or stuccoed porch columns. The Henry P. McGill House continued this trend and featured a wide hipped dormer at the roofline (Figure 47).

Many of Roberts' early 20th century residential projects commonly followed the American Foursquare plan with wood-trimmed stucco exteriors and full-width porches. The homes varied in decorative details such as dormers and other exterior features. Roberts developed a number of stock house plans which he varied with decorative elements. In the early 1900s many of these were essentially American Foursquare plans but given Prairie treatments with wide eaves, stucco finishes, and horizontality emphasized by wood strips and belt courses. An example of this type of dwelling is the Burt S. Davis House built in 1912 which is distinguished by its interlocking wood strips to create geometric patterns on the façade (Figures 52-53).

Roberts worked as an architect in Oak Park until 1912 when he moved his office to Chicago to concentrate on commercial architecture.<sup>101</sup> He formed a partnership with his son, Elmer in the early 1920s and together they designed numerous buildings in Oak Park. These buildings include one of the Village's few examples of the Art Deco style, the Grove Apartments at 300-304 N. Grove completed in 1926. Roberts continued to work in Chicago until 1926 when he retired. He died in Muskegon, Michigan in 1943 and is buried in Forest Home Cemetery west of Oak Park.

<sup>100</sup> Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission, "A Guide to Oak Park's Frank Lloyd Wright and Prairie School Historic District," 142.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

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Figure 46: A.J. Redmond House (1900), 422 Forest Avenue.



Figure 48: H. Benton Howard House (1904) 911 Chicago Avenue.



Figure 47: Henry P. McGill House (1903), 164 N. Euclid Avenue.



Figure 49: Americus B. Melville House (1904), 437 N. Kenilworth Avenue.

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Figure 50: E.E. Roberts House (remodeled 1912), 1019 Superior Street.



Figure 52: Burt S. Davis House (1912), 232 N. Ridgeland Avenue.



Figure 51: Louis H. Brink House (1909), 533 N. Grove Avenue.



Figure 53: Burt S. Davis House (1912), 232 N. Ridgeland Avenue.

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## Tallmadge and Watson

Another prominent firm of the period was Tallmadge and Watson which was founded in 1905. Both Thomas Tallmadge and Vernon S. Watson met while working for architect Daniel H. Burnham. Tallmadge coined the term "Chicago School" in 1908 to describe the Prairie style and the firm eventually became well known for their ecclesiastical architecture.<sup>102</sup> However, in the firm's early years they designed numerous Prairie style dwellings in Evanston, where Tallmadge lived, and Oak Park, where Watson lived. Watson designed and built his home at 643 Fair Oaks Avenue in 1906 and the firm also designed the T.S. Estabrook House at 200 N. Scoville Avenue in 1908 (Figures 54-55). Designed in a cross plan, the Estabrook House was illustrated repeatedly in books and magazines and described as a one-story dwelling that "typifies the "Chicago School".<sup>103</sup>

Like most architects working in the Prairie style, the firm's buildings had an emphasis on open floor plans and the use of natural materials. While some dwellings were built with side gable plans, a design frequently employed by the firm featured a prominent facing gabled bay on the main façade with stucco and wood strips used to outline windows and create geometric patterns. The massing used by the firm often employed more verticality than typical Prairie houses of the period. This design approach can be seen in the Harold H. Rockwell House built in 1910 and the William V. Carroll House built in 1913 (Figures 59 and 61). The firm also employed Tudor Revival detailing such as stucco and half-timbering in gables as seen in the Henry D. Golbeck House completed in 1915 (Figure 60).

As the popularity of the Prairie style waned in the 1910s, the firm returned to designing buildings in historical styles such as Colonial and Tudor Revival. Tallmadge and Watson designed at least 70 dwellings and institutional buildings in Oak Park and River Forest in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>104</sup> Tallmadge gained additional fame in 1927 when he published a well regarded book, *The Story of Architecture in America*. The firm remained in business in Chicago until Watson retired in 1936. Tallmadge continued to practice architecture until 1940 when he was killed in a train accident.

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<sup>102</sup> Brooks, *The Prairie School*, 102.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>104</sup> Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission, "A Guide to Oak Park's Frank Lloyd Wright and Prairie School Historic District," 144.

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Figure 54: Vernon S. Watson House (1904),  
643 Fair Oaks Avenue.



Figure 56: E.P. Ward House (1915), 724  
Linden Avenue.



Figure 55: Torrie S. Estabrook House (1909),  
200 N. Scoville Avenue.



Figure 57: Barrett Andrews House (1906),  
623 N. East Avenue.

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Figure 58: Joseph S. Guy House I (1913),  
411 N. Scoville Avenue.

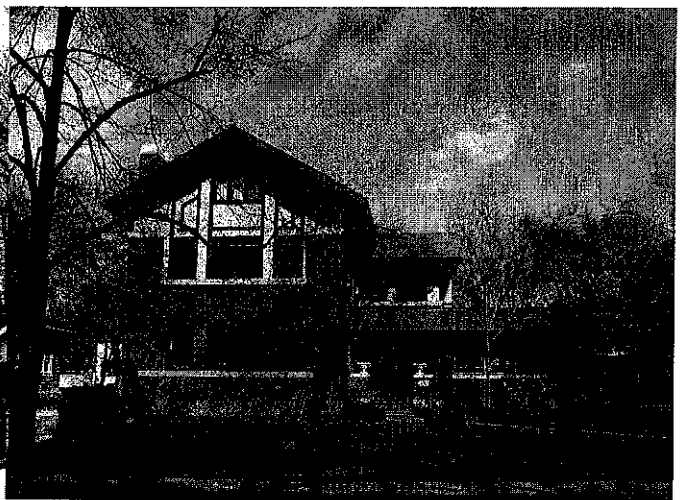


Figure 60: Henry D. Golbeck House (1914),  
636 Linden Avenue.



Figure 59: Harold H. Rockwell House (1910),  
629 N. Oak Park Avenue.



Figure 61: William V. Carroll House (1913),  
611 Fair Oaks Avenue.

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### Robert C. Spencer Jr.

Robert C. Spencer Jr. graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1886 and then worked for the Boston architectural firm of Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge. By 1893, he had moved to Chicago and was working for a branch office of the firm.<sup>105</sup> In 1895, Spencer opened his own practice next door to Frank Lloyd Wright in Steinway Hall before forming a partnership with Horace S. Powers in 1905. The firm of Spencer and Powers designed many buildings until they closed in 1923. The firm's designs in the Prairie style often included simple rectangular forms and half-timbering in the gable fields.<sup>106</sup> An example of this use of stucco and half-timbering is the William C. Stephens House at 167 N. Ridgeland Avenue built in 1909 (Figure 62).

A more representative example of their designs in the Prairie style is the Edward W. McCready House at 231 N. Euclid Avenue in Oak Park built in 1908 (Figure 63). This house was designed with a broad hipped roof, banks of casement windows, an exterior of Roman brick, prominent belt courses and an articulated entrance in a projecting bay. Another notable house designed by the firm included the John W. Broughton House in River Forest in 1908 which was designed in an L-plan and had grouped casement windows and a prominent belt course between the two floors.

Spencer also wrote for both professional and popular magazines such as *Architectural Review* and *House Beautiful*. For *House Beautiful* he wrote more than 20 articles by 1909 with many of the illustrations depicting Prairie style houses implying that these were the most appropriate designs for American homes.<sup>107</sup> After closing his architectural firm in 1923, Spencer taught at several colleges including the University of Florida and Texas A&M. He also worked as a painter, designing murals for various federal agencies in the 1930s. Spencer retired to Arizona in 1938 where he died in 1953.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 142.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Brooks, *The Prairie School*, 97.

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Figure 62: William C. Stephens House (1909), 167 N. Ridgeland Avenue.



Figure 63: Edward W. McCready House (1907), 231 N. Euclid Avenue.



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### George W. Maher

Originally from Indiana, George W. Maher received his architectural training in the office of Joseph L. Silsbee where he worked along side Frank Lloyd Wright in the 1880s. In 1888, Maher opened his own practice and he experimented around the edges of the Prairie style in the 1890s while he refined his approach. Maher developed his "motif-rhythm" theory of design that involved repeating several different design elements through the exterior and interior of a building to create a harmonious whole. This was exemplified in the John Farson House (Pleasant Home) at 217 Home Avenue in Oak Park (NHL). This immense dwelling was built in 1897 with a low pitched hipped roof and features a broad front porch supported by large square brick columns (Figure 64).

Maher refined his approach and designed several notable dwellings in the 1900s in Oak Park and throughout the Midwest. Maher had a particular emphasis on open living plans on first floors and his exteriors were generally designed with low and rectangular hipped roofs and central projecting entrances.<sup>108</sup> The Charles R. Erwin House at 530 N. Euclid Avenue was completed in 1905 and features a broad hipped roof with wide eaves and a curved pediment over the entrance (Figure 65). The interior was centered on a large living hall off which was a study, dining room and living room. Another notable design was the James Hall Taylor House built in 1912 which features a central entrance with an elliptical portico and two-story bay window on the south façade (Figure 66). Maher resided in the Chicago suburb of Kenilworth and many of his commissions came from this community. However, he designed many other dwellings in Oak Park and Evanston. Maher practiced alone until 1921 when he was joined by his son, Philip. Maher died in Michigan in 1926.

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<sup>108</sup> Brooks, *The Prairie School*, 107.

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Figure 64: John Farson House, (1897) 217 Home Avenue.



Figure 65: Charles R. Erwin House (1906), 530 N. Euclid Avenue.

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Figure 66: James Hall Taylor House (1912), 405 N. Euclid Avenue.

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### Lawrence Buck

Lawrence Buck worked as an architect in Alabama before moving to Chicago by 1894. From 1903 to 1905 he had a practice in Rockford, Illinois before moving back to Chicago and opening his firm in 1906.<sup>109</sup> Buck partnered with Vernon Watson in 1905 in the design of the Charles Reeves House at 454 Iowa Street (Figure 67). This dwelling featured a gable roof and drew on Tudor influences in its overall Prairie massing. In 1908, Buck designed the Edwin H. Ehrman House on Kenilworth Avenue which has a stucco exterior and casement windows (Figure 68). Buck drew inspiration from English Arts and Crafts architects and used medieval elements in his designs.<sup>110</sup>



Figure 67: Charles Reeves House (1905), 454 Iowa Street.

<sup>109</sup> Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission, "A Guide to Oak Park's Frank Lloyd Wright and Prairie School Historic District," 140.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

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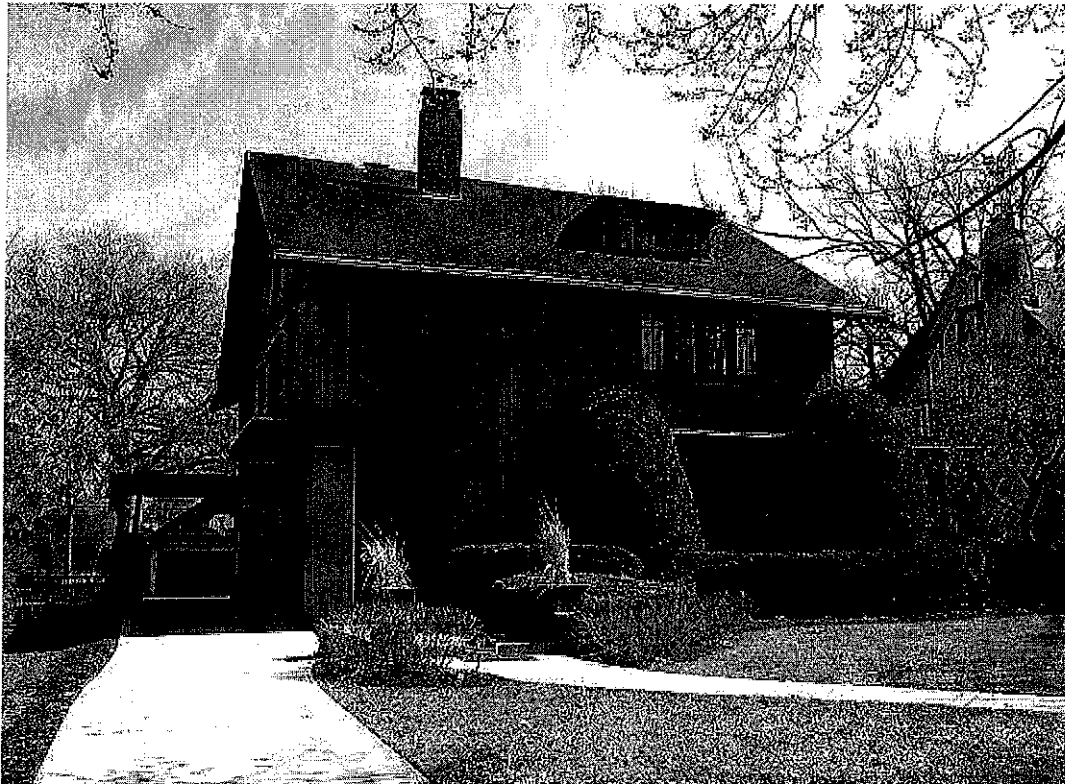


Figure 68: Edwin H. Ehrman House (1908), 410 N. Kenilworth Avenue.

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## Henry Fiddelke

Henry Fiddelke was born in 1865 and apprenticed in the offices of Joseph Silsbee and Adler and Sullivan. He opened his own practice in Oak Park in 1896 and designed numerous houses in the historic district in the early 20th century. Fiddelke's work was more in the Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival styles and his Prairie style designs were limited. His most representative work in the Prairie style is the house at 518 N. Grove Avenue which has a stucco exterior, prominent belt course and a hipped roof porch with stuccoed columns (Figure 69). Another design was the Clarence and Grace Hemingway House at 600 N. Kenilworth Avenue which features a broad front porch and well defined belt course (Figure 70).



Figure 69: Dwelling at 518 N. Grove Avenue designed in 1910.



Figure 70: Clarence and Grace Hemingway House (1906), 600 N. Kenilworth Avenue.

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Other architects designing Prairie style houses in Oak Park included Henry K. Holsman who designed the George D. Webb House in 1910 at 600 N. Euclid Avenue and Thornton Herr who designed the M.A. Richardson House at 515 N. East Avenue in 1908.

In addition to these architects who designed buildings in Oak Park and throughout the region, several other notable architects who either worked with Wright or were influenced by him practiced in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in Chicago and other cities in the Midwest. Although their best known designs are not in Oak Park, these architects produced significant examples of the Prairie style throughout the region. The best known of these architects include Walter Burley Griffin, his wife, Marion Mahony, William Purcell and William Drummond.

Walter Burley Griffin emerged from Wright's studio to become a prolific and influential designer in the Prairie style. Griffin studied architecture at the University of Illinois and then moved to Chicago where he worked for several architects in Steinway Hall. After receiving his architecture license he worked under Wright from 1901 to 1905 and then formed his own business. Between 1901 and 1913, Griffin designed some 130 houses, landscapes and buildings. He is now credited with developing the L-shaped floor plan, the carport, and has been noted for his innovative use of reinforced concrete in building construction.<sup>111</sup>

Marion Mahony received her architecture degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1894 and was the second woman to graduate from the program. A native of Winnetka, Mahony moved back to Chicago and worked with architect Dwight Perkins before being hired by Frank Lloyd Wright. She worked for Wright for 14 years but felt that he took undue credit for her work.<sup>112</sup> When Wright left for Europe in 1909 he asked her to continue designing for his clients but she refused. Wright then hired Herman von Holst who asked Mahony to reconsider her decision. Mahony agreed to work with von Holst on the condition that she controlled most of the design work. Mahony is credited with designing the Robert and Adolph Mueller Houses in Decatur, Illinois although when Wright returned from Europe he took credit for them and exhibited them under his name.<sup>113</sup>

In 1911, Mahony and Griffin were married and the two collaborated on a number of projects in the following years. Of particular note in these years were the designs for the Harry D. Page House in 1912 and the J.E. Blythe House in 1913, both in Mason City, Iowa. The Page House features a broad gable roof form, stucco exterior and one-story porch. In contrast, the Blythe House has a flat roof and has a stone veneer skirt wall and stucco façade with wide expanses of

<sup>111</sup> [www.pbs.org/wbgriffin](http://www.pbs.org/wbgriffin).

<sup>112</sup> Sarah Downey, "The Invisible Architect," The Chicago Reader, September 23, 2005.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

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windows. Griffin also designed the Stinson Memorial Library in Anna, Illinois in 1913 which is considered one of his finest works. It has a random course stone base, large piers, and horizontal rows of window set just below the eaves.

Many of his homes carry the familiar design elements of the Prairie School. Yet Griffin, true to the urging of his mentor Louis Sullivan, developed his own style of architecture free from the constraints of historical precedent. His designs echoed many of Wright's with an emphasis on hipped roofs, rows of windows located just below the soffits, and wide eaves. Griffin and Mahony also worked with a variety of levels on the interiors with steps up and down to various living spaces.<sup>114</sup> Griffin and Mahony also worked with landscapes and urban plans and prepared landscape plans for dwellings as well as plans for campuses and cities. In 1912 Griffin won a design competition from the city of Canberra, Australia to create a new city plan and the couple divided their time during the rest of their careers between America and Australia. Griffin's influence was so great that he was called the "father of modern architecture in Australia."<sup>115</sup>

Oak Park native William Purcell grew up near Frank Lloyd Wright and after studying architecture at Cornell University returned back to Chicago and formed a partnership first with George Feick Jr. and later moved to Minneapolis where he partnered with George Elmslie. The firm of Purcell and Elmslie was prolific, executing over 70 commissions in ten years and designed residences, churches, banks and courthouses. The majority of their work was in Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin and Illinois. No major works were designed in Oak Park although the firm was responsible for several homes in nearby Riverside and River Forest.

William Drummond, who also studied at Wright's studio, designed the First Congregational Church in Chicago in 1908. This church reflected elements of Wright's Unity Temple through its flat roof, narrow windows, and horizontal form. Drummond then designed his own Prairie School home in 1910 in River Forest with an exterior of wood and stucco and a decorative wood trim. His interior was designed in an L-shape with a large living room and fireplace and the use of a slatted screen to provide a sense of openness to the dining room beyond.<sup>116</sup> Drummond partnered with Louis Guenzel from 1912 to 1915. Drummond was the primary designer of the firm and one of the firm's most notable designs was the Ralph S. Baker House in Wilmette, Illinois completed in 1914.<sup>117</sup> This house was designed with a stucco exterior accentuated with wooden inlaid strips, flat roof, and rows of casement windows. The interior has a large open floor plan with a balcony above three sides of the living room.

<sup>114</sup> Brooks, *The Prairie School*, 122.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 262.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 130.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 272.



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When Frank Lloyd Wright returned from Europe in 1911 he began a new career in Wisconsin and designed few new projects in Illinois. However, the Prairie School overall gained momentum as Wright's former studio employees continued to gain commissions in the Midwest. Between 1912 and 1914, some fifteen architects in the Chicago area designed buildings in the Prairie style and the influence of the Prairie School increased throughout the Midwest.<sup>118</sup> Commissions came to the Prairie School architects from Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin as well as other parts of America. Notable works from this period include Purcell, Fieck and Elmslie's Merchants Bank of Winona in 1912, the Bradley Bungalow in Woods Hole, Massachusetts in 1912 and the Edward W. Decker House in Minnetonka, Minnesota built in 1913. The Merchants Bank of Winona was distinguished by its large enframed walls of glass containing abstract patterns and its corner piers with terra cotta ornamentation. The Bradley and Decker Houses were designed with low broad hipped roofs with cantilevered second floors and projecting elliptical one-story wings with glass walls. The Bradley Bungalow was a particularly innovative building and is recognized as a landmark of the Prairie style.<sup>119</sup> Fieck left the firm in 1913 and continued on as Purcell and Elmslie. The firm continued to execute numerous commissions throughout the Midwest and other well known works during this period included the Harold C. Bradley House completed in 1915 in Madison, Wisconsin and the First State Bank in Le Roy, Minnesota.

The early 1910s also saw resurgence in the works by Louis Sullivan, which combined Prairie style massing interspersed with abstract ornamentation. Sullivan's sometimes difficult personality kept him from achieving the financial success of many of his contemporaries but his National Farmer's Bank in Owatonna, Minnesota completed in 1908 gained him national recognition. The building's severe massing and bulk was offset by an enframed wall with terra cotta decoration and large arched windows on the primary facades. In 1913, Sullivan was commissioned to design the Henry C. Adams Building in Algoma, Iowa and the Merchants' National Bank in Grinnell, Iowa. The Adams Building was distinguished by its enframed wall around the entrance on the main façade while the Merchant's National Bank featured a large terra cotta panel above the door.

The Prairie School peaked in terms of the number and quality of buildings designed between 1912 and 1914. After 1914, there were increasingly fewer commissions for the Prairie School architects and resurgence in interest in more traditional and historical styles. In 1915, an author writing in the *Architectural Record* noted that "...I have learned that a large part of the "Colonial" buildings recently erected [in the Midwest] are the result of instructions of clients rather than the

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 200-201.

<sup>119</sup> Carter Wiseman, *Twentieth Century American Architecture, The Buildings and Their Makers*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), 102.

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recommendation of the architects.<sup>120</sup> The taste of American builders and homeowners shifted in the 1910s and the Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival and other historical styles predominated for residential construction. In particular, women seemed to prefer the historical styles and this was noted by several Prairie School architects of the period. Wright Studio architect Barry Byrne opened his own practice in 1914 and noted that if the design decision were left to the husband then he felt sure of getting the commission. If the wife made the decision then the job was "as good as lost."<sup>121</sup> While the husband would accept the Prairie style design as practical, straightforward and logical, the wife would reject it as being out of fashion. Architect Thomas Tallmadge made the same observation when he noted that "Clients, the wives of whom at least, [having] received their architectural education in magazines edited in Boston and New York, now have turned back to pretty Colonial or the fashionable Italian."<sup>122</sup>

Architectural historian Carter Wiseman points to the fate of Wright's design for the Harold McCormick House as a harbinger of what was to come. In 1907, Wright designed an elaborate series of pavilions with terraces and gardens at the request of McCormick for a site in Lake Forest on Lake Michigan. After reviewing the plans, Mrs. McCormick rejected the design and persuaded her husband to hire New England architect Charles Platt who provided an Italian Renaissance plan instead. Wiseman asserts that "The loss of the McCormick commission was a severe blow to Wright personally and professionally, and it can be argued that the death sentence of the Prairie School was pronounced at that moment."<sup>123</sup> After Wright left Chicago in 1909, his influence waned and no one else emerged as a forceful spokesperson for the style among the Prairie School architects.

This waning of interest in the Prairie School was also seen in the periodicals of the day. The magazine *House Beautiful* regularly promoted the style during the early 1900s but in 1910 the magazine moved its offices to New York and the Prairie style was no longer mentioned after 1914.<sup>124</sup> Instead, the revival styles took center stage and remained there for the next two decades. In 1916, Gustav Stickley's *Craftsman* magazine stopped publication "because it was no longer attuned to public taste (the readers were discontented with Stickley's designs and demanded more examples of colonial work)."<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Brooks, *The Prairie School*, 337.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 338.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> Wiseman, *Twentieth Century American Architecture*, 103.

<sup>124</sup> Brooks, *The Prairie School*, 339.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

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Other theories for the abrupt loss of popularity of the Prairie style were cost and practicality. In their study of popular mail order homes of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, authors Robert Schweitzer and Michael Davis suggest that the large houses designed by the Prairie School architects proved impractical for most urban homeowners and state:

"These designs were non-traditional and the materials non-standard resulting in costs far above those for the modest dwellings most Americans could afford. Moreover, the floor plans and room arrangements were enough out of the ordinary to render them unpleasing to the ordinary home-buyer. Another possible reason for their unpopularity may have been the Prairie plan itself. This long, low house just did not fit a 30-foot lot."<sup>126</sup>

Mail order companies offered the Prairie style only sparingly in the early 1900s and those they offered did not stay long. The Radford Company offered a Prairie style house in its catalog of 100 houses in 1903.<sup>127</sup> This design reflected the style in its hipped roof and lack of ornamentation. By 1909, Radford offered several more designs including a two-story version that had wide eaves, stucco exterior, and windows below the roofline. A Prairie influenced house was first offered by Sears in 1913 and featured a gable roof, large porch with square columns and a stucco exterior. In 1918, Sears offered Prairie style houses in two designs, the "Aurora" and the "Carlton" but evidently the orders for these houses were not sufficient to continue them and they disappeared from the catalog the next year.<sup>128</sup>

In 1917, the annual architectural exhibition at the Art Institute in Chicago was bereft of any major Prairie School influences. Architect Thomas Tallmadge stated that

"What is... to be regretted is the absence of any evidence that the [Prairie School] as a potent style of architecture any longer exists... Where are Sullivan, Wright, Griffin and the others? The absence of the work of these men has removed from the show the last vestige of local color."<sup>129</sup>

<sup>126</sup> Robert Schweitzer and Michael W.R. Davis, *America's Favorite Homes, Mail Order Catalogues as a Guide to Popular Early 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Homes*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990), 138.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 139.

<sup>128</sup> Daniel D. Reiff, *Houses From Books, Treatises, Pattern Books, and Catalogs in American Architecture, 1738-1950: A History and Guide*, (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 204.

<sup>129</sup> Brooks, *The Prairie School*, 295.

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As residential commissions fell away, some of the Prairie School architects managed to keep the style alive through other building designs. Barry Byrne remained active by designing ecclesiastical and educational buildings while George Elmslie designed schools, banks, and churches. However, it became clear by the late 1910s that the Prairie style was simply not fashionable anymore. As Tallmadge wrote in 1927, "...not enough people of consequence adopted it to give it authority with the general herd – it challenged, attacked, and locked horns with the Beaux Arts which was at the height of its influence in America...The progressive movement had the message, it had the enthusiasm, it had the leaders, but the 'breaks' were all against it."<sup>130</sup> Architectural historian Carter Wiseman suggests that Wright and his fellow architects were just ahead of their time and that "Wright and his fellow domestic innovators on the West Coast had simply appeared a bit early for all but a small segment of the American architectural clientele, and a period of time would have to pass before a new generation, having tired itself of the neoclassical message, would again turn to Europe for guidance."<sup>131</sup>

During the late 1910s and 1920s only a few residential clients actively sought a Prairie style house and even their influences were difficult to discern. These were peak years of mail order houses designed and shipped to customers by companies such as Sears, Montgomery Ward and Aladdin. The catalogs mailed out each year by these companies both reflected and helped form residential architecture design for the country's rising middle class. Later catalogs such as the *Sears, Roebuck Catalog of Houses* in 1926 are full of Bungalows, Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival style dwellings but Prairie style dwellings are absent.<sup>132</sup>

Although formal Prairie style houses fell out of favor with the general public by the early 1920s, the influence of the style continued to resonate in overall house design and form for the rest of the decade. A few Prairie style houses continued to be built in Oak Park such as the John Barlow House at 717 N. East Avenue designed by John S. Van Bergen in 1923. Although this was one of the last "pure" Prairie style houses built in Oak Park, the influences of the style were evident in building construction throughout the Village during the 1910s and 1920s. Throughout Oak Park hundreds of dwellings were built in the decade in American Foursquare plans common of the period. Across America these designs are generally considered to be derivative of the Colonial Revival style. In their seminal work on American houses, Virginia and Lee McAlester reference this house type as part of the Colonial Revival tradition and also describe it as a "Classic Box

<sup>130</sup> Dull, *The Domestic Architecture of Oak Park, Illinois: 1900-1930*, 134.

<sup>131</sup> Wiseman, *Twentieth-Century American Architecture*, 104.

<sup>132</sup> Sears, Roebuck and Company, *Sears, Roebuck Catalog of Houses, 1926*. (New York: Dover Publications, reprint edition, 1991).

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(Figure 71).<sup>133</sup> These designs typically display a stronger emphasis on the vertical than the horizontal, have shallow eaves, and display classically derived porch columns on the main façade.



Figure 71: The typical Colonial Revival influenced American Foursquare is characterized by an emphasis on verticality and the use of classical porch columns on the main façade (719 N. Kenilworth Avenue).

However, American Foursquare designs in Oak Park owe a greater debt to the Prairie style through their use of particularly wide eaves, stucco exteriors, geometric wood banding, art glass windows, square frame, brick or stuccoed columns, and an overall emphasis on horizontal rather than vertical massing. Oak Park's American Foursquares more strongly resemble the examples cited by the McAlesters in their discussion of the Prairie style.<sup>134</sup>

A representative example of an early Prairie influenced American Foursquare is the Rall House built in 1904 which has a full-width hipped roof porch with square Doric porch columns and a stuccoed railing (Figure 73). The Fanny Parmlee House built in 1911 also has wide eaves, a stucco exterior and inlaid geometric wood strips in the porch columns (Figure 74). Another example is the dwelling at 623 N. Ridgeland Avenue, which has broad eaves, stucco exterior and simple stuccoed porch columns (Figure 75). A common variation of this house form is a one-

<sup>133</sup> Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), 321.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 439-445.

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story sun porch instead of an open porch on the main façade. An example of this type of variation is the F.C. Pilgrim House built in 1919 (Figure 76).

Nationally, even though the Prairie style fell out of fashion by the early 1920s, its influence on American architecture was still felt. Many houses, including those offered by Sears and the other companies offered houses with simple plans, few historical details and lack of ornate decoration. Architect Elkin Wallick asserted that "the dominant characteristic of what we may term the American style is simplicity of design."<sup>135</sup> The natural use of materials was expressed through the use of materials such as stained wood shingles, rock faced concrete block, and stucco. Variety in exterior surfaces was achieved through contrasting several materials together rather than manipulating materials into decorative forms.

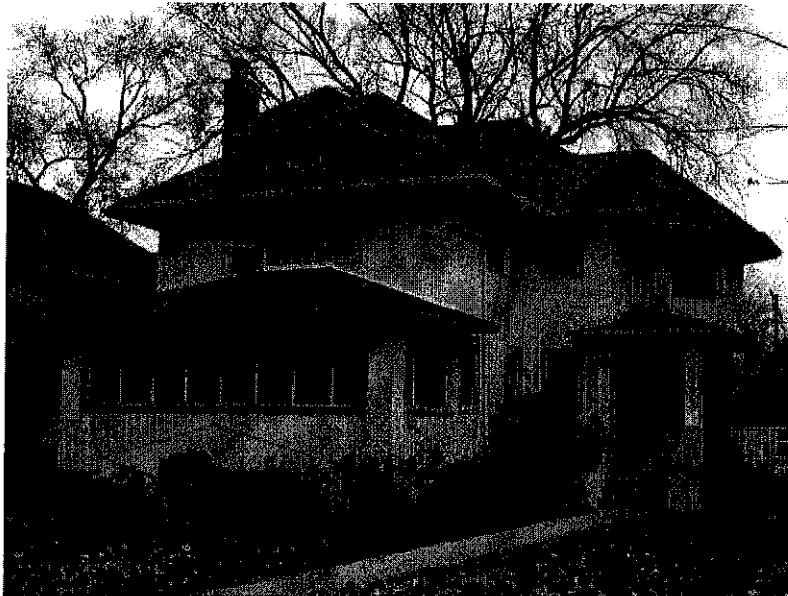


Figure 72: This American Foursquare's wide eaves, stucco exterior and broad roof lines reflect the Prairie influence more strongly than that of the Colonial Revival style (830 N. Kenilworth Avenue).

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<sup>135</sup> Clifford Edward Clark Jr., *The American Home, 1800-1960*. (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 149.

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Figure 73: Rall House (1904), 206 N. Elmwood Avenue.



Figure 75: 623 N. Ridgeland Avenue (ca. 1910).



Figure 74: Fanny Parmlee House (1911), 743 N. East Avenue.



Figure 76: F.C. Pilgrim House (1919), 823 N. East Avenue

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In Oak Park, almost ninety buildings were designed in the Prairie style in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and hundreds of dwellings were built with Prairie influences. Concurrent with this architectural movement was the design and construction of the popular revival styles of the period which came to dominate the Village's built environment in the 1920s. The Colonial and Tudor Revival styles were most commonly built in the Village with examples of Italian Renaissance, Mission, and Spanish Colonial also constructed on occasion. On many of the blocks in Oak Park are notable examples of the revival styles built side by side with Prairie dwellings.

Many of the architects who were proficient with the Prairie style also designed notable examples of revival styles. Architects such as Charles E. White Jr., Eben E. Roberts, and Tallmadge and Watson were adept in designing within a wide variety of styles and influences. The Colonial Revival style and its variations were widely built in the historic district throughout the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Representative examples in the district include the McGill House built in 1919 and designed by Tallmadge and Watson, and the Charles H. Schumann House built in 1922 (Figures 77-78). The McGill House is based on Georgian architecture and has an elliptical portico on the main façade, an elaborate cornice with modillion blocks and corner brick quoins. The Charles H. Schumann House designed by architect William Harlev, Jr. is more typical of those built in the district with its symmetrical façade, central pedimented entry bay and eight-over-one wood sash windows. A Dutch Colonial variation utilized similar overall designs and detailing but was distinguished by its use of the gambrel roof form as seen in the J.C. Burrell House built in 1925 (Figure 79).



Figure 77: McGill House (1919) 525 Fair Oaks Avenue.

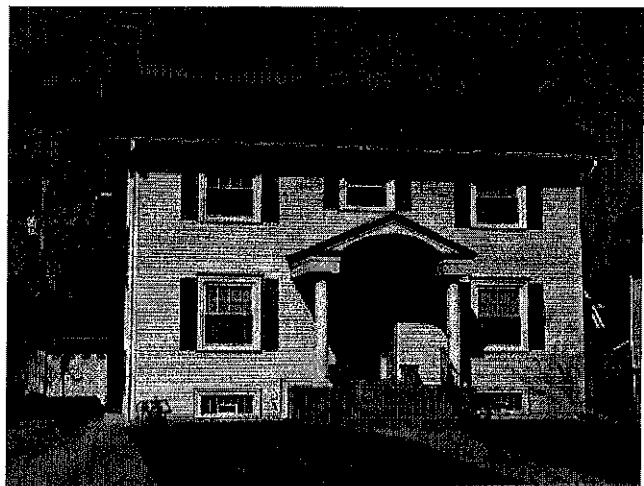


Figure 78: Charles H. Schumann House (1922), 841 N. Euclid Avenue.



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Figure 79: J.C. Burell House (1925), 603 N. Grove Avenue.

In addition to the Colonial Revival style another primary house style from this time period was the Tudor Revival. The Tudor Revival style was based on designs of medieval Europe and featured high pitched roofs, arched or Tudor arched entrances, and stucco and half-timbering in the gables. An early example of this style is the George W. Hayden House built in 1904 which has a prominent brick chimney on the main façade, stucco and half-timbering in the gables and a one-story porch with brick columns (Figure 80). The dwelling at 502 N. Oak Park Avenue built in 1910 is a more modest version but retains the basic characteristics of the Tudor Revival style in its high pitched roofline and stucco and half-timbered exterior (Figure 81). The Tudor Revival style is widely represented throughout the district.

Other revival styles of the period such as Italian Renaissance Revival and Spanish Colonial Revival were built in district during these years. Architect Frederick Schock designed the C.S. Castle House in 1924 at 647 Linden Avenue (Figure 82). This house was designed with a large arched opening on the main façade, a hipped tile roof and a corner tower with a crenellated parapet wall. A notable Spanish Colonial Revival style house in the Village is the Querin H. Cook House designed by architects Meyer and Cook in 1924. Located at 501 Linden Avenue, this three-story dwelling features arched windows, a stucco exterior and an arcaded loggia on the first floor (Figure 83).

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Figure 80: George W. Hayden House (1905),  
538 N. Euclid Avenue.



Figure 81: 502 N. Grove Avenue (1910).



Figure 82: The Querin H. Cook House was  
designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival  
style in 1922 at 501 Linden Avenue.



Figure 83: The C.S. Castle House was built in  
1924 in the Italian Renaissance Revival  
style at 647 Linden Avenue.

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Between 1900 and 1910, Oak Park's population doubled to over 20,000 residents and many of the lots in the district had been developed. Those that remained vacant were gradually filled in over the next three decades with dwellings largely exhibiting the Prairie style, revival styles and the popular Bungalow. The Bungalow (also called the Craftsman style) in America was first introduced in California and by the 1910s was one of the most popular house types in the country. It was characterized by its horizontal proportions, heights of one- and one-half stories, large porches, wide eaves and the use of simple decorative elements such as wood elements called knee brace brackets and purlins. Examples of the Bungalow style in the district include the dwellings at 716 and 720 N. Ridgeland Avenue both built in 1913 (Figure 84-85). Both are one- and one-half stories, of frame construction and have knee brace brackets at the eaves. Both were built with square frame columns and with enclosed sun porches on the main facades.

By 1941, the majority of the lots in the district and Village had been developed and relatively few new dwellings were constructed in the district after this time. Not only was the district largely built out by this time, but World War II slowed construction during the 1940s. After the war construction resumed, and during the 1940s and 1950s several lots were developed with dwellings designed in the Ranch style. Houses in this style were also built to replace earlier homes destroyed by fire or razed to accommodate the modern homes. Since the mid-1950s, few new buildings have been constructed in the historic district and more than 95% of the properties date from before 1941, the end date of the district's period of significance.



Figure 84: 716 N. Ridgeland Avenue (1913).



Figure 85: 720 N. Ridgeland Avenue (1913).

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Figure 86: Bungalow at 823 N. Marion Street built ca. 1920.

Although single family dwellings make up the majority of the buildings constructed in the historic district, other property types include apartment buildings, churches, commercial buildings and social buildings. As the population of Oak Park increased dramatically in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, numerous developers sought to address the rising demand for housing by building apartment buildings within a few blocks of the railroad line and the train stations connecting with downtown Chicago. The largest of these is the Santa Maria Apartments constructed on N. Oak Park Avenue in 1924 (Figure 87). This three-story apartment building was designed with elaborate Tudor Revival decoration and has several inset courtyards. Another example is the four-story apartment building also built in the Tudor Revival style ca. 1920 and designed by architect A.J. Buerger, Jr. (Figure 88). A later example is the four-story apartment building designed in the Art Deco style in 1928 at 225-227 N. Grove Avenue (Figure 89). Designed by the firm of Dubin and Isenberg, this building features ornate terra cotta surrounds at the entrances.

Within the district are a number of churches built from the 1890s to the 1920s to serve the Village's congregations. Most of these churches were designed in the Gothic Revival style and include the First Methodist Church on N. Oak Park Avenue built in 1923 and the Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church on N. Fair Oaks Avenue built in 1926 (Figures 90-91). Both of these churches were designed with stone and concrete exteriors and have details such as wall buttresses and Gothic arched stained glass windows. The Prairie style Trinity Lutheran Chapel and Church at 300 N. Ridgeland Avenue was designed by Eben E. Roberts and completed 1909-1916 (Figure 92).

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Figure 87: Santa Maria Apartments (1924),  
208-232 N. Oak Park Avenue.



Figure 89: Apartments at 225-227 N. Grove  
built in 1928.



Figure 88: Apartments built ca. 1920 at  
1035-1037 Superior Street.

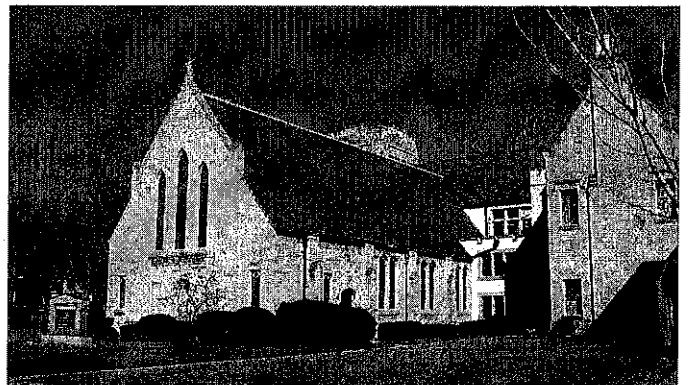


Figure 90: Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church  
(1926), 744 Fair Oaks Avenue.

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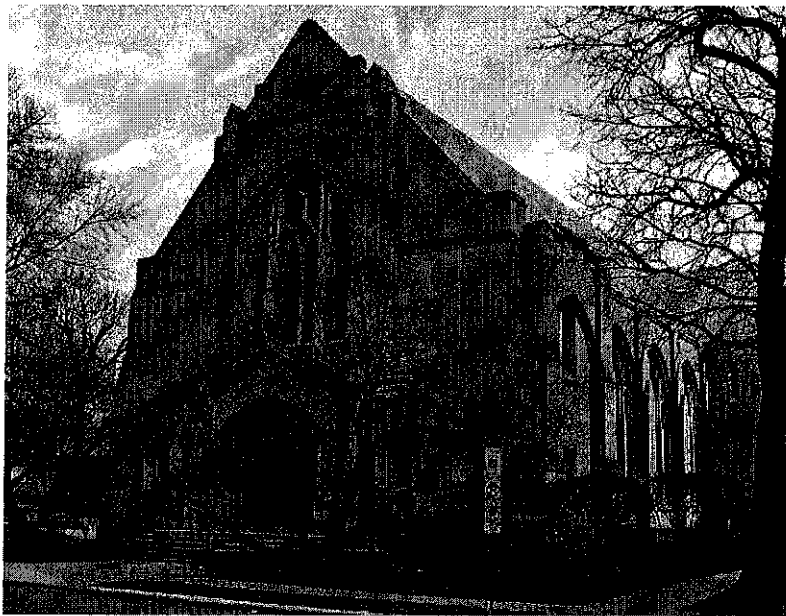


Figure 91: First Methodist Church (1923), 324 N. Oak Park Avenue.

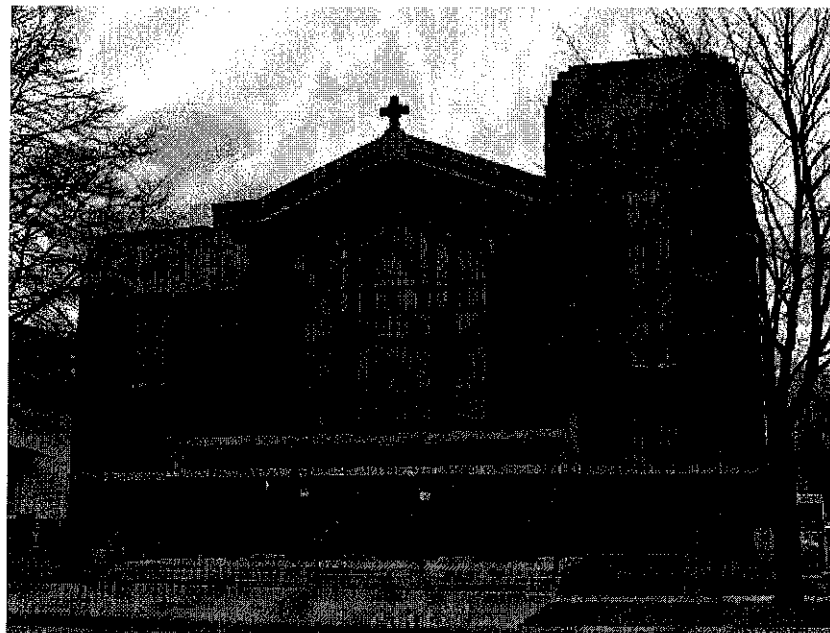


Figure 92: Prairie style Trinity Lutheran Church and Chapel at 300 N. Ridgeland Avenue.

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Commercial buildings in the district are largely confined to a small cluster at the corner of Chicago and Ridgeland Avenues and a larger area centered on Chicago Avenue and Marion Street. On Chicago Avenue are several multi-story brick and terra cotta buildings that were designed to have apartments in the upper floors and retail establishments on the first floor. These were built primarily in the 1920s and include the Nicholas Building completed in 1925 and designed by Eben E. Roberts (Figure 93). The building was designed with a curved corner bay and with classical detailing on the first-story. Other commercial buildings along this section of Chicago Avenue were built primarily in the 1910s and 1920s and contained businesses such as hardware stores, beauty shops, grocery stores and other neighborhood services.

In addition to the commercial buildings, the district also contains several early 20<sup>th</sup> century social buildings and the Oak Park – River Forest High School. Buildings constructed for social purposes include the YMCA on N. Oak Park Avenue, the Nineteenth Century Club at 178 Forest Avenue, and the Oak Park Club built in 1923 on Ontario Street (Figure 94). This club was built to serve as a social hall for the Village's upper class and contained a swimming pool, bowling alley and dining room. The building was designed in the Italian Renaissance Revival style and has been converted into condominiums. The Oak Park – River Forest High School was originally built in 1906 and was continually expanded and redesigned throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Figure 95). The building continues to serve as the primary high school for Village students.



Figure 93: Nicholas Building (1925) 1100-06  
Chicago Avenue.



Figure 94: Oak Park Club (1923), 721  
Ontario Street.

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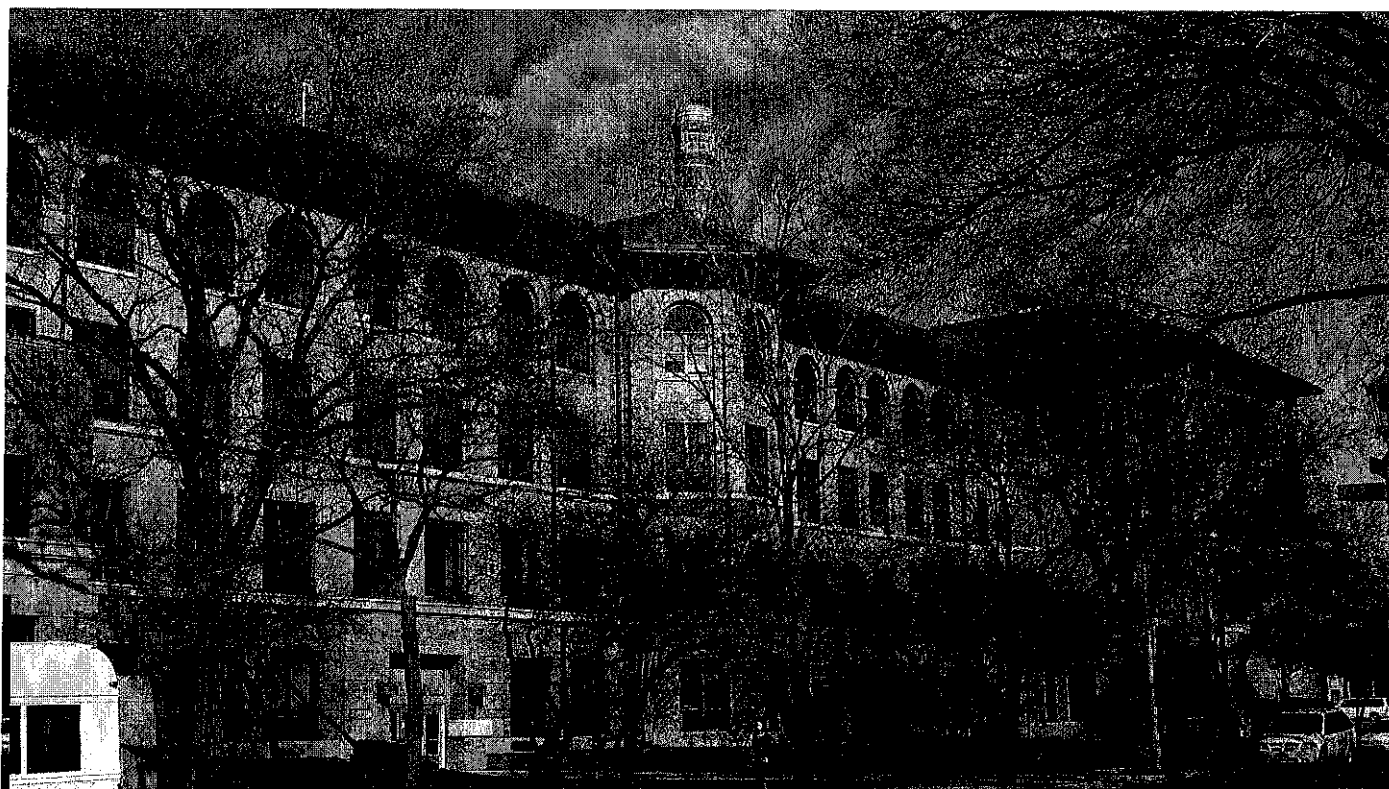


Figure 95: Oak Park and River Forest High School (1906 with additions) 201 N. Scoville Avenue.



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### FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT'S CAREER AFTER OAK PARK

The Frank Lloyd Wright – Prairie School of Architecture Historic District is significant under criterion B for its association with architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Although Wright left Oak Park in 1909, his influence continued to shape architecture throughout his long life. Wright left Oak Park at the height of his influence on the Prairie style but even then he felt a need to explore new avenues for his talent. Leaving behind his architectural practice coincided with his highly publicized affair and abandonment of his family. Wright left Oak Park with Mamah Cheney and upon his return to the United States he began to build a home for them on a portion of the Wright family farm in Spring Green, Wisconsin. Named Taliesin, a Welsh term meaning "shining brow," Wright's new home was a perfect example of his philosophy of organic architecture and is still considered one of his masterpieces. The low, one-story dwelling subtly merged into the Wisconsin hillside on which it was built, wrapping around the earth in such a manner that it appeared to be a natural outcropping. Building and site are fused in a manner that complements rather than dominates the setting. Its stone terraces and floors, large expanses of glass, and overhanging eaves merge the outdoors and indoors. Rooms are loosely defined and flow into one another and create interplay of light and shadow as the sun crosses over the valley.<sup>136</sup>



Figure 96: Taliesin, Spring Green, Wisconsin.

<sup>136</sup> Visser, *Prairie School in Wisconsin*, 166; Boulton, *Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect*, 60.

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Taliesin became Wright's passion. Over the years he continuously reinvented it through moving furniture, adding on, or other alterations. In his autobiography, Wright fondly refers to the spirit of Taliesin: "I knew well that no house should ever be on a hill or on anything. It should be of the hill. Belonging to it. Hill and house should live together each the happier for the other."<sup>137</sup> Wright brought Mamah to Taliesin in 1911 after her divorce was final. He established a studio there and maintained his Chicago office. Over time the locals began to accept Mamah, and she and Wright lived a relatively quiet existence in their Wisconsin hillside home.

In 1913, Wright was commissioned to design Midway Gardens in Chicago, a large collection of restaurants, clubrooms and bars gathered around a central outdoor bandstand. This was a significant commission for Wright and served as a new turn in his career. Not only did it provide needed income for him, but it also brought him considerable recognition, a key step in putting the bad publicity of the past behind him and moving forward.<sup>138</sup>

It was during the Midway Gardens project that a tragic event occurred to alter Wright's life deeply. In 1914, a crazed servant at Taliesin set the home on fire and then brutally murdered Mamah, and six others, including her two young children who were visiting at the time, as they tried to escape the burning building. Wright was at the Midway Gardens worksite when he received the call, which only informed him of the fire. As he rushed back to Wisconsin, he learned of the horrific murders. The culprit was caught but committed suicide, thus leaving his actions a mystery.

The tragedy at Taliesin devastated Wright and marked a turning point in his life. For nearly the following two decades, he experienced a difficult period of personal and professional struggles and hardship. The loss of Mamah was deep, and Wright withdrew from life emotionally. "The gaping black hole left by the fire in the beautiful hillside seemed a charred and ugly scar upon my own life—on all life," he later wrote in his autobiography.<sup>139</sup> Only the rebuilding of Taliesin gradually pulled him out of the depths of despair. "In action there is release from anguish, he wrote, "Work only was bearable."<sup>140</sup> He redesigned the portion of the house where the tragedy occurred in order to erase its memory, and built a new wing.

The events at Taliesin made headlines and the public, which had previously passed harsh judgment upon Wright, now poured out its heartfelt sympathy. Wright received a number of letters of condolences and support. One letter especially struck a cord with him and he arranged

<sup>137</sup> Wright, *An Autobiography*, as quoted in Visser, *Prairie School in Wisconsin*, 163.

<sup>138</sup> Copplestone, *A Retrospective View*, 49; McDonough, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 63.

<sup>139</sup> Huxtable, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 140.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

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to meet its author, Miriam Noel, a wealthy divorcee. Miriam was an intelligent and worldly woman, had lived abroad, and exuded an air of sophistication. A sculptor, she, like Wright, enjoyed projecting an artistic self-image through dress and behavior. Wright found her intriguing and the two became an item. Over time, however, Miriam began to display erratic behavior. Her emotional instability was worsened by drug use and escalated over time. Prone to fierce mood swings, fits of unreasonable anger, and destructive, irrational actions, Miriam would likely be diagnosed a schizophrenic today.<sup>141</sup>

In the spring of 1915, Miriam moved to Taliesin with Wright, who still remained legally married to Catherine. Unlike Mamah, who had kept a low profile, Miriam sought the spotlight and was quick to make statements to the press regarding Wright, his work, or their relationship. Wright designed several houses between 1914 and 1930 but his main project from this period was the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, Japan. Wright worked on this massive project for eight years with design and construction stretching from 1914 to 1922. Wright immersed himself in his work on the Imperial Hotel and it became an escape for him from many of his troubles. Wright had always been an admirer and collector of Japanese art and appreciated Japanese concepts of beauty. The Imperial Hotel presented him with a refreshing new challenge from his residential work. Japan was free of European architectural traditions and gave him free reign to explore new forms, designs, and materials. The work would also increase his international fame and renown.<sup>142</sup>

The size and magnitude of the Imperial Hotel made it a lengthy and difficult commission. Wright left for Tokyo in December 1916 and spent most of the following seven years there, returning to the United States only for brief periods. Wright worked tirelessly on the project and was involved in every detail including designing furniture for the hotel and selecting the dinnerware to be used in the dining room. Earthquake prevention was a major obstacle to overcome in the design process. Wright devised a method of shock absorption for the building by placing the central supports into soft earth, thus allowing the floor slabs to be held up "as a waiter balances a tray on his fingers."<sup>143</sup> The completed building was a unique blend of Eastern aesthetics and Western construction techniques, and Wright's earthquake prevention system proved successful. Soon after completion of the structure, Tokyo experienced one of the worst earthquakes in Japan's history. The quake left most of the buildings in Tokyo destroyed or damaged, but the Imperial Hotel remained intact. Wright, by this time back in the United States, received a telegram stating, "hotel stands undamaged as monument of your genius."<sup>144</sup>

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 141-142.

<sup>142</sup> Boulton, *Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect*, 63-66; Tafel, *Apprentice to Genius*, 97-98.

<sup>143</sup> McDonough, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 70.

<sup>144</sup> Huxtable, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 147.

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The intense work on the Imperial Hotel left Wright exhausted. Toward the end of the project his health was suffering and he left Japan in 1922 before construction was completed. His success in Tokyo was followed by several lean years. During Wright's absence, the Prairie School designs dropped from favor in the U.S. and architectural trends turned back toward classicism. Few commissions came forth and only two of Wright's projects were actually constructed between 1923 and 1933. These two projects were the D.D. Martin House in Buffalo, New York, and the house of Richard Lloyd Jones, Wright's cousin, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, neither of which were considered exceptional examples of Wright's work.<sup>145</sup> By the late 1920s, Wright's career seemed to be over. At age sixty he was regarded as "the grand old man of architecture," a man whose zenith had passed, "a voice from a past era."<sup>146</sup>

Personal difficulties continued to plague him as well. Soon after he returned from Japan Catherine granted Wright a divorce (after a separation of over twelve years), and in 1924 he married Miriam Noel, even though their relationship remained turbulent. Within five months of their marriage, Miriam left him. She sued for divorce with a claim that Wright was abusive. During this same year, Wright's mother and his former mentor, Louis Sullivan, died. Another fire took place at Taliesin in 1925, this time caused by faulty electrical wiring. Strapped for cash, Wright sold his Oak Park home to raise money. The bank began to foreclose on Taliesin and Wright was forced to leave. Much of his furniture, art and other belongings were auctioned off, and finally a group of Wright's friends and family came to his aid by organizing Wright, Incorporated. This corporation took control of Wright's finances and estate and sold shares of stock, thus selling interest against his future earning power.<sup>147</sup>

During this emotionally stressful period, Wright met twenty-six year old Olga Ivanova Milanoff Hizenburg from Yugoslavia. Olgivanna, as she was called, was in the process of getting a divorce at the time and had one daughter, Svetlana, who was four years old. She and Wright developed a strong bond and in February of 1925 she and her daughter moved in with him at Taliesin. By the end of the year, Olgivanna had given birth to their child, Iovanna. Olgivanna was a smart, sensible, and strong woman and they married on August 25, 1928. The marriage thrived, and Olgivanna continued to be Wright's partner throughout the remainder of his life. The marriage was "a tremendous stabilizing element for him – her devotion and strength brought his genius forward again."<sup>148</sup> The marriage also renewed a family life for Wright. He doted on his young daughter, Iovanna, and Olgivanna's daughter, Svetlana, adored him and called him "Daddy

<sup>145</sup> Tafel, *Apprentice to Genius*, 114.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>147</sup> McDonough, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 72-75, 81; Boulton, *Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect*, 75-76.

<sup>148</sup> Tafel, *Apprentice to Genius*, 128.

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Frank." This stability helped to reinvigorate Wright's creativity, and Wright entered a new period of productivity and vision.

Just as things were settling down for Frank and Olgivanna, the stock market crashed in 1929 and plunged the U.S. economy into a severe depression. Although Wright had few designs constructed during the 1930s, he continued to develop new ideas, experimenting with new building systems, and exploring new forms and new concepts of space that became prototypes for his later buildings. He devised designs for apartment complexes, a ranch development in Southern California, a Chicago skyscraper, and designs for low- and mid-income housing. Wright also devised plans for rural areas and created his model town – Broadacre City.<sup>149</sup> These emerging ideas were "innovative, strong, and predictive of styles and techniques that would become standard within thirty years."<sup>150</sup> He also lectured at universities, wrote numerous articles, and in 1932 published the first version of his autobiography.

Wright was constantly evolving and changing his designs even once they were under construction, and sometimes even after construction was completed. Never wholly satisfied once a design was drawn, his ideas continued to develop and he never hesitated to rework or rebuild. He is often quoted as saying, "The architect's most effective tools are the eraser in the drafting room and the wrecking bar on the job."<sup>151</sup> Wright's constant reworking of concepts and designs led to developing new styles. Whereas other architects often focused on one style throughout their whole career, Wright never fastened himself to one particular style. "What we did yesterday, we won't do today," he would say. "And what we don't do tomorrow will not be what we'll be doing the day after."<sup>152</sup>

Wright's relationships with and opinions of other architects was notoriously well-known. He particularly disliked most European architects, whom he thought were trying to take over the profession in America. Of French architect Le Corbusier, Wright would say, "Well, now that he's finished one building, he'll go write four books about it."<sup>153</sup> Wright especially detested the Bauhaus school of architecture. When Walter Gropius, German leader of the Bauhaus school was in the region and wanted to come and meet the leading American architect, Wright refused. "What he stands for and what I stand for are poles apart," Wright declared. "Our ideas could

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 116-119.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 119.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 64.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., 65.

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never merge. In a sense, we're professional enemies—but he's an outside enemy. At least I'm staying in my own country."<sup>154</sup>

Also in the 1930s, Wright became increasingly interested in social issues and designed what he termed the Usonian house, an affordable dwelling for the average family. The house featured an attached cantilevered carport and its interior space had an open plan designed to enhance family interaction. This was largely done by moving the kitchen to an area where public and private spaces intersected.<sup>155</sup> Usonian houses were single-story structures and typically featured a glass-faced patio and generous window space.

Economical features of the house included a concrete slab foundation with built-in hot-water pipes that produced heat that rose through the floors, and an insulated slab roof that housed the ventilation system while the roof's wide overhang protected the exterior. There was also extensive use of glass, stained wood, and brick walls so the need for paint, plaster, and wallpaper were eliminated. Wright's first Usonian house was built in 1937 and the style became increasingly popular over the next several years. It eventually became a prototype of the modern ranch house, which was one of the most widely constructed styles in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>156</sup>

Encouraged by his wife Olgivanna, Wright established the Taliesin Fellowship at his Wisconsin home in 1932. Wright took his aunts' old Hillside Home School, which had closed soon after the 1914 fire at Taliesin, and turned it into a living, working, and learning facility for architectural apprentices. The young apprentices built a drafting room, added dormitories, and converted the gym into a theater. Participants in the Fellowship learned by doing and they became involved in every aspect of the complex. In addition to drafting architectural designs, they excavated land and constructed buildings. In the carpentry shop they built furniture and cabinets, as well as windows, doors, trim and other details.<sup>157</sup>

Some apprentices came and went, but many relished the life at Taliesin and especially thrived on being in the presence of Frank Lloyd Wright. Many stayed for long periods of time. Edgar Tafel, one of Wright's first apprentices at Taliesin stayed for nine years. Like many of the apprentices, he was a young architecture student and saw Wright as "a giant to look up to, the creative source to draw from."<sup>158</sup> Taliesin was not limited to architecture students, but also

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<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 66.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 119, 190-191; Upton, *Architecture in the United States*, 43.

<sup>156</sup> McDonough, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 90-93.

<sup>157</sup> Boulton, *Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect*, 77- 79, 84. Visser, *Prairie School in Wisconsin*, 168-169.

<sup>158</sup> Tafel, *Apprentice to Genius*, 10.

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included painters, sculptors, and musicians. Both Wright and Olgivanna nurtured a creative atmosphere at Taliesin and encouraged all to participate in a variety of activities. In addition to learning organic design, apprentices could take up painting, philosophy, or drama. They could also study molding, casting or woodworking.<sup>159</sup>

Taliesin was something of a self-sufficient communal operation with apprentices fully involved in every aspect of life. Work and responsibilities did not end with building design and construction, but extended to household chores, farm duties, and any other tasks that needed to be accomplished. Apprentices worked in the fields, orchards, and gardens that made up the small farm at Taliesin. They plowed fields, planted and tended crops, raised chickens, milked cows, and slopped the pigs. They husked corn and made cider from the farms apple orchard crop. They grew most of their own food and prepared and served the meals. Any vegetables left over were taken to a nearby market to sell. They logged timber for wood, worked the limestone and sandstone quarries for stone, and cut ice from the river. Apprentices also worked on the complex's plumbing and electricity after learning as much as they could from hired workmen.<sup>160</sup>

Many of Wright's critics charged him with using his apprentices to do hard labor and sustain his property while paying for the "privilege" of being in his presence. Later biographers have also criticized Wright for placing himself in the role of grand master, with no room for criticism or challenges to his work or ideas. But applications to join the Fellowship poured in from around the world and those who sought to join were eager to be involved with Wright on any level.<sup>161</sup> His dynamic personality "swept everyone in, conquering by charm as much as by strength," . . . "people who worked for him were absorbed into all the facets of his life."<sup>162</sup>

<sup>159</sup> McDonough, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 86.

<sup>160</sup> Tafel, *Apprentice to Genius*, 146-162.

<sup>161</sup> McDonough, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 86-87.

<sup>162</sup> Tafel, *Apprentice to Genius*, 63.

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Figure 97: Fallingwater, Bear Run, Pennsylvania.

With the renewed creative energy of Taliesin and a stable personal life, Wright entered a new productive stage in his life in which he gained substantial new success and recognition. Much of the impetus behind Wright's newfound popularity came from his design of Fallingwater, a vacation home for Pittsburgh department store owner Edgar Kaufmann, Sr. built in 1936. Kaufmann's son was an apprentice for Wright and encouraged his father to employ the architect for the project. The elder Kaufmann took Wright to the wooded property on which he wanted to build, and, upon Wright's request, pointed out his favorite spots to sit and reflect. The most favored location was on a boulder atop a rock ledge overlooking a small waterfall and stream. Wright designed the house to sit right over the waterfall with large cantilevered terrace slabs extending out in all four directions. Built largely of reinforced concrete and stone, the resulting tri-level home was a dramatic blend of modern technology and a natural setting. The numerous terraces, deeply projecting balconies, and trellises combined with bands of glass walls expertly blur the line between outside and inside – the perfect example of Wright's philosophy of organic architecture.<sup>163</sup> Fallingwater was immediately recognized as a masterpiece and has continued to be recognized as a "landmark of modern architecture and a work of genius."<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Coplestone, *A Retrospective View*, 74; Upton, *Architecture in the United States*, 83-84; McDonough, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 88-89.

<sup>164</sup> Coplestone, *A Retrospective View*, 74.



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Fallingwater once again put Frank Lloyd Wright, then at age seventy, in the forefront of American architecture, and subsequent commissions proved that he was far from past his prime. Around the time construction on Fallingwater finished, Wright received a commission to design a corporate building for the Johnson Wax Company. Completed in 1939, the building employs rounded corners and streamlined surfaces to produce a modern appearance. The building reflected company president Herbert Johnson's attitude toward the workplace and its employees. Johnson had a strong personal involvement with his workers and wanted to instill a family feeling to the workplace. Unlike Fallingwater, the Johnson Wax Building did not strive to blend exterior and interior, but instead purposely separated the two. Situated in an industrial area, the building was designed without conventional windows in order to shut out the harsh exterior setting. In an effort to bring light to the building and give it a pleasant interior atmosphere, Wright designed the main office as a large open room ringed by balconies. Tall light pillars with lily-pad-like crowns extend to the ceiling, and skylights allow ample natural light.<sup>165</sup>



Figure 98: Wingspread with its four wings extending from a central core, Wind Point, Wisconsin.

Herbert Johnson also commissioned Wright to design a home for him in Wind Point, Wisconsin. Named Wingspread, the home consisted of a central core with four wings extending to create a pinwheel effect. The house features a large curved chimney and long rows of windows.

<sup>165</sup> McDonough, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 95-98.

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Completed in the late 1930s, it is considered Wright's last Prairie School design.<sup>166</sup> Also in the late 1930s, Wright built Taliesin West in Scottsdale, Arizona. This second home for Wright and his family was much like its Wisconsin counterpart and served as a winter learning and working complex for the continuing Taliesin Fellowship.

The Johnson Wax Building reinvigorated Wright and his optimism and confidence reached new heights. The building was a huge success and Wright's reputation continued to rise. In 1938, the magazine *Architectural Forum* devoted an entire issue to Frank Lloyd Wright, and Time printed a major piece on him and called him "the nation's greatest architect."<sup>167</sup> He continued to receive a number of accolades, and awards, both nationally and internationally. In 1940, the Museum of Modern Art in New York City held a retrospective of Wright's work. Other important works of Wright's that occurred in this late period of his career include the tower of St. Mark's-in-the-Bowery in New York and the Beth Shalom Synagogue in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania.

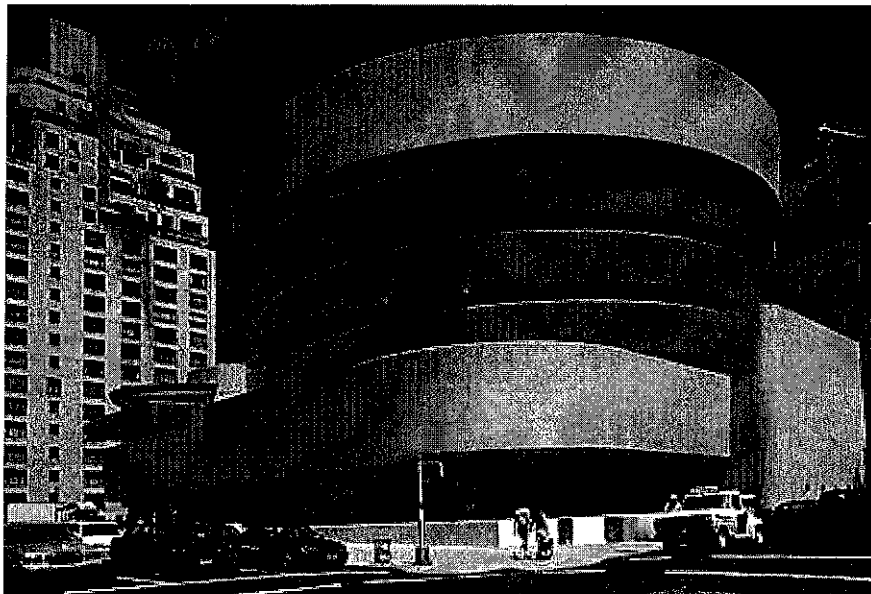


Figure 99: Guggenheim Museum, New York City.

By the 1950s Wright was aging but remained vigorous. In his late eighties, Wright designed one of his most famous works, the Guggenheim Museum in New York City. Construction began on the building in 1957 when Wright was ninety years old. The building's spiral-shaped plan and

<sup>166</sup> Costantino, *Frank Lloyd Wright Design*, 93-94.

<sup>167</sup> McDonough, *Frank Lloyd Wright*, 99.

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sloped floors provided a unique layout and a feeling of continuous movement. Visitors moved down spiral ramps to trace an artist's career and could gain a perspective on the whole collection without retracing their steps. The building lacked posts, beams, and confining rooms. Likened to a sculpture, the building sought to unite form and function – a work of art to house other works of art. Many criticized the Guggenheim stating that its curved walls are not conducive to hanging paintings and the sloped ramps are awkward and uncomfortable for patrons. However, others have claimed it to be one of Wright's finest achievements arguing that in the Guggenheim Wright "accomplished the contradictory goals of fluidity and permanence, of stability and change."<sup>168</sup>

Unfortunately, Wright did not live to see the Guggenheim completed. He died just shy of his 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday on April 9, 1959 in a Phoenix hospital following a minor surgery. The Guggenheim museum opened the following fall. Wright's apprentices carried his body back home to Spring Green, Wisconsin. Following a Unitarian funeral service attended by family and friends, his coffin was carried by a horse-drawn farm wagon to the small family cemetery near Taliesin, where he was buried near his mother and his beloved Mamah (Wright was later disinterred and buried near Olgivanna). Wright was mourned the world over and left a large void in the lives of many of his friends, family, and colleagues.<sup>169</sup> Wright's influence has endured and his innovative ideas and concepts continue to inspire the world of architecture. Wright's legacy of creative design makes him one of the most important architects of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 102-103.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 105-106.

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## LIST OF KNOWN ARCHITECTS

The following list includes all known architects and companies that designed buildings in Oak Park between ca. 1865 and 1929.

Allison, Lyman  
Allison, Robert  
Arnold, Wesley  
Ashby, G.W.  
Barfield, William G.  
Beaudry, R.L.  
Bernhard, William  
Bialles, Theodore P.  
Bird, Samuel E.  
Brand, Herbert A.  
Braucher, Ernest  
Brom, Lawrence  
Bruns, B.J.  
Buck, Lawrence  
Buerger, Albert, Jr.  
Burnham & Root  
Burrell, J.C.  
Burtar, A.G.  
Cable, M.L.  
Carson, G.B.  
Cerny, Jerry  
Chiaro, John A.  
Dahlquist, Clarence  
DeButts, E.E.  
DeMoney, F.D.  
Druski, William  
Dubin & Isenberg  
Dunning, Max  
Ellis, Frank  
Fiddelke, Henry  
Fifield, William  
Foltz & Brand  
Fortin, J.T.

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Fox & Fox  
France, Roy  
Frank, D.W., Jr.  
Fyfe, James L.  
Gamsey, George O.  
Gibb, William  
Gilbert, C.W.  
Graham, Anderson, Probst and White  
Harlev, William Jr.  
Hansen, H.M.  
Harper, William  
Herr, Thornton A.  
Hine, Cicero  
Holmes & Flinn  
Holsman, Henry K.  
Hotchkiss, Roy  
Howe, Stanley W.  
Hyde, Robert M.  
Jacobs, Arthur  
Johnson, H.E.  
Johnston, W.K.  
Koster, John  
Kramer, William  
Kristen, Charles  
Lagal, J.G.  
Landsea, Gilbert  
Lewis, Jacob  
Loewenberg & Loewenberg  
Lundstand, J.A.  
Maiwurm, Arthur  
Maher, George W.  
Malina, John  
Meyer & Cook  
McNett, Leon  
Moody, A.L.  
Mueller, H.F.  
Nimmons & Fellows  
Ohrenstein & Hild & Ostergau, R.C.

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Page, Harvey L.  
Pagels, William  
Patton, Normand S.  
Patton & Fisher  
Patton & Miller  
Pearson, George  
Perkins, C.A.  
Perkins, Fellows & Hamilton  
Pond & Pond  
Presto, William C.  
Reff, George W.  
Roberts, Eben E.  
Roberts Eben E. and Roberts, Elmer  
Rocher, J.B. & Son  
Rosenberg & Pierce  
Ross, Frank P.  
Rowland, William  
Runde, Otto  
Rynerston, F.J.  
Sanders, L.M.  
Scheidt, Louis A.  
Schock, Frederick  
Seator, Sinclair M.  
Seyfarth, Robert  
Shaw, Howard Van Doren  
Skiff, Frank V.  
Spencer, N.S. and Son  
Spencer and Powers  
Stauber, Carl  
Stanhope, Lawrence E.  
Steinbach, John C.  
Stevens, Harry  
Tallmadge and Watson  
Tunk, Frank F., and Company  
Van Bergen, John S.  
Van Kueren, William J.  
Von Holst & Fyfe  
Wadikind, A.

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Wadskier, Theodore Vigo  
Wahlstrom, C.G.  
Watson, Vernon  
White & Christie  
White & Weber  
White, Charles E., Jr.  
Whitney & Williams  
William, E.B.  
Wilson, Marble & Lamson  
Wolf, Peter J.  
Wolf, Sexton, Morgan & Trueax  
Wolf, Sexton, Harper & Trueax  
Worthmann & Steinbach  
Wright, Frank Lloyd  
Wright, Harvey  
Wyeth, Walter H.  
Zwik, Frank F., Company

## **BUILDERS**

Over 400 individuals or companies are known to have constructed buildings in the district from ca. 1865 to 1929. A complete list of known builders is on file with the Village of Oak Park Planning Department.



Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission

# Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District



*Washington Blvd (Village photo)*



# RIDGELAND-OAK PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT

National Register of Historic Places  
Nomination Form

Prepared by:  
Daniel M. Bluestone and the  
Oak Park Landmarks Commission  
(now Historic Preservation Commission)

December 8, 1983

## **NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District**

Prepared by: Daniel M. Bluestone and the Oak Park Landmarks Commission  
Listed on: December 8, 1983

### **Section 7: DESCRIPTION**

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#### Summary Statement

Residential structures and a fairly spacious suburban character dominate the District's 539 acres and 1,713 buildings. Spanning the decades from the 1870s to the 1920s, the District's residential architecture embodies a myriad of building styles and types. The major re-orientation of domestic architecture embodied in the District, from 19<sup>th</sup> century eclecticism to 20<sup>th</sup> century modernism, was accompanied by a growing use of stucco in the place of wood in house exteriors. The spacious character of the single-family house lots is enhanced by wide parkway lawns between the street and the sidewalks. The streets are laid out in a grid pattern. The District's single-family residence areas are bounded by streets lined with brick apartment buildings. Rising from two to four stories, the apartments were built for the most part between 1905 and 1929. An important physical aspect of the District is its alternating quality between busy apartment-lined streets and quiet single-family areas. The District also includes many of Oak Park's finest religious and commercial buildings, ranging in style from Romanesque to Prairie School modern. The overall integrity and historic character of the District has been well preserved.

#### Geography

The Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District occupies a flat plain of glacial till lying nine miles west of Lake Michigan and downtown Chicago. The nearly level natural setting is broken only by a low terminal moraine rising slightly under the course of Lake Street in the western part of the District. The area's geography, perhaps, an inspiration of the creative designs of Prairie School architects, provided no real obstacle to human settlement. Artesian wells, railroad transportation and Chicago's booming growth facilitated the area's emergence in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century as a major residential suburb.

#### Residential Architecture

The numerous detached, single-family residences built in the district prior to 1900 were constructed primarily of wood and are generally 2 to 2-1/2 stories; these include several fine examples of Gothic Revival cottages and Italianate houses from the 1870s and 1880s. Exuberant and spatially complex Stick Style and Queen Anne frame houses from the 1880s and 1890s line many of the streets. These fine examples of Victorian homes are located throughout the district; in general, both in terms of number and quality, the highest concentration of these homes were built along the streets west of East Avenue. A few distinctive houses incorporating Romanesque motifs in their street facades were built in the District in the 1890s.

Around 1900, as the population and settled area of the District rapidly expanded, many of the new single-family detached homes assumed new forms and materials. Eschewing the earlier

designs which incorporated historically-derived style and ornament and turning to the rooted principles and traditions of composition, proportion and symmetry, architects and builders helped effect a major stylistic transition. The District, containing Frank Lloyd Wright's Unity Temple, lacks examples of his own mature Prairie School residential designs which are found in abundance in the Frank Lloyd Wright and Prairie School of Architecture Historic District adopted in 1972. However, the District does bear the unmistakable imprint of the Prairie School's modern architecture in its post-1900 houses. Around 1900 many Prairie School architects, and builders who popularized their work, began filling the area with simple, quiet, formal rectangular houses with more symmetrical disposition of parts, than had characterized the late Victorian homes. While a few brick homes were constructed, the more common use of light colored stucco to cover either part or all of the house's exterior wall surface marked a transition in building material and texture as striking as the stylistic re-orientation.

The modern residential buildings in the District tended to preserve the 2 and 2-1/2 story plan of earlier residences; yet, it did, in some cases, accommodate different building forms. Promoted primarily by the Oak Park builder R. G. Hancock, some modest 1-1/2 story, stucco, California-style bungalows (such as those along the 300 block of North Taylor Avenue built in 1913) did appear in the District. They represented an extreme in the simplifying tendencies of modern design. More importantly, maintaining the same over-all exterior form of the modern stucco single-family residence, the two-flat, double decker, detached residence appeared in the District after 1900. Cleverly designed and disguised as a single-family home, the two-flat apartment settled harmoniously and, in many cases, unnoticed into blocks of single-family residences. The detached single-family and two-family houses generally occupy the center of rectangular lots with 50-foot street frontages and depths of from 150 feet to 175 feet.



300 block of North Taylor Avenue

The numerous apartment buildings constructed in the District between 1905 and 1929 tempered but did not destroy its pervasive suburban character. The apartment buildings are between 2 and 4 stories. Ranging in color from white, to yellow, to red, to brown, the apartment buildings are nearly all constructed of brick. In seeking a harmonious suburban landscape, many builders and architects included in their apartment building designs a variety of elements from porches, sun rooms, bay windows, half-timbering, casement windows, and geometrical ornament. Features of the then modern prairie School architecture were introduced into some of the apartment buildings. As the District's residential lots filled up in the 1910s, construction of detached residences declined precipitously. However, the 1920s apartment construction proceeded and even intensified. Replacing earlier single-family houses, the apartment buildings quite often

constituted a second generation of building on their sites. Larger apartment buildings with several separate entrances arranged along or around landscaped courtyards developed between about 1915 and 1929. The 1920s buildings continued to incorporate contemporary stylistic elements from domestic architecture. Thus, while the detached residences do not reflect the general return to stylistic revivalism, the District's apartment houses of the 1920s contain surface ornaments characteristic of Tudor, Medieval, and Classical architecture.



Apartment buildings in the Historic District.

### Civic, Religious and Commercial Buildings

Suburban residents often looked beyond their residential structures for a sense of neighborhood and community. Civic, religious, and commercial buildings occupied visible and central spots in the suburban landscape. The District encompasses major examples of these buildings.

The District's ecclesiastical architecture includes numerous architectural styles and building materials. The church buildings range from W. C. Williamson's First Presbyterian (now Calvary) Church (1898-1902) built in the Romanesque style of variously colored, split, granite boulders to Frost & Granger's Cuyler Avenue Methodist Church (1903-1914) built in English Gothic style of red granite, to Henry Schlack's St. Edmund's Church (1909-1910) built in French Gothic of Bedford limestone to Frank Lloyd Wright's famous Unity Temple (1905-1908) built in bold modern style of reinforced concrete. The District's religious school buildings complement the churches. The public schools, Eben E. Robert's imposing Classical Revival Municipal Building (1903-1904), and the imposing Moderne post office designed by White & Weber (1931) represent the Community's civic and secular commitments to good government and public education.



First Presbyterian

Cuyler Methodist

St. Edmund's

Unity Temple

Unlike the churches, which are located on corner lots in both the business and residential sections of the District, the significant commercial structures are located primarily in concentrated nodes, determined initially by accessibility to the railroad stations along the Chicago and Northwestern Railway. Built between 1890 and 1929, the major commercial

buildings are constructed of brick and stone and are from two to four stories. They follow a general plan of combining commercial/retail stores on the first floor with office and/or apartment space above. The outstanding exception to the pattern is Roy Hotchkiss' 10-story design for the Medical Arts Building (1929), faced in white concrete and green terra cotta. The District's significant commercial structures, like the churches, present broad stylistic variety. William J. Van Keuren's S. S. Niles Building (1890-1894), designed for a bank and stores below and offices and flats above, adopted restrained Romanesque motifs and juxtaposed brick with heavy stone lintels and carved stone ornament. Patton & Fisher's Cicero Gas Company building (1893), along the District's major commercial street, Oak Park Avenue, merged Romanesque arches at street level with a gable, a corner tower, and brackets familiar in the Queen Anne designs of their Oak Park residential work. Patton, Fisher and Miller's design for the Scoville Block (1899), a building combining commercial, offices and sleeping rooms, was topped with a pitched terra cotta tile roof and a dramatic series of stepped Dutch gables. Eben E. Robert's design for the Second Scoville Building (1907-1908), listed on the National Register, contained stores, offices and a Masonic Hall in the general form and massing familiar to the Prairie School; T. R. Bishop's design for a two-story enameled brick commercial block, rimmed with foliated trim (1922) at 200-212 South Marion also extended modern design and style to Oak Park's commercial architecture.



Medical Arts



Niles Building



Cicero Gas



Scoville Block



Second Scoville

Lawns, Parkways and the Streetscape

The significance of the Historic District hinges not only on its individual structures but on the orderly integration of its diverse building types and styles into a fairly harmonious suburban plan. Despite the diversity of building types, the ordered relation of buildings to each other and to the framework of the streetscape fosters a striking harmony.

The subdivision of land, the platting of streets and the sale of building lots in the District proceeded according to the grid system corresponding to the 1785 United States rectangular survey of townships and sections. In the nearby western suburb of Riverside, roughly contemporary with Oak Park and Ridgeland, the corporate control of 1,600 acres of land permitted Olmsted and Vaux to lay out a curvilinear plan to set the community apart from the city and its grid plan. In contrast, developers in Oak Park and Ridgeland relied on the traditional and more familiar grid plan to coordinate the settlement of much smaller land holdings over the course of the years. Thus, the suburban community intended to arise as linked but distinct part of the city, replicated the city's dominant land division. In 1892, changing the names of several east-west streets to correspond with the names of the main connecting Chicago streets, Oak Park and Ridgeland became even more closely identified with the Chicago grid.

Despite the repetition of Chicago's grid and street names, the spacious right-of-ways and broad parkway lawns in the District successfully create a more suburban residential character. Two standard rights-of-way (the total distance between opposite lot-lines) prevail in the District. All east-west streets and the north-south streets located west of Oak Park Avenue have 66-foot rights-of-way. The District's other rights-of-way are 80 feet in width. After dedicating a 30-foot wide strip for actual street paving and two 5-foot wide cement sidewalks, space remained for generous parkway lawns, between the sidewalk and the street, which range from 12 to 20 feet. These landscaped parkways arose with the earliest subdivisions and prevailed into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The only modifications came when the widths of Wisconsin, Oak Park, Ridgeland Avenues and Washington Boulevard were widened to 38 feet – removing 4 feet from each parkway.

The District's street light design supports the continuity of the streetscape created by the parkway plan. Replacing earlier arc lights and overhead wires, the present light standards and lanterns were installed in 1926 and 1927. The wires are placed in underground culverts. The octagonal cast-bronze lanterns, 32 inches high and 16 inches in diameter, topped with ornamental finials, are supported by gray reinforced concrete standards, 13 feet high. The lights are from 120 to 150 feet apart and are arranged in a staggered configuration on opposite sides of the streets. The busier east-west streets: South, Pleasant, Randolph, Washington, as well as Ridgeland, Oak Park and Austin, have newer 30-foot high concrete poles with 8-foot steel arms.

#### The Elevated Track

The 1907 elevation above grade of the Chicago and Northwestern Railway tracks, located between North and South Boulevard, created a continuous, lofty presence in Oak Park and the District. The track looms especially large in the otherwise level landscape. The concrete retaining wall is incised with shallow arcaded motif. It terminates the northward view along most of the District's north-south streets. The elevated track, despite its numerous underpasses, does interrupt Oak Park's architectural landscape and provides an obvious boundary for the Historic District. The District extends north of the elevated track at Oak Park Avenue and between Cuyler and Harvey Avenues. In both places, higher structures on the north side of the tracks, provide some continuity between separate sections of the District. Since 1962, the elevated track, has accommodated the Lake Street elevated (Chicago Transit Authority) track which earlier ran at grade along South Boulevard.

Although concerns for public safety and operating efficiency, rather than aesthetics or symbolism, determined the track elevation, the project gave the railroad a visual dominance in Oak Park, which symbolized its central role in the area's development as a commuting suburb of Chicago. The determining force of railway transport in early community growth is architecturally recalled in the car barns and power plant of the Cicero and Proviso Street Railway Co. (1892 – presently used as the garage of the West Town Bus Company) and in Lake Street Elevated transformer building at 117 South Lombard (1903 – presently used as a residence and artist studio).

#### Building Sites and Connections: The District's Order

The relation of buildings to each other and to the spacious framework embodied in the street plan also fosters a certain harmony and unity in the District plan. Detached residences from all

periods generally were constructed 30 to 50 feet back from the front lot line on green lawns, which nicely complement and extend the parkway lawns. The depth of the lots in relation to the size of the houses made it easy for house builders to observe a fairly uniform building line. In a lot pattern of development on easy access to the railway, the less generous width of lots provided for a desirable level of concentration and gave 15 to 20 feet of separation between adjacent houses. The stables, garages, and alleys at the rear of the lots, generally eliminated the need to break up parkway strips and side yards with driveways.

The District's larger apartment buildings occupy a greater percentage of their lots than the detached residences do. In some cases, the apartment building observes the building line of adjacent detached residences. More commonly, the apartment buildings have smaller lawn areas between the wall and the lot line. The largest apartment buildings have wings close to the lot line and yet often incorporate lawns, plants, and trees into their midst with landscaped courtyards. The parkways and lawns complement the domestic references of the architecture itself to distinguish many of these apartment buildings from the lot line walls and greater formality of their more urban counterparts.

The most striking feature of the District's streetscape and the relation of the buildings to each other is their relative order, achieved through a zoning system of districting. The District's business and apartment buildings are not randomly scattered among detached residences. In a planned order codified by the 1921 Zoning Ordinance, certain streets are set aside for apartment houses, and others for detached residences. The subsequent concentration of large apartment buildings initiated rather striking contrasts in the District's streetscape. In several areas of the district turning a corner leads one from a corridor of bustling, high-density apartments into the midst of a quiet, suburban domestic street. The alternating character, and balance, of apartment or business corridors and suburban streets is highly unusual and quite successfully achieved in the District.

#### Boundaries and Containers

The District can be conceptualized as a container – broad areas of detached residences are contained and surrounded by narrower strips given over largely to apartment buildings. On the west, apartments line Maple Avenue and to a lesser extent Wisconsin Avenue. On the south, apartment buildings line Washington Boulevard creating a strong boundary nearly as consistent and visible as the elevated track embankment at South Boulevard, which contains a large part of the District on the North. On the east, Austin Boulevard's line of apartments, share a continuity of form, style and fabric with Washington Boulevard. In the section of Ridgeland north of the elevated track, the Austin Boulevard line of apartments is backed by the apartments along North Humphrey Avenue. Commercial and apartment buildings along South Oak Park Avenue present a narrow break in the detached residential areas which these other apartment-lined streets generally enclose.

Given the vagaries of town development, the concept of the District as a container provides a useful but somewhat idealized generalization. First, there are apartment buildings located in other sections of the district, among detached residences; they are only concentrated at the periphery of the District. Second, the Maple, Washington, Austin corridors are not built-up solidly with large apartment buildings; there is a mixture of small detached residences along

these streets. Finally, there are detached residences, both singly and in groups, of fairly high quality, which are adjacent to, but not contained by the zoning envelope's apartment boundaries. For example, the historic district boundaries are drawn to include John S. Van Bergen's W. H. Griffith House (1913, 418 South Harvey), Frank Lloyd Wright's G. W. Smith House (1895-1898, 404 Home Avenue), Charles E. White's C. W. Austin House (1905, 420 Clinton Avenue) and Eben E. Robert's F. W. Hall House (1904-5, 412 Clinton) all of which are located south of the Washington Boulevard corridor. The southern boundary thus often dips below the Washington Boulevard line to take in certain blocks of detached residence; it is pulled back to the Boulevard at other points to exclude many more recent apartments of a quite intrusive character. Similarly, the section of Ridgeland north of the elevated track encompasses several Gothic cottages and noteworthy blocks of stucco residences but lacks the articulated, contained boundary of the main body of the district.



418 S. Harvey



404 Home



420 Clinton



412 Clinton

Outside the boundary, in portions of the District, sharp discontinuity in building style and type is evident. The section of Forest Park west of Harlem Avenue and the District's west boundary lacks the Victorian architecture of the Oak Park section and has none of the orderly integration of detached residences and apartments characterizing the Historic District. Harlem Avenue, itself lined with automotive service and fast food establishments, presents a quiet distinct boundary to the west. Madison Street, the first street south of the south boundary of the district, constitutes a similarly abrupt change in building type and landscape plan. This street is a major vehicular transportation artery from Chicago, 120 feet wide, and is bordered for much of its length by an automotive strip lacking any architectural merit (even as far as automotive strips go). The residential areas south of Madison Street consist primarily of single-family detached houses occupying smaller lots. There are a number of fine streetscapes in this area, such as the Hulbert-built section on Clinton and Kenilworth Avenues, but the overall quality of architecture is somewhat less than that of the Historic District. This is also the case with the northern boundary north of Superior Street and Chicago Avenue. A major pedestrian mall has mauled and compromised the historic character of the Lake and Marion Streets business center, adjacent to the western section of the district. In this area, parking lots, concrete and gray granite pavers, the modern light standards, and the clumps of landscape more closely resemble an enclosed shopping mall than the historic character of the commercial buildings and streets included in the District.

The District boundaries north of Lake Street, west of North Cuyler Avenue, and east of Austin Boulevard do not outline areas of sharp discontinuity or distinction between the landscape inside and outside of the District. Rather they define the borders of an existing and of an anticipated historic district. North of Lake Street and west of North Cuyler and North Ridgeland Avenues, the Historic District is in close proximity to the National Register's *Frank Lloyd Wright and*



*Prairie School of Architecture Historic District.* This area encompasses a wealthier residential district. It contains some Victorian and modern homes of higher architectural merit than those in the Historic District; nevertheless, the continuities of form and association are manifest. Zoned as a detached residence district, the already established Oak Park Historic District lacks the alternating character of city and suburb, town and country, and the range of building forms and types which exist in the Historic District reviewed here.

It is anticipated that a portion of the Austin neighborhood of Chicago, located just east of Austin Boulevard, will soon be formally presented as an historic district. It contains significant architectural and historical associations with the District's Ridgeland and Oak Park area. These areas developed simultaneously as Western Suburbs of Chicago. Contiguous sites and the Chicago and Northwestern Railway tracks united them physically. Politically, they were merged and incorporated in Cicero Township until 1899. Builders, community leaders, and architects; for example, F. A. Hill, Henry Austin, and Frederick Schock worked on both sides of Austin Boulevard, which in 1902, became Oak Park's eastern boundary. William Drummond's First Congregational Church of Austin (1904-08, corner of Midway Park and Waller) shares stylistic similarities with Wright's Unity Temple. Many of the extraordinarily fine late-nineteenth-century detached houses lining Midway Park, Race, and Ohio Streets and Central Avenue echo the Victorian structures located within the Historic District. Similar structures are also located south of the elevated track; however, here the streets of Austin evidence a more random, less ordered juxtaposition of detached residences and apartment structures than is found in the Historic District, west of Austin Boulevard. The Midway Gardens Apartments, 440 North Austin, the West Suburban Hospital, and other associations, structures, and areas of the Historic District will harmoniously connect into the anticipated Austin historic district east of the Austin Boulevard boundary.



Midway Gardens, 440 N. Austin



West Suburban Hospital

### Representation in Surveys

A total of 141 buildings in the District are listed in one or more of the following architectural surveys: National Register of Historic Places (4); Illinois Historic Structures Survey (41); Hasbrouck-Sprague Survey (76); Steiner: Victorian Oak Park (13); Sprague: Prairie School Oak Park (7).

### Intrusive and Noncontributing Structures

The District's structures retain a very high degree of their original design and character. In general, they are in a good state of repair with few intrusive alterations or additions evident on the exterior. Where such intrusions or damaged integrity exists, it usually takes the form of

asbestos or aluminum siding. However, even with changed siding, the houses' massing and preservation of the streetscape make them contributing structures. The District includes no known or significant archeological sites. Structures considered to non-contributing intrusions are generally located on the periphery of the District, and where possible, have been excluded by the configuration of the boundary. Intrusive structures within the district are not ones which have been altered but ones which have been designed in the last thirty-five years in a style and material quite out of context with the District's earlier buildings. These intrusions are for the most part recently constructed apartment buildings and convenience stores. In 1930, the District was solidly built-up and utilized as it is today; the limited number of intrusive structures are ones which depart from the architectural patterns established in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, when the District took on its present form and significance.

## **Section 8: SIGNIFICANCE**

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### Summary Statement

Architecture and community planning are the Historic District's leading areas of significance. Ranging in date from the 1870s to the 1920s, the District encompasses models of suburban residential architecture, which possess high merit and quality. The District significantly embodies the major stylistic reorientation of domestic architecture from nineteenth-century historical eclecticism, captured in the area's Victorian homes, to twentieth-century modernism, represented in houses designed by or influenced by Prairie School architects. The district also includes civic, commercial and religious structures possessing high artistic value. The largely successful attempts in the early twentieth century to plan, order and regulate the merging of the urban apartment building form and the suburban single-family neighborhood, within the District, represented a significant precedent in American community planning. Both the architectural and planning precedents went beyond the local community to share in and influence national developments. The District's significance most readily meets National Register Criteria A; in terms of the broad pattern of suburban development it relates to Criteria C; on a local level and to some extent, on the State and National level, the architects who designed buildings in the District meet Criteria B – "lives of persons significant in our past."

### Suburban Development

In 1898, the anonymous author of Halley's Pictorial of Oak Park declared "*Oak Park history is not strongly marked nor notably eventful.*" The author then proceeded: "*Cutting down forest trees and planting ornamental ones, laying out, grading and parking streets, building sidewalks, constructing ditches, drains and sewers, has been one constant practice of our people. Platting subdivisions and putting them in the market has been another. Providing cheap and frequent means of transportation to and from the City of Chicago is one particular thing we never lost sight of. Our people have contributed most freely and effectually to the providing of schools, churches, literary institutions and means of recreation... We have reclaimed the wilderness (and) have set up the standard of civilization.*"<sup>1</sup> Perhaps not particularly heroic, these town-building activities, the raising of houses and the development of the community, with its striking forms and patterns, are precisely what makes Oak Park "notable" and "eventful."

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<sup>1</sup> Halley's Pictorial Oak Park, Oak Park: William Halley, 1898, p. 4.

The earliest suburban development of Oak Park originated in the 1850s, when Joseph Kettlestrings, who had purchased a large tract of land in 1835, subdivided his land into house lots. In 1849, the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad carried passengers to a station in Harlem, now River Forest. Still somewhat remote from this station and Chicago, the Oak Park settlement proceeded slowly. It was not until 1866 that James W. Scoville and M. C. Niles subdivided the first major section of the District land south of the railroad track. In 1871, Scoville and William B. Ogden, Mahlan D. Ogden, Joel D. Harvey, and Josiah Lombard subdivided a large tract of land and undertook street, sidewalk, tree planting and railroad depot improvements in the eastern part of the District known as Ridgeland. Ridgeland was viewed as a link between the neighborhood of Oak Park and the growing suburb of Austin laid out by Henry Austin in 1866, just east of Ridgeland. Until 1899, when Austin was annexed to Chicago, Austin, Ridgeland, Oak Park and other western villages were politically united and incorporated as part of Cicero Township.<sup>2</sup> In 1901, Ridgeland and Oak Park merged, incorporated, and established local government as the Village of Oak Park.

In 1872, when Oak Park received its own railroad depot on the Chicago and Northwestern Railway, its rapid emergence as a residential suburb of Chicago began. In 1877, the railroad was running thirty-nine trains daily between Oak Park and Chicago; in the subsequent year, more railroads and street car lines, with increased service, came to link Oak Park and Chicago. As Chicago grew from a regional center to a national metropolis Oak Park expanded – from 500 residents in 1872 to 1,812 in 1890, to 9,353 in 1900, to 20,911 in 1910, to 39,585 in 1920. Oak Park thus emerged as a leading Chicago suburb.

### The Architects

Some of the District’s oldest remaining houses dating from the 1870s and 1880s are Gothic cottages and Italianate houses whose builders and architects are unknown; these include, for example, Gothic cottages located at 139 and 143 North Harvey Avenue and 143, 144, 418 and 419 N. Cuyler Avenue and Italianate style houses at 121 South Maple and 211 Clinton Avenue.



143 N. Harvey



418 N. Cuyler



121 S. Maple



211 Clinton

As Oak Park grew, buildings by Normand S. Patton and Frank Lloyd Wright, architects of national reputation, were built in the District. Well-known and established Chicago-area architects, many of whom contributed to the evolution of Prairie School forms and stylistic vocabulary also designed buildings within the District. Architects represented have included Wesley J. Arnold, William Drummond, Frank Ellis, Henry G. Fiddelke, Charles S. Frost and Alfred H. Granger, William Harley, Cicero Hines, George W. Maher, Frederick Perkins, Eben E. Roberts, Henry J. Schlacks, Frederick R. Schock, Robert C. Spencer, Jr., Thomas E. Tallmadge

<sup>2</sup> Everett Chamberlin, Chicago and Its Suburbs, Chicago: T. A. Hingerford & Co., 1874, pp. 424-427.

and Vernon S. Watson; John S. Van Bergen, William J. Van Keuren, Charles E. White, Jr., James H. Willet and Alfred Pashley and W. G. Williamson.

The character and architectural significance of the District is primarily residential and most of these architects are represented by residential design. However, in terms of community planning, the diversity of the District’s buildings, outlined in Section 7, should be kept in mind. In many ways, the design work of Eben E. Roberts, probably the most widely represented architect in the District, best underscores the District’s diversity. In the District, Roberts designed five single-family homes for Isaac N. Conrad (1902, 321 Clinton) and Frank W. Hall (1904-5, 412 Clinton). He designed single-family and two-flat houses for middle-class families built by small investors as well as leading speculative builders such as F. A. Hill and A. D. Orvis; he designed, for example, the Orvis home at 224 South Ridgeland (1907) and the two-flat apartments at 211, 213 and 241 South Elmwood (1905, 1905 and 1909 respectively).



321 Clinton

224 S. Ridgeland

213 S. Elmwood

The “Quadrangle” apartments (1905, 108-110 South East) and the “Wisconsin” apartments (1906, 309-315 Wisconsin), both designed by Roberts, are two of the District’s nicer apartment buildings. Roberts also designed major civic, religious and commercial buildings in the District; these include the Municipal Building (1903-04, s.e. corner Euclid and Lake Street), the Scoville Business Block (1905, s.w. corner Lake Street and Oak Park Avenue), the West Suburban Hospital (1911-12), the Playhouse Theater (1913, 1111 South Boulevard) and the Euclid Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church (1921-22, s.w. corner South Euclid Avenue and Washington Boulevard). These and other non-residential buildings harmoniously supported and complemented the District’s pervasive residential character.



“The Quadrangle”

“The Wisconsin”

Playhouse Theater

Euclid Avenue M.E.

### Victorian Residences and Individuality

The District’s major Victorian residences, designed largely in Stick and Queen Anne styles, aimed at visual delight and complexity. The irregular shapes of gables, dormers, overhanging eaves, bay windows and porches, asymmetrically disposed, introduced picturesque variety into a fairly uniform natural landscape. Perhaps united in their exuberance and dominant wood-frame

materials, the designs strive for individual expression, craftsmanship, and distinction. Stylistic accuracy and consistency within the prevailing eclecticism is of little importance. Broad porches, bay windows, rough natural materials, the interpenetration of interior and exterior space evidence contemporary concerns for sunlight and health and the view of the suburban home as a natural retreat from the city. The dominant roof, the picturesque chimneys, the inter-locking masses all embodied commonly understood images of home, health, and family – the enshrinement of the late-nineteenth century domestic ideal. The surface complexity also emphasized the compartmentalized interiors of cozy, intimate, domestic space – inglenooks, bay-window seats, sunrooms and porches. These elements represented important symbols of family life for the middle-class families of Chicago businessmen and professionals moving into Oak Park.

W. J. Van Keuren built dozens of Stick and Queen Anne style houses in the District. He designed houses for individual clients; he also designed speculative housing on his own account and for builders like F. A. Hill and S. A. Rothermel. Van Keuren’s houses lack uniformly high quality; many of the designs because of less money and/or less imagination reveal a process by which elements of a high quality design are watered-down, filtered, or eliminated in more modest commissions. This development leads to a cohesive streetscape in which shared vocabulary relates through association, modest houses to grander ones. Van Keuren’s work and the work of various subdivision buildings – F. A. Hill, R. G. Hancock, J. Kempston and Son share this characteristic of filtered grandeur. In houses for A. A. Adair (1893, 102 South Grove) and H. B. Waterman (1894, 309 Clinton) Van Keuren makes interesting use of a rectangular corner tower, turned at 45 degrees from the orientation of the main rectangular mass of the house. Van Keuren’s houses for H. B. Noyes (1891, 329 Wisconsin), J. E. Davis (1894, 315 Wesley), and W. H. Cribben (1895, 330 South Euclid) are three of his more interesting designs in the District.



102 S. Grove



309 Clinton



329 Wisconsin



330 S. Euclid

Architect Wesley A. Arnold’s house built for his family (1888, 130 South Kenilworth) takes the contemporary enthusiasm for variegated surfaces and textures and extends it into an unusual participation of building materials – sandstone, brick and slate. Also of some interest is Cicero Hines’ H. H. Morgan house (1887, 229 Wesley). Other significant essays in textured Victorian surfaces, of unknown date and architect, include houses at 329 South Maple, 121 Wesley, 113 South Elmwood, and 407 North Harvey.



130 S. Kenilworth



229 Wesley



121 Wesley



113 S. Elmwood

The District includes several fine examples of Normand S. Patton's and Henry G. Fiddelke's Queen Anne houses. Steep gables, broad overhanging eaves, protruding corner bays mark Patton & Fisher's R. S. Thain House (1892, 210 Home Avenue); the firm also designed the Townsend House (1891, 315 South East). The masses and textures of the R. S. Thain House also appear in the frame house by an unknown architect for C. R. Blanchard (1894, 235 South Grove) and in a similar house at 234 South Grove. L. A. Weage, a real estate dealer, built houses adjacent to the Blanchard House which are also of some interest (1889, 237 South Grove and 1894, 231 South Grove). The range of Henry G. Fiddelke's Queen Anne expression is captured in two houses for John I. James (1887, 209 South Grove and 1897, 138 Clinton). The former, with half-timber and picturesque juxtaposition of forms and masses contrasts sharply with the quieter, more regular and integrated form of the latter.



210 Home



235 S. Grove



209 S. Grove



138 Clinton

Henry G. Fiddelke's design of the Jennie A. June Rowhouses (1895, 313-319 South Maple), an attached row of four brick and stone private residences, represents both an uncharacteristic form for the District and a useful summary of a leading stylistic feature of the area's Victorian homes. June's attached row of houses represents something of a reminder and fragment of the urban landscape quite out of keeping with the Oak Park ideal of individual detached homes on individual house-lots. The attached house was generally the course not taken in a suburban Village committed to the exclusion of reminders of city life, including the sale of alcohol. Fiddelke's design carefully distinguished the treatment of each house from the one adjacent to it. A pitched gable of one unit contrasted sharply with the bulging tower of the next, brick contrasted with stone, light colored material contrasted with dark. Picturesque individuality of forms and families reigned supreme.



313-319 S. Maple

Other rowhouse developments for S. A. Rothenmel designed by Van Keuren (1891, 100-110 Home) and for E. F. Burton designed by Willet & Pashley (1892, 200-208 Home), both incorporating Romanesque ornament, revealed the same striving for individual distinction. As Oak Park continued to grow in the early twentieth century architects and builders developed quieter, simpler, more symmetrical, more formal houses in the places of the earlier picturesque forms; a concern with a community of forms and families arose in the place of the earlier assertions of the individual family unit.



100-110 Home

#### Simplicity and Repose in the Modern Home

George W. Maher's John Farson House (1897-99, 217 Home), constructed in the nineteenth century, anticipated and suggested the reorientation of the District's domestic architectural style, which came in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The Farson House is the District's largest, most costly, residence. It occupies substantial grounds made possible by Farson's purchase and removal of eight adjacent houses. The flat walls of Roman brick, the crisp geometry of the windows, bordered in stone, the simple rectangular openings of the porch, the low roof, the symmetry, formality, and classical atmosphere of repose in the main façade was antithetical to the neighborhood's Queen Anne exuberance. The District's subsequent detached residences, both grand and modest, increasingly embodied the simple elements of quiet repose found in Maher's design. Projecting bays, dormers, corner turret towers, porches, were compressed, restrained or eliminated leaving a stripped down, rectangular, box-shaped "minimal," house.



217 Home, "John Farson House"

Myriad aesthetic, social, and cultural developments impinged upon the shift in residential architecture, which the Historic District so significantly and dramatically illustrates. The classical simplicity of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition and its suggestion of unity and harmony in a chaotic urban world proved attractive to both the public and established architects. The economic depression of the 1890s engendered criticism of the excesses of sham historical ornament and fostered a desire to modernize and simplify home decoration. Tenement house crusades and housing reform generally led architects to seek models of simple, inexpensive, homes. A nascent public health movement and germ theories of disease raised fears that the cozy nooks and bays and uneven surfaces and masses of Victorian houses might actually give harbor to dirt, dust, and dangerous germs. The Arts and Crafts movement fostered an aesthetic of sparseness. New household technology and attempts to reform women's work led to a new emphasis on comfort, convenience, and simplicity – again favoring less complicated, smaller, quieter houses and farms. As home technology modernized, a preference for precise machine aesthetics proved more popular than the handicrafts of the housewife. The modern movement also eclipsed the supposed handicraft work of the Victorian builders, porch spindles, fishscale shingles, and individually crafted homes. Many of these influences coalesced most dramatically in the new works of the emerging Prairie School architects, whose works are evident throughout the District.

Houses designed by Eben E. Roberts nicely capture the new mood of simplicity, symmetry, and formality after 1900. Roberts' design is best evidenced in houses for Isaac N. Conrad (1902, 321 Clinton), Frank W. Hall (1904-5, 412 Clinton) and C. M. Lynch (1907, 265 Home). They all include symmetrical facades, broad porches, rows of connected casement windows on the second floor and sharp, geometrical lines.



321 Clinton



412 Clinton



265 Home

The Hall House includes stucco around the second floor, above a wood-frame first floor. Although Wright introduced the stucco house to Oak Park, Roberts' larger practice and growing commitment to stucco helped to popularize the material. Stucco's smooth surfaces nicely reflected the clean, simple, uncluttered aesthetic of the emerging domestic ideal and architecture. The stucco was laid over both wood lathe and fireproof tile. In July 1911, the Cement Era recognized Roberts' "*particular study of*" stucco cement and his "*determination of working out an architectural design especially adopted to it.*" In the same month, the journal Rock Products declared "*Mr. Roberts...was the first architect in Chicago to give cement its proper recognition in residence architecture. The contractors and builders accord him this distinction and he has done much and is doing much for the industry.*" The Historic District has many stucco houses designed by Roberts. The Arthur J. Lloyd House (c. 1910, 324 South Euclid), with its dramatic



curved gable and dormer above a more formal base is one of Roberts' most notable stucco houses.



324 S. Euclid

In 1907, when A. D. Orvis built all twelve houses on the east side of South Ridgeland Avenue, including several stucco residences, he had Roberts design the house at 224 South Ridgeland; Roberts probably designed the other houses on the block. Each of the houses have a somewhat distinct character but blend together well suggesting an harmonious community of homes when contrasted to a block of insistent individual Queen Anne houses. The introduction of modern stucco residential architecture and its striking continuity from one house to the next gave the District's streetscapes a new unity. In 1914, the builder W. E. Palmer constructed five adjacent detached stucco houses at 202-214 Pleasant Street. Varying only the attic dormer permitted the houses to blend together without the striking distinctions of the Victorian block. After 1900, the atmosphere of suburban sanctuary and retreat from the city, apparent in the individual Victorian home, expanded into the street. In 1916, discussing R. G. Hancock's building of entire blocks of uniform California bungalows, both inside and outside of the Historic District (1914, east side of 300 block on North Taylor) the Oak Leaves reported, "The general style of the building lends an air of refinement and exclusiveness not possible where the types of building vary greatly and no defined building restrictions are followed."<sup>3</sup>



224 S. Ridgeland



200-214 Pleasant

Frederick A. Hill, a contractor and builder, put up hundreds of houses in Austin, and along Humphrey Avenue and other streets in the eastern section of the Historic District, using plans by Schock, Van Keuren and other architects. Hill also turned his attention to a unified streetscape. He planted hundreds of trees along the parkways where he developed property and in 1914 he

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<sup>3</sup> Oak Leaves, 18 March 1916.

attempted to develop large entranceways, with monumental urns filled with plants, at the intersections of Washington Boulevard, Harlem Avenue and Austin Boulevard. He also proposed smaller flower-filled urns at each intersection along Washington Boulevard. Although there is no evidence of these plans today, the attention to images of definition, unity and community are evident in the rows of frame and stucco residences on North Taylor, South Taylor, South Lombard, and South Harvey, built between 1900 and 1920. Here builders popularized the lessons and forms of Maher, Roberts and other Prairie School architects.

The District also includes several more radical ventures into stucco design with greater emphasis on abstractly geometrical forms and sparse surfaces than were embodied in Roberts' more widespread and popular work. Among these houses are Charles E. White's design for C. W. Austin (1905, 420 Clinton), and John S. Van Bergen's designs for G. R. Hemingway (1913, 106 S. Grove), W. H. Griffith (1914, 418 S. Harvey), and Q. H. Cook (1914, 204 S. Cuyler). Other stucco residences of some merit, designed by unknown architects, include those for William Taylor (c. 1907, 661 Washington), John Hula (1908, 417 S. Grove), E. J. Merit (1911, 415 Washington), and the house located at 419 Randolph.



106 S. Grove



418 S. Harvey



661 Washington



419 Randolph

#### “The Impending Calamity:” Apartment and the Suburb

With growing alarm after 1900, Oak Park residents viewed the modern apartment building as a threat to their unified streetscape, to their ideal of a “a community of homes,” to the continuity of community history, and to their property values. Few, if any, building issues, stylistic or otherwise, stirred up the amount of debate and controversy as did the question of the proper place of apartment buildings within the Village of Oak Park. Irony pervaded the debate because the trends toward the reform of housework, the reform of housing, the more efficient design of domestic space, the incorporation of modern labor-saving technology in the home, the aesthetics of sparseness, and related issues which contributed to the style, plan and form of the modern detached residence also fostered the turn toward apartment living. The modern apartment offered comfort and convenience without the responsibility and cost of homeownership. Oak Park's close proximity to Chicago made it a desirable place for the denser concentration of population afforded by the apartment buildings. The Historic District's significance in the area of community planning centers upon its fairly successful resolution of the social and design issues raised by the apartment building in the suburb.

In the April, 1905 Oak Leaves, the local newspaper presented an editorial entitled “The Impending Calamity” which aptly and pointedly expressed the widespread resistance to the apartment building; it declared, “*Oak Park is threatened with an invasion – a foreign invasion – of flats. The advance guard of the enemy is already upon us and the great host of its army is encamped at our very borders. Its encroachments, insidious and insinuating though they be, are*

none the less effective and, in a few years, will prove none the less fatal to those ideals that have hitherto distinguished our village as a residence suburb and a “community of homes.” Oak Park has stood thus far for that distinctive type of individual and community life that has its dependence upon broad expanse of open space, upon grass and trees and sunlight and fresh air. When it ceases to stand for that, it ceases to be Oak Park.”<sup>4</sup> A short time later, the same editorial page again criticized the flat building. Usurping the open-spaces devoted to lawns and trees around detached residence, the Oak Leaves suggest, “the flat destroys all this and gives in its place a lot of dry-good-box architecture lined up on the street without beauty and forming a bar to the circulation of fresh air and the accessibility of sunshine, nature’s two great health givers.”<sup>5</sup> While the social and aesthetic sides of the apartment building question were perhaps uppermost in residents’ minds, the legal defense of private property rights made the public health question particularly important.

The furor over apartment buildings led to calls for social restraint on the part of land owners and for ordinances and regulation on the part of the Village Board. In fact, the Board’s earliest building ordinance adopted in 1902 started a long process of controlling apartment building construction. The 1902 ordinance required that apartment buildings of three or more families be construction of brick, stone, iron or other incombustible material. The ordinance required fire escapes and limited the area the buildings could cover to 85% of corner lots and to 75% of other lots; it also limited apartment building heights to one-half the width of the broadest adjacent street (thus generally limiting heights from 33 feet to 40 feet). Minimum dimensions for light courts, rooms, windows, and minimum numbers of sinks and toilets were also established. The Village Board, in making what the Oak Leaves considered “stringent restrictions against the cheap construction of apartment buildings,” took what many considered a step toward “securing the beauty of the Village for the future.”<sup>6</sup> In 1904, hoping to attract the “better class of home builders,” Board President Allen S. Ray urged the Board to “go to the extreme limit of its powers in regulating (apartment) ...and in providing that they shall be unobjectionable to the inhabitants of the Village.”<sup>7</sup>

The small, two-flat apartment building proved to be one of the best means making apartments “unobjectionable” to Oak Park residents. E. E. Roberts received special credit from contemporary writers for developing a two-flat building which blended harmoniously with single-family residences. In 1911, Village Board President August Einfeldt pointed with favor to the 15 stucco two-flats constructed in Oak Park in 1911, like Roberts’ designs for the two-flats at 211, 213 and 241 S. Elmwood. He lauded the apartments as “an improvement rather than a discredit to our Village, and much more preferable than plain brick flats.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Oak Leaves, 22 April 1905.

<sup>5</sup> Oak Leaves, 27 May 1905.

<sup>6</sup> Oak Leaves, 16 July 1904.

<sup>7</sup> Annual Report of the Village of Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois for the Fiscal Year January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1904 to December 31<sup>st</sup> 1902, Oak Park: Ainsworth & Wilson, 1903, p. 8.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 1911 Annual Report, p. 3-4; see also 1912 Annual Report, p. 4.



211 S. Elmwood



213 S. Elmwood



241 S. Elmwood

In 1910, pointing to the stringency of the building ordinance the Oak Leaves reported that ordinance had encouraged the construction of two-flats; it noted with some satisfaction that they had “*the exterior appearance of an ordinary dwelling, and (were) proving a very desirable thing as a place of residence, as an ornament to the community, and as an investment.*”<sup>9</sup> These stucco two-flats succeeded in disguising their multi-family character by following the same basic site plan and building outline as the single-family house and obscuring or tucking away the second entry.

The building ordinance did not completely ban larger apartment buildings; however, the general air of resistance to flats did affect their design. In 1905, discussing the “*Impending Calamity*” the Oak Leaves expressed the hope that the apartment building controversy and regulation would either put an end to their development or lead to “*such a modification of the flat idea as to bring it into harmony with...Oak park ideals;*” according to the newspaper E. E. Roberts’ design for Luther Conant’s “*Quadrangle*” apartments (1905, 108-110 South East) represented one such building “*in harmony*” with those ideals.<sup>10</sup> Roberts, who advertised himself as an architect of “*Homelike Homes*” and “*homey dwellings*” led the way in extending “*homey*” images to the Oak Park apartment building. In the “*Quadrangle*” development, Roberts placed three separate buildings with six apartments each, around a well-kept lawn and circular driveway. The building observed the building line established by private residences on the block. Roberts excluded light courts and airshafts entirely – every room had an outside window. The half-timbered gable, the open porches for each apartment, the broad lawn, shared more common features with suburban private residences than with the flat-roofed “*dry goods boxes*” of the typical urban flat buildings. The Oak Leaves applauded the design as a “*high water mark of apartment house construction.*”<sup>11</sup>



108-118 S. East Avenue – “*Quadrangle*” Apartments

<sup>9</sup> Oak Leaves, 5 February 1910.

<sup>10</sup> Oak Leaves, 22 April 1905.

<sup>11</sup> Oak Leaves, 27 August 1905.

Although the apartment buildings built between 1905 and 1920 in the District rarely achieved the site and architectural character of the “Quadrangle,” this building included what turned out to be many recurring elements and themes. Most importantly, obvious efforts were made to harmonize the features and concerns of contemporary domestic architecture with apartment building design. The interchange was spurred by the controversy and regulations concerning the apartment in Oak Park. To varying degrees, the apartment designs left an unaccustomed amount of lawn around the building, exceeding the 15% to 25% required by ordinance. In 1916, the building ordinance was amended to require that apartment buildings observe the building of adjacent buildings on the block; however, some apartments had already observed this requirement – for example, H. H. Richards’ design for the Biggs Brothers Apartment (1910-15, 201-207 S. Lombard) and the “Glen Ellyn” (1912, 127-33 S. Harvey). The “Oakdale Apartments” (1906-07, 136 S. Harvey) did not observe the lot-line and did not evidence particularly imaginative design; yet, its narrow width in relation to the lot eliminated the need for courts and air shafts and left an ample 100-foot wide backyard. A 1907 advertisement for the “Oakdale” declared that it was designed on the premise that *“the dweller in an apartment is entitled to the same conveniences and to as good light as the man who lives in a house.”*<sup>12</sup>



Biggs Brothers Apartment



The Glen Ellyn



The Oakdale

Aside from considerations of siting, the apartment buildings continued to incorporate “homey” architectural features. The concern of the homeowner for sunlight and air worked itself out in elaborate schemes for porches and sunrooms. The front bays of porches or sun rooms also tended to break up the building façade into a less imposing series of related units. The pitched terra cotta roof, half timber, casement window, art glass, geometric ornament, and a mixture of materials – brick, stucco, and stone – linked the buildings to single-family house designs. E. E. Roberts’ “Wisconsin” apartments (1906, 309-315 Wisconsin) and the apartments of unknown architect at 801-809 Washington and 255-257 South Maple bear obvious features of Prairie School design.



The Wisconsin



801-809 Washington



255-257 South Maple

<sup>12</sup> Oak Leaves, 27 April 1907.

The “LuViola” (1914-15, 815-821 Washington) built by Lewis H. Webb, is a design of extraordinary quality. The green tile entry pavilions are supported on brackets, which echo Greene and Greene’s California designs. The contrast of stone and brick establish a fine, abstractly geometrical pattern in the walls, while the art glass windows suggest the interior richness of beam ceiling mahogany buffets and tile bathrooms. Frederick R. Schock’s design for E. A. Cummings apartments (1912, 135-141 N. Ridgeland) dramatically juxtaposed red brick and the geometrical ornament characteristics of the Prairie School, executed of white terra cotta. In keeping with modern effort at harmonious community design, Schock’s apartments echoed the elements of the adjacent store and apartment building, which he also designed for E. A. Cummings (1911, 400-404 Lake).



The LuViola



135-141 N. Ridgeland



400-404 Lake

Other notable apartment designs include two buildings by architect Willam B. Pruyn, Jr., the “Oak Ridge” (1916, 949 Lake) and the “Lorain” (1915, 38-44 Washington). The Johnson Brothers firm of builders constructed some of the fine apartment buildings in the District, including two large courtyard buildings – “Midway Park” apartments (1915, 440 North Austin) and “Ridgecourt” (1915, 302-312 Washington). “Homey” apartment buildings like “Seven Elms” with half-timber, stucco, tile roof, and landscaped courtyards (1915, 815-821 Lake) could harmoniously settle into the “architectural center of Oak Park,” around the Scoville Institute, an area which it had earlier been thought would be spoiled if apartments were constructed.<sup>13</sup>



The Oak Ridge



The Lorain



Midway Park Apts.



Ridgecourt

Between about 1900 and World War I, public criticism, Village ordinances and architects’ innovations fostered many apartment buildings of some merit which appeared sensitive to “Oak Park ideals.” Village ordinances only addressed the character of individual buildings and not their location or pattern within the Village. Some Oak Park builders with large enough land and building operations actively addressed these issues. Thomas H. Hulbert, who in 1904 began to

<sup>13</sup> Oak Leaves, 16 May 1908.

build houses on Clinton and South Kenilworth Avenues, south of Madison, proudly advertised “*The Hulbert Houses, Oak Park, Residences Only – No Flats Allowed.*” Hulbert backed his promise with “ironclad” deed restrictions barring all single-family residences in his subdivision \*\*\*\*\* until 1945.<sup>14</sup> Smaller developers could not offer the same guarantee in other parts of the Village – particularly in older areas where relocating homeowners had little interest in making their house sale difficult with restrictions covering only single lots. For all of the apartment building’s virtues and fine designs, homeowners still worried about the apartment buildings’ potential to tip the balance and character in their own neighborhood.

### Zoning, Order and Community Design

After World War I, zoning appeared to concerned Oak Park homeowners as a new and powerful means to preserve neighborhood character in the “community of homes.” The basis and emphasis of the apartment building controversy shifted from single building designs to community planning and patterns. A 1921 Oak Leaves editorial reflected the transition; praising the modern apartment building as an important modern invention and “achievement” the newspaper reported, “*The objection is not to the apartment house itself but to its location.*”<sup>15</sup> In 1919, the Oak Leaves proposed that Oak Park residents turn their ability, evidenced during the War, for working “*harmoniously and efficiently for the government*” into a crusade for zoning – “*No plan for the future welfare of any community can more directly contribute to the happiness of its citizens than a comprehensive, fair and impartial zoning plan.*”<sup>16</sup> The 1919 call for zoning coincided with a major Oak Park Housing-Living Exposition which aimed to revive the housing industry and to promote an “Own Your Own Home” campaign. New homeowners and buyers needed some guarantee that their new homes would not be overwhelmed by apartments on adjacent lots.

In July 1919, the Village Board appointed a Zoning Commission headed by architect Charles E. White, Jr. The Zoning Ordinance was slowed somewhat by legal hurdles in the State Legislature. When Oak Park was enabled to enact Zoning in 1921, only 27 other American communities had zoning laws. The ordinance embodied and extended earlier regulations concerning building height, percentage of lot coverage, and dimensions of light courts. The ordinance added restrictions on the numbers of families per acre, and most importantly, divided the entire Village into separate districts for: (1) single-family residence, (2) multi-family residence, (3) commercial buildings, and (4) industrial buildings. Zoning, thus, finally provided an orderly and predictable pattern or framework, upon which the community, apartment buildings included, would develop in the future.

In terms of the Historic District, which had been almost completely filled with buildings by 1920, the zoning ordinance protected and preserved broad areas of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century single-family residences from being demolished or intruded upon by a more intensive second generation of apartment buildings. The zoned districts and a continuing demand for apartment accommodations in the 1920s population boom also led to the intensively developed apartment strips which bound and contain the District along Maple and Wisconsin Avenues, Washington Boulevard, and Austin Boulevard. During the 1920s apartment buildings

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<sup>14</sup> Oak Leaves, 2 December 1905, 26 October 1907; Economist, 32 (15 October 1904): 507.

<sup>15</sup> Oak Leaves, 25 June 1921.

<sup>16</sup> Oak Leaves, 8 March 1919.

developed along these streets; assured of their importance and position they eschewed some of the “homey” aspects of earlier buildings. Charles E. White, Jr., Chairman of the Zoning Commission, designed several buildings which stand in curious relation to his earlier modern design: 24-32 Washington (1921) and 124-130 Washington (1923). In structures like those designed by Roy France (1925, 237-251 Washington) and Henry J. Appelbach (1929, 415-427 South Taylor), which each housed 49 families, the apartment building took on a more ponderous form, clothed in historical ornament and references.



In 1913, the Chicago City Club sponsored an architectural competition for the residential design of a large tract of urban land. The competitors were asked to grapple with the problem of merging single-family and multi-family residences with civic, religious, and commercial buildings. The design problem appeared central to residential development in both city and suburb. The Oak Park zoning ordinance and its subsequent guidance of the community emerged in 1921 as one particularly successful and practical solution to the problem of suburban development raised in the City Club competition. Its success can be gauged in part by the balanced contrast between the bustling character of the apartment-lined periphery of this Historic District and the quiet suburban atmosphere of the interior streets lined with detached residences on broad lawns and parkways. The unusual community planning and preservation represented in the District complement the architecture of individual structures in establishing the area’s historical significance.

#### Related Districts

Both locally and nationally, there are few parallels to this District’s juxtaposition of Victorian and Prairie School styles of architecture. The architecture and community planning of the District is most relevant to regional and state levels of significance. The established historic district which most closely approximates this District is Chicago’s Kenwood-Hyde Park Historic District. Both districts possess a similar diversity of residential, civic, religious and commercial structures. The Historic District lacks the many substantial mansions of Kenwood; however, this fact is compensated for by the District’s close proximity to the Frank Lloyd Wright and Prairie School of Architecture Historic District which contains many larger homes. The Hyde Park section also lacks the generous lawns and parkways of Oak Park and, in many areas, because of less-regulated twentieth-century development, it has assumed a more urban character. In terms of the architectural significance of individual single-family homes, the Wright/Prairie School District complements, and exceeds, the structures of the present district; however, both in terms of the significance of its civic, religious and commercial architecture and the significance of its community planning, the Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District possesses notable, significant structures and qualities lacking in the earlier Wright District.



**Contributing Properties**

**Austin Boulevard – North**

14	130	206-214	230	328-330	470-492
16-24	134	216	302-304	336-346	500-528
112	142	220	308	432-438	
116-122	146	224	316	440-448	
124-126	148-150	226	324-326	450-460	

**Clinton Avenue**

100	126	221	240	300	325	421
102	134	224	241	301	329	422
108	138	225	244	304	335	425
110	200-208	227	245	305	345	426
112	210	228	247	308	404	428
115	211	230	248	309	408	431
117	215	231-233	250	312	412	433
120	216	234	251	317	417	
123-131	220-222	237	254	321	420	

**Cuyler Avenue – North**

130-134	162	205	304-306	324	406	426
140	163	209	305	325	409	428
143	165	213	307	326	410	432
144	168	217	310	328	411	434
147	169	221	311	329	412	
150	171-177	225	315	332	415	
151	172	229	316	333	418	
153	174	233	317	400	419	
156	176-178	300-302	318	401	420	
159	201	303	321	404	423	

**Cuyler Avenue – South**

114	128	145	214	228	300	322
115	131	200	215	229	304	325
118	132	201	216	230	305	326
119	134	202	217	231	306	328
120	135	205	219	233	307	329
122	136	206	220	234	310	332
123	139	207	222	236	314	333
125	140	208	223	239	317	337-345
126	142-144	211	224	243	318	402-406
127	143	212	225	245	321	

**East Avenue – South**

108-110	127	200	216	232	302	327
112-114	130	201	217	233	306	328
115	131	204	221	236	308	329
116-118	133	205	222	237	314	332
121	138	208	224	240	315	338
122-124	141	209	225	241-245	318	401-413
125	142	212	228	244	321	
126	145	213	229	301	323	

**Elmwood Avenue – South**

110	126	144	213-215	230	242	314
112	129	145	214	231	300	317
113	130	200	217	233	301	318
116	131	201	218	234	307	321
118	134	204	222	235	308	322
121	135	205	223	237	310	325
122	138	209-211	224	238	311	326
123	139	210	225	241	313	337

**Erie Court**

1-3

**Erie Street**

**Euclid Avenue – South**

110	126	209	225	240	317	405
114	127-129	210	227	301	321	415
115	130	213	228	304	324	416
117	131	214	229	307	325	426-436
119	136	217	230	309	328	
120	140	220	232	314	329	
123	201	221	233	315	330	
124	202	224	237	316	331	

**Grove Avenue – South**

102	123	200	223	304	324	417
103	124	206	226	305	325	420
106	129	209	230	308	328	421
109-111	130	211	231	309	332	424
110	132	212	234	312	331-341	425
113	133	213	235	315	334	428
114	134	215	237	316	336-338	430
115	137	216	238	317	408-410	431
116	138	218	239	320	412	433-435
117	139	219	240	321	413	434
121	140	222	303	323	416	

**Harlem Avenue – North**

97            201-205        301

**Harvey Avenue – North**

125	147	165	202	232	316	332
129	150	166	203	300	317	333
131	151	167	204	301	320	400
135	154	170	207	305	321	401
138	155	173	208	306	323	407
139	158	174	212	308	324	
142	159	178	216	309	327	
143	162	179	220	311	328	
146	163	201	224	312	331	

**Harvey Avenue – South**

100-112	130	208	226	317	336	422
101-111	134-140	209	228	318	337	424
114	135	212	229	319	339	426
115	137	215	235	324	343	428
116	141	216	301	325	346-348	
120	143	217	307	328	347-357	
121	201	220	312	329	403-405	
122	202	221	314	332	411-415	
126	204	224	315	333	414	
127-133	205	225	316	335	418	

**Home Avenue**

100-110	212	234	248	305	316	327
112-114	217	237	250-252	306	317	330
118	220	240	251	308	320	332
119-121	224	241	259	309	321	400
122-130	226	244	265	312	325	404
210	232	247	304	315	326	408

**Humphrey Avenue – North**

123-129	139	151	163	171	177	333
130-142	143	155	164-166	174	209	
133	146-154	158	167	175	325	
137	147	159	170	176-178	329	

**Humphrey Avenue – South**

103-111	125	201	224	310	330	421
102	126	204	225	311	331	423
106	128	205	228	314	334	426
110	131	208	229	315	335	427
114	132	209	300	318	341-343	428-430
115	133	212	301	319	407-409	429
117	136	213	302	323	417	432
119	137	217	303	324	418	
120	141	220	306	326	419	
121	200	221	307	327	420	

**Kenilworth Avenue – North**

101	109	115	119	124		
105	111	117	121			

**Kenilworth Avenue – South**

106-108	126	210	223	235-237	308	334
110	130	213	226	238	310	336-340
114	134	214	227	239	312	403-405
115	138	215	229	242	314	400-412
117-119	142	218	230	243	318	
118	200-204	219	232	247-249	324	
121	201-211	221	233	300-302	328	
122	206	222	234	304-306	332	

**Lake Street**

38-44	56	266	410	805-809	921-923	
46	116	310	414	813-825	931	
48	120	316-324	715	855	949	
50	246	400-404	719-721	875		
54	250	733	723-731	901		

**Lombard Avenue – North**

124	143	161	204	222	309	328
126	144	162	205	225	311	329
128	146	163	209	226	312	332
131	147	166	210	227	316	
133	149	170	211	232	317	
134	150	174	212	233	320	
135	151	175	214	300	321	
138	154	178	217	304	322	
139	155	179	220	305	324	
140	158	200	221	308	325	

**Lombard Avenue – South**

114	130	214	230	315	330	416
117	133	215	231	316	331	418
118	134	216	300	319	334	422
120	135	217	301	322	335	
124	200	220	302	323	337	
125	201-207	221	304	326	339	
127	206-210	224	310	327	340-346	
128	209	225	311	328	402-408	
129	211	229	312	329	414	

**Maple Avenue – South**

109	125	239-241	255-257	320	333	401
111-115	200-224	240-246	312-314	324-328	336-344	414
112-126	230-238	245	313-319	325	343	
121	235-237	254-256	316	329	400-408	

**Marion Street – South**

101-107	121-125	203	224	240-242	264	
109-111	200-212	216	227	260		

**North Boulevard**

806-812

**Oak Park Avenue – North**

100-114	101-107	109-111	113	115	116-136	129-151
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**Oak Park Avenue – South**

104-106	159-171	221	236-238	312-314	326	413
101-103	177-189	223	237	316	329	417
125-133	188	227	300	317	332	421-423
126-134	208	229	304	320	333	
137-147	212	231	305-315	321	334	
138-140	215	232	306	322	338	
149-155	217	235	308	325	408-420	

**Ontario Street**

3-11	253	260	312			
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**Pleasant Street**

6-12	128	210	412	905-911	1014	1033-39	1123
119-127	202	214	424	915-919	1018	1034	1136-48
120	205-211	220-226	619	916	1020-24	1041-45	
122	206	258	810	932-954	1028	1100-12	
126	208	259	845-853	1000-12	1032	1117-21	

Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District, Cook County

**Randolph Street**

5-11	211	221	412	803-805	1032	1139
120	215	225	419	916	1034	1140-44
205	217	229	619	1018-20	1136-38	
209	219	250	647	1024-30	1116-28	

**Ridgeland Avenue – North**

128-136	135-141	140-142	146	147-149	150
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**Ridgeland Avenue – South**

105-111	123	200	217	236	308	325
114	125	201	220	237	311	328-330
115	126	204	221	240	312	329
116	127	205	224	241	315	331
117	129	207	225	244	316	332
119	130	208	228	245	318	
120	131	212	229	300	319	
121	134	215	232	304	320-326	
122	142	216	233	307	321	

**Scoville Avenue – South**

104-110	126	138	215	230	300	322
105	127	141	216	233	303	323
109	129	142	217	234	306	325
111-113	131	201	220	235	309	326
112	132	204	221	238	311	327-329
114	133	205	224	239	312	
118	134	208	225	240	315	
122	135	209	226	241	316	
125	137	212	229	244	320	

**South Boulevard**

21	223-229	309	453	725	811	1101
37-49	237-249	311	515	721-723	911	1107-13
113-117½	305	401-407	617	733	915	
119	307	417-419	647	801-809	947	

**Superior Street**

205

**Taylor Avenue – North**

118-126	143	163	206	225	306	320
123	146	164	210	226	308	322
125	147	165	212	228	309	323
127	150	167	213	229	311	324
131	151	170	214	232	312	327
134	154	174	216	233	314	328
135	155	175	217	300	315	329
138	158	178	218	301	316	330
139	159	200	221	304	317	331
142	162	205	224	305	319	332

**Taylor Avenue – South**

104	123	142	217	304	323	416
105	124	145	220	306	324	418
106	126	200	221	307	326	420
107-109	127	201	222	309	328	422-428
111	130	204	225	310	329	427-429
112	131	208	226	313	330	430
114	134	209	227	314	331	431
115	135	210	230	315	333-335	434
117	136	211	231	316	339-341	435
118	137	214	300	319	409-411	436
119	140	215	301	320	414	437
120	141	216	303	321	415-425	

**Washington Boulevard**

1	53	114	221-229	409-411	505	651	1116
4	54	115	228-230	412	516	655	1118-30
12	57	116	237-247	415	520	661	1119-29
21	58	117-119	238-250	416	524	711-713	1138-50
24-32	59	120	252	417	530	715-717	
37-39	60-62	121-127	253	419	601-603	801-809	
38-44	61	124-130	256	420	605-613	814-824	
41	64	201-211	258	423-425	615-623	815-821	
45	101-103	202	260	424-426	618-622	832-840	
46	102-104	206	261-267	443	625-627	842-858	
47-49	105-107	208	302-312	447	626	901-911	
48	106	210	316	451	639	934-942	
51	110	213-219	322-330	455	643	1036-46	
52	111	214	400	458-466	647	1113	

Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District, Cook County

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**Wesley Avenue**

101	112	129	214	229	301	319
102	115	131	217	231	305	320
103	118	136	218	234	306	321
104	121	200	220	235	309	322
105	122	201	221	236	310	323
107	124	209	224	240	311	326
108	125	210	225	241	314	330-332
110	128	213	228	244	315	400-412

**Wisconsin Avenue**

300	305	309-315	329	337	344-346
301	308	320	332	338	413
302	312-314	321-323	333	341	417-425



## Noncontributing Properties

### Austin Boulevard – North

34	138	320	468
38	312	462	

### Clinton Avenue

118	432
315	437

### Cuyler Avenue – North

131-133

### Cuyler Avenue – South

301

### East Avenue – South

134	333
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### Elmwood Avenue – South

109	405-409
400-404	

### Euclid Avenue – South

101-113	332-334
300	338

### Grove Avenue – South

120	227	401
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### Harvey Avenue – North

228

### Harvey Avenue – South

119	421
311	425
313	431

### Home Avenue

200	300	301
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### Humphrey Avenue – North

162

### Humphrey Avenue – South

140	435
216	

**Kenilworth Avenue – South**

100 135  
125

**Lake Street**

114 259 330-332  
244 260 675  
252 300 701  
256 328 835

**Lombard Avenue – North**

165 228

**Maple Avenue – South**

201 226 250 337  
217-219 228 300  
221-223 229-231 321  
225-227 243 330

**Marion Street – South**

113-115 246 255  
229-235 248

**Oak Park Avenue – South**

105 214-216 240 429  
150 220-222 245  
209 224 407

**Pleasant Avenue**

5 900-902 943 945 947 949 951 1116-18 1120-22

**Pleasant Place**

1025

**Randolph Street**

1025 1033-35 1037-39

**Ridgeland Avenue – South**

301

**Scoville Avenue – South**

107 400-412

**South Boulevard**

102 321 433-451 615 711  
131 323-329 519-527 651 715-717  
259 331 601 653-655 935  
301-303 411 605 661  
315 425-427 609 701

**Taylor Avenue – North**

119            179

**Taylor Avenue – South**

102

**Washington Boulevard**

222	444	652	800	1103-07
257	454-456	658-660	916	
264-266	500-512	710	935-943	
428	640-648	720	950	

**Wesley Avenue**

135	144	337
141	300	405
143	333	

**Wisconsin Avenue**

317	327	407
324	328	

Document amended on December 17, 2013



Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission

# Gunderson Historic District



*Gunderson & Sons 1906 (Oak Park-River Forest Historical society)*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Gunderson Historic District

other names/site number Second Gunderson Development

2. Location

street & number Roughly bound by Madison Street, Harrison Street,  
Gunderson Street, and South Ridgeland Avenue. not for publication

city or town Oak Park vicinity \_\_\_\_\_

state Illinois code IL county Cook Code 031 zip code 60304

State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this \_\_\_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_\_\_ locally ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

\_\_\_\_\_ entered in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

\_\_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the \_\_\_\_\_  
National Register

\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

\_\_\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the \_\_\_\_\_  
National Register

\_\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

private  
 public-local  
 public-State  
 public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

building(s)  
 district  
 site  
 structure  
 object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>228</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>228</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic/Single Dwelling  
Domestic/Multiple Dwelling

Sub: \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic/Single Dwelling  
Domestic/Multiple Dwelling

Sub: \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

American Four-Square  
Other: Arts & Crafts  
Other: Prairie School  
Colonial Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone  
roof Asphalt Shingle  
walls Clapboarding, wood shingle  
other Stucco

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning and Development  
Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1906 - 1920

**Significant Dates****Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation****Architect/Builder**

S.T. Gunderson and Sons, builder  
Frank DeMoney, architect

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Location of Additional Data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

**Name of repository:**

The Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest.

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**10. Geographical Data**

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Acreage of Property 42 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing		Zone Easting Northing	
1	_____	3	_____
2	_____	4	_____

\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title Suzanne Germann and Lesley M. Gilmore

organization Gilmore Franzen Architects, Inc. date December 14, 2001

street & number 949 Garfield Street telephone 708-386-4620

city or town Oak Park state IL zip code 60304

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets****Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Property Owner**

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Multiple owners

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_



**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U S C 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 1

Gunderson Historic District

The Gunderson Historic District is located on the south side of Oak Park, Illinois. The district is roughly bound by Madison Street on the north, Harrison Street on the south, Gunderson Street on the west, South Ridgeland Avenue on the east, and a half block on the west side of the 500 block of South Cuyler Avenue. The district consists of 230 buildings, 208 of which are single-family residences and 22 of which are two-flat apartment buildings. The east side of South Ridgeland Avenue and the west side of South Cuyler Avenue, at the 500 block, are lined with Arts and Crafts style two-flat apartment buildings. The district was developed between 1906 and 1920 by developer, S.T. Gunderson and Sons. It is referred to as the second Gunderson development in Oak Park; it followed Gunderson's first Oak Park development of 1905. Only two buildings within the district are considered non-contributing: 605 and 508-510 South Elmwood.<sup>1</sup> These two buildings were constructed in 1961 and 1983 respectively. Although original permits were not available for sixteen of the buildings, because of the development pattern and design of the homes it is presumed that they were constructed by S.T. Gunderson and Sons.

The majority of the single-family Gunderson homes are American Four Square types constructed between 1906 and 1911. They are individualized with original detailing of either Colonial Revival, Arts and Crafts, or Prairie style influence. Although the massing is consistent on all the homes, there are many variations of detail on the homes throughout the district. There are several roof shapes including shallow pitch hip, front gable, and side gable; several dormer types; several bay window configurations; and several porch layouts. Cladding type, trim profile, and millwork detailing vary throughout.

Both historic and current views of the streetscapes depict the common features of the Gunderson homes that share a uniform design theme. The American Four Square is the predominant style, typically with at least a minimal Prairie School style influence. The Prairie School style is the next most prominent style. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map of Oak Park in 1908 indicates that wood shingles were the typical roofing material. The homes were of frame construction and were originally clad with stucco, wood clapboards, wood shingles, or a combination thereof.<sup>2</sup>

The firm's advertising brochure promotes a "solid stone basement, cement floors" and "big homelike porches on stone piers." The interiors are also described quite thoroughly, from accounts of mosaic vestibule floors, solid oak trim and flooring, sliding doors, tinting by mural artists, "dark weathered oak, done in the best modified Mission style, with heavy beamed ceilings," to boasts of kitchens designed to minimize the trials of housework.<sup>3</sup> S.T. Gunderson & Sons' advertisements in the local newspapers stress that these "artistic homes, individual in character and perfectly constructed of the very best materials, which include steel posts and girders in the basement" illustrate what the developer thought home buyers would respond to.<sup>4</sup> Gunderson's advertising claims have proven to be reliable. All the features described and promised were incorporated into the homes.

The American Four Square played a critical role in speculative developments throughout the United States; they were basic, comfortable homes affordable by the middle-class from 1895 through 1925.<sup>5</sup> The typical American Four Square home in the district is approximately 25

<sup>1</sup> Based on field surveys performed on 30 March, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Lesley M. Gilmore and Frank Lipo, *Contextual Report Historic Resources Survey of the Second Gunderson Development in the Village of Oak Park* (Unpublished, 1998), 18. Lesley Gilmore provided the architectural analysis for the contextual report, and Frank Lipo, Executive Director of the Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest, provided the section on the history of Oak Park and the Gunderson Development.

<sup>3</sup> S.T. Gunderson & Sons, *New Book of Standard Gunderson Homes* (1908), 16.

<sup>4</sup> Gilmore and Lipo, 19.

<sup>5</sup> James S. Massey and Shirley Maxwell, "Builder Style: America's Little Houses," *Old House Journal*, September/October, 1990, p. 45-49.

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Gunderson Historic District

feet wide and 32 feet deep. This floor plate is slightly longer than the square floor plan of the standard Four Square. However, the building mass is the prototypical Four Square cube. The remainder of the features are representative of the American Four Square as defined by Alan Gowans in *The Comfortable House*: "two stories high, set on a raised basement with the first floor approached by steps, a verandah running the full width of the first story, capped by a low pyramidal roof that usually contains at least a front dormer, and an interior plan of four nearly equal sized rooms per floor plus side stairwell."<sup>6</sup> The front porch typically has only three columns instead of four, and the front entrance openings are typically asymmetrically arranged; yet the entire effect is essentially solid and symmetrical. The Four Square homes in the district are typically 2-1/2 stories high, and the roofs have prominent dormers. This potential additional living space was a strong advertising feature of S.T. Gunderson and Sons.<sup>7</sup>

The American Four Square houses in the district are illustrative of the variety of secondary styles that often accompany the style. Most have strong horizontal lines, restraint in ornamentation, and wide eaves. Some of these features are strong enough to be considered the influence of the Prairie School style. Some are graced with a classical flair, often manifested in Ionic or Corinthian capitals on round porch columns. This building style is considered a distinctive new building style from the turn of the century. While many of the homes in the district do contain other stylistic components, their massing, floor plate, and fenestration are essentially the same. They represent the many possible variations on a theme.<sup>8</sup>

The entry of the Gunderson homes is at the side of the front elevation. This typically leads directly to a stair hall, and sometimes to a small vestibule. The interior stair run is typically perpendicular to the entry access, with an intermediate landing at the center of the exterior wall. An interior feature remaining in some of the Gunderson homes is a dual first stair flight culminating at this first landing: the stair run visible at the entry, and a parallel twin run about four feet behind it. The latter run is accessed a few feet further down the hallway between the entry foyer and the dining room. The parallel flights to the second floor and to the basement are in between the two first runs. In many of the Gunderson homes, the rear of these two stair runs has been replaced with a closet or a bathroom.<sup>9</sup>

These artistic homes were graced with art glass windows - typically five per house: one in the entry vestibule, two flanking the fireplace, two flanking the built-in buffet in the dining room, and one at the stair landing. The S.T. Gunderson & Sons brochure stated that "your home will have at least 5 high-class art-glass windows - one in the hall, one in the stairway, one over the built-in sideboard, another in the side-wall of the dining-room, and another in the library, the character of each being appropriate to its situation and environment."<sup>10</sup> In a few instances, an art glass window has been concealed from the exterior or interior or both. Subsequent remodeling efforts have often been accompanied by the discovery of art glass behind gypsum board. The style of the art glass in the Gunderson houses reflects all the tensions, ambitions, and theories of the Arts and Crafts Movement in America. The lines, color, and light enclose and enhance the warmth of a cozy home. The nature of the materials - glass and lead - is honestly expressed in the straight lines and gentle curves of stylized plant forms and geometric patterns. The color palette is earthy and mixed. Since art glass was not then, and is not now, something that can be made by machine, the glass studios did the next most efficient thing

<sup>6</sup> Alan Gowans, *The Comfortable House: North American Suburban Architecture 1890 - 1930* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1986).

<sup>7</sup> S.T. Gunderson & Sons, *New Book of Standard Gunderson Homes* (1908), 22.

<sup>8</sup> Gilmore and Lipo, 17.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> S.T. Gunderson & Sons, *New Book of Standard Gunderson Homes* (1908).

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Gunderson Historic District

- they drew up a large number of patterns and adapted them for a window's individual location by changing the textures and colors of the glass. The window designs of the Gunderson homes reflect the stylized patterns of the time. The color palette is also from the Arts and Crafts aesthetic. The bold, clear colors of the Victorians and the Modernists can be found only as accent pieces. Instead, the windows feature the newly invented opalescent glass in mixed earth tones of amber, green, pink, and purple. The textures are rough. The background glass was either clear window glass or a rough textured clear glass that would admit light while hiding the view. Although zinc came had been in use since the 1890s, the craftsmen who made these windows used lead came supported by steel rebars. The similarity of construction and colors of the art glass in the Gunderson homes indicates that Gunderson apparently ordered all of the art glass from the same, as yet unidentified, studio. Some of the same designs appear in several different houses. At least half of the windows have survived for more than eighty years.<sup>11</sup>

Another common decorative window type featured on the Gunderson homes is one with wood muntins. The muntins form a large central diamond, the corners of which are connected to the sash with muntins perpendicular to the sash member. These are most frequently present in the second floor and dormer windows.

Although the original construction of the homes in this district ended in the teens, the homes have been altered and modernized similarly. Many of the full-width front porches were enclosed in the 1920s. This enclosure typically consists of ribbons of tall casement windows set on the original low porch wall. The prototypical casement has vertical divided lites in a three-over-two pattern. Although these are later alterations, they are historic and are seen consistently throughout the district. There has been a fair amount of artificial siding applied to the homes.<sup>12</sup> Still more than fifty percent of the homes have appropriate siding. This is also a sign of the evolution of these homes. The homes were originally constructed for middle-class first-time homeowners. The district remains middle-class. Although the artificial siding and enclosed porches on some of the buildings is not original, it does not diminish the integrity of the structures. The building massing, fenestration, and detailing remain intact.

The lots of the single-family homes are forty feet wide and 130 feet deep, as promised by S.T. Gunderson and Sons in their advertising brochure. The lot sizes were incorporated into the firm's formula for a successful development. The typical front yard setback is 25 feet. A fifteen-foot wide alley separates the blocks. The alleys provide access to the garages, a few of which were built simultaneously with the homes. The garages tend to be two-car garages with either clapboarded or stuccoed walls, and hipped roofs.

The subdivision was improved with over three miles of cement walks, over two miles of water mains, over two miles of sewer drains, and over two miles of asphalt pavement. "1200 Carolina poplar trees, two being placed every 25 feet, were planted, one on each side of the streetwalks." These trees were selected because they were quick growers and long-lived shade trees.<sup>13</sup> The photographs of the new development included in the Gunderson brochure show a regular pattern of saplings along each parkway. The Oak Park Forestry Department has indicated that these poplars are no longer extant; they would have lasted about forty years.<sup>14</sup> Replacement trees, now mature, line the parkway.

<sup>11</sup> Sarah King, "Art Glass Windows," in *Contextual Report Historic Resources Survey of the Second Gunderson Development in the Village of Oak Park*, p. 25 & 26.

<sup>12</sup> "Artificial siding" includes asbestos siding, vinyl clapboards, aluminum siding, and asphalt siding. Of the 230 buildings in the district, 124 retain their original wall cladding.

<sup>13</sup> S.T. Gunderson & Sons, *New Book of Standard Gunderson Homes* (1908), 24-25.

<sup>14</sup> Gilmore and Lipo, 16.

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The east half of South Ridgeland Avenue and the west half of South Cuyler Avenue at the 500 block was developed by S.T. Gunderson and Sons between 1915 and 1920 for the construction of brick two-flats. These brick two-flats - twenty-two in all - are designed in the Arts & Crafts style with clay tile roofs. Smooth Indiana limestone windowsills and trim provide decorative accents coincident with the style. The local newspaper advertised these apartment buildings as "two-family homes" with mansard roofs, pressed brick, stone, steel, and concrete construction, and large sun parlors.<sup>15</sup> Patterns of rustic brickwork, simple smooth limestone trim, and side gables are common features. Most dominant is the front porch bay of each building, with three exterior walls for ample fenestration. Two double-hung windows at each side wall, and three to four double-hung windows at the front elevation provide each floor with a true sun parlor that offers cross ventilation. One of the buildings on South Cuyler Avenue has open front porches. The porch bays have a variety of roofs; front gables, flat roofs with parapets, and hipped roofs. The front gables are finished with decorative brickwork or heavy timber and stucco "Tudor half-timbering." The parapets are plain and capped with a smooth limestone coping. The hipped roofs have wide overhanging eaves. Some of the roofs are accentuated with exposed rafter tails. The majority of the buildings are accessed from a side entry protected by a gable roof supported by wood brackets. The side entries share a common gangway. A small number of the buildings have a front entry - some with a prominent Prairie style stone lintel, and some with a shed roof.

The two-flats are similar to the Gunderson single-family homes in that they are variations on a design theme - in plan, elevation, and use of materials. An assortment of each material is used: different brick textures and colors, different styles and colors of clay tile roofing (French style, flat shingle, and Spanish style), different limestone ornament shapes, and different muntin patterns in the windows. The plans of some of the South Cuyler apartments are larger than those on South Ridgeland; they are widened by a full-height octagonal bay on one side. The last apartment building constructed (in 1920), at 542-544 South Ridgeland, is essentially two two-flats joined by a party wall.

The two-flats on South Ridgeland and South Cuyler are serviced by an alley in the center of the block. All but one of the buildings currently has a garage, entered from the alley. The majority of the garages are for two cars with two exceptions. The four-flat at 542-44 South Ridgeland has a 4-car brick garage with side parapet walls, and the two-flat at 545 South Cuyler has a three-car brick garage. The garages consume the majority of the space behind the building. Some of the garages are original to the two-flat, constructed of the same brick, and some have been replaced.

The most salient and recognizable enduring historic features of the district are summarized as follows:

1. Green parkways with mature deciduous trees regularly spaced.
2. Equal setbacks (front, side, and rear) for each property.
3. Consistent rhythm established by items #1 and #2 above.
4. Consistent building massing.
5. Consistent porch sizes and depths.
6. Consistent building height.

<sup>15</sup> *Oak Leaves*, January 8, 1916.

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List of Resources:

\*Contributing

1. Address: 512 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1911  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
2. Address: 514 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1911  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
3. Address: 518 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1911  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: None
4. Address: 520 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1911  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
5. Address: 524 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1911  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
6. Address: 528 Gunderson\*  
Developer: O. Gunderson  
Date: 1912  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
7. Address: 530 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson  
Date: 1910  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: None
8. Address: 534 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: c. 1910  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
9. Address: 536 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1910  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
10. Address: 540 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: c. 1910  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
11. Address: 542 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: c. 1911  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
12. Address: 600 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1910  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
13. Address: 604 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1910  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
14. Address: 608 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
15. Address: 610 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
16. Address: 614 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing

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Gunderson Historic District

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 17. Address: 616 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 18. Address: 620 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing    |
| 19. Address: 624 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 20. Address: 626 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: None                |
| 21. Address: 630 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 22. Address: 632 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: c. 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 23. Address: 636 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 24. Address: 638 Gunderson*<br>Developer: unknown<br>Date: c. 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing                 |
| 25. Address: 642 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1910<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 26. Address: 646 Gunderson* (446 Jackson)<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1911<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: None  |
| 27. Address: 700 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1911<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 28. Address: 704 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing    |
| 29. Address: 708 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 30. Address: 710 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: c. 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 31. Address: 714 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 32. Address: 718 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: c. 1912<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 33. Address: 720 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 34. Address: 724 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing        |

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- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 35. Address: 728 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 36. Address: 732 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     |
| 37. Address: 734 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 38. Address: 738 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 39. Address: 742 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 40. Address: 746 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     |
| 41. Address: 800 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 42. Address: 804 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     |
| 43. Address: 808 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 44. Address: 810 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     |
| 45. Address: 814 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 46. Address: 818 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 47. Address: 820 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 48. Address: 824 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 49. Address: 828 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 50. Address: 832 Gunderson*<br>Developer: unknown<br>Date: c. 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing                  |
| 51. Address: 834 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 52. Address: 838 Gunderson*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |



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53. Address: 842 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1908  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
54. Address: 846 Gunderson\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1908  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
55. Address: 500 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: c. 1911  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
56. Address: 506 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: c. 1911  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: None
57. Address: 508-510 S. Elmwood (Non-cont.)  
Developer: Henry Amos  
Date: 1983  
Style: Split-Level  
Garage: None
58. Address: 511 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1911  
Style: Prairie  
Garage: None
59. Address: 515 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: c. 1911  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
60. Address: 516 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: c. 1911  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
61. Address: 517 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: c. 1912  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
62. Address: 518 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: Prairie  
Garage: Contributing
63. Address: 521 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1910  
Style: Prairie  
Garage: Non-Contributing
64. Address: 522 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
65. Address: 523-525 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
66. Address: 526 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1910  
Style: Arts and Crafts  
Garage: Non-Contributing
67. Address: 527 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: Prairie  
Garage: Contributing
68. Address: 530 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
69. Address: 531 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: None
70. Address: 532 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing

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- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 71. Address: 533 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 72. Address: 536 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     |
| 73. Address: 537 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 74. Address: 540 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1911<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 75. Address: 541 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1910<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 76. Address: 542 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1913<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     |
| 77. Address: 600 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: unknown<br>Date: c. 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing                  | 78. Address: 601 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: Prairie<br>Garage: Contributing                  |
| 79. Address: 604 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 80. Address: 605 S. Elmwood (Non-cont.)<br>Developer: Carl Freeberg<br>Date: 1961<br>Style: Ranch<br>Garage: Non-Contributing               |
| 81. Address: 608 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 82. Address: 609 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: unknown<br>Date: c. 1909<br>Style: Arts and Crafts<br>Garage: Contributing                       |
| 83. Address: 610 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 84. Address: 611 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: unknown<br>Date: c. 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing                  |
| 85. Address: 614 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 86. Address: 615 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1909<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     |
| 87. Address: 618 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: unknown<br>Date: c. 1909<br>Style: Arts and Crafts<br>Garage: Non-Contributing                   | 88. Address: 619 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1910<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     |

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89. Address: 620 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: unknown  
Date: c. 1909  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
90. Address: 621 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1910  
Style: Prairie  
Garage: Non-Contributing
91. Address: 624 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: unknown  
Date: c. 1909  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
92. Address: 625 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
93. Address: 628 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
94. Address: 629-633 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: Prairie  
Garage: Contributing
95. Address: 632 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
96. Address: 634 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: Arts and Crafts  
Garage: Contributing
97. Address: 635 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1909  
Style: Prairie  
Garage: Contributing
98. Address: 638 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1910  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
99. Address: 639 S. Elmwood\*  
Architect: Roy Hotchkiss  
Date: 1920  
Style: Arts and Crafts Bungalow  
Garage: Contributing
100. Address: 641-647 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: Gerberich  
Date: 1917  
Style: Bungalow  
Garage: Contributing
101. Address: 642 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1911  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
102. Address: 700 S. Elmwood\*  
George O. Gunderson Home  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1907  
Style: Prairie  
Garage: Contributing
103. Address: 701 S. Elmwood\*  
Seward Gunderson Home  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1906  
Style: Dutch Colonial Revival  
Garage: Non-Contributing
104. Address: 704 S. Elmwood\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1907  
Style: Prairie  
Garage: Contributing

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| 105. Address: 708 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 106. Address: 709 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 107. Address: 710 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 108. Address: 711 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 109. Address: 714 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 110. Address: 715 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 111. Address: 718 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 112. Address: 719 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: unknown<br>Date: c. 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing              |
| 113. Address: 720 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 114. Address: 721 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 115. Address: 724 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 116. Address: 725 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: Arts and Crafts<br>Garage: Contributing          |
| 117. Address: 728 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: Arts and Crafts<br>Garage: None                  | 118. Address: 729 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 119. Address: 732 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 120. Address: 733 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 121. Address: 734 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 122. Address: 735 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |

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| 123. Address: 738 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: Arts and Crafts<br>Garage: Non-Contributing      | 124. Address: 739 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     |
| 125. Address: 741-43 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing  | 126. Address: 742 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 127. Address: 746 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 128. Address: 747 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: unknown<br>Date: c. 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing                  |
| 129. Address: 800 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: Arts and Crafts<br>Garage: Contributing          | 130. Address: 801 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 131. Address: 804 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 132. Address: 805 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 133. Address: 808 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 134. Address: 809 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 135. Address: 810 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 136. Address: 811 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     |
| 137. Address: 814 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 138. Address: 815 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 139. Address: 818 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: T.A. Holm<br>Date: 1915<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing                   | 140. Address: 819 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     |

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| 141. Address: 820 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: Arts and Crafts<br>Garage: None                  | 142. Address: 821 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing            |
| 143. Address: 824 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 144. Address: 825 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing        |
| 145. Address: 828 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 146. Address: 829 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing        |
| 147. Address: 832 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 148. Address: 833 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: Prairie<br>Garage: Non-Contributing                     |
| 149. Address: 834 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1906<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 150. Address: 835 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing        |
| 151. Address: 838 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: unknown<br>Date: c. 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing                  | 152. Address: 839 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing        |
| 153. Address: 842 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 154. Address: 843 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing        |
| 155. Address: 844-846 S. Elmwood*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing | 156. Address: 510 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1917<br>Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 157. Address: 511 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1911<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing   | 158. Address: 512 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1917<br>Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment<br>Garage: None             |

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159. Address: 515 S. Ridgeland\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1911  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
160. Address: 516 S. Ridgeland\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1911  
Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment  
Garage: Non-Contributing
161. Address: 518 S. Ridgeland\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1917  
Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment  
Garage: Non-Contributing
162. Address: 519 S. Ridgeland\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1911  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
163. Address: 521 S. Ridgeland\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1911  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
164. Address: 522 S. Ridgeland\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1915  
Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment  
Garage: Non-Contributing
165. Address: 524 S. Ridgeland\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1915  
Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment  
Garage: Contributing
166. Address: 525 S. Ridgeland\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: c. 1910  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
167. Address: 527 S. Ridgeland\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: c. 1910  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
168. Address: 528 S. Ridgeland\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1915  
Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment  
Garage: Non-Contributing
169. Address: 530 S. Ridgeland\*  
Home of Miles C. Gunderson (son of  
Seward) in 1922  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1915  
Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment  
Garage: Contributing
170. Address: 531 S. Ridgeland\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1911  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Non-Contributing
171. Address: 532 S. Ridgeland\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1915  
Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment  
Garage: Contributing
172. Address: 533 S. Ridgeland\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1910  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing
173. Address: 536 S. Ridgeland\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1915  
Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment  
Garage: Non-Contributing
174. Address: 537 S. Ridgeland\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1910  
Style: American Four Square  
Garage: Contributing

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|---|---|
| 175. Address: 538 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1915<br>Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 176. Address: 540 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1915<br>Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 177. Address: 542-544 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1920<br>Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment<br>Garage: Contributing | 178. Address: 543 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1913<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing          |
| 179. Address: 601 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1910<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing          | 180. Address: 605 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1910<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing          |
| 181. Address: 607 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1910<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing          | 182. Address: 611 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1910<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing          |
| 183. Address: 615 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: unknown<br>Date: c. 1910<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing                   | 184. Address: 617 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: unknown<br>Date: c. 1910<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing                       |
| 185. Address: 621 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: unknown<br>Date: c. 1910<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing                       | 186. Address: 623 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: unknown<br>Date: c. 1910<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing                   |
| 187. Address: 627 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1910<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing          | 188. Address: 629 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1910<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing          |
| 189. Address: 633 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: c. 1910<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing   | 190. Address: 637 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1911<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing          |
| 191. Address: 639 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1911<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing      | 192. Address: 643 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: c. 1911<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing       |



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| 193. Address: 647 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1911<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 194. Address: 701 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: None             |
| 195. Address: 705 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 196. Address: 709 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 197. Address: 711 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: Prairie<br>Garage: Non-Contributing              | 198. Address: 715 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     |
| 199. Address: 719 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 200. Address: 721 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     |
| 201. Address: 725 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 202. Address: 729 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     |
| 203. Address: 733 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 204. Address: 735 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 205. Address: 739 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 206. Address: 743 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 207. Address: 747 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     | 208. Address: 801 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing     |

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| 209. Address: 805 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing       | 210. Address: 809 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing   |
| 211. Address: 811 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing   | 212. Address: 815 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing   |
| 213. Address: 819 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing   | 214. Address: 821 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing   |
| 215. Address: 825 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing   | 216. Address: 829 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing   |
| 217. Address: 833 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: unknown<br>Date: c. 1907<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Non-Contributing                | 218. Address: 835 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1907<br>Style: Prairie<br>Garage: Non-Contributing                |
| 219. Address: 839 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: None               | 220. Address: 843 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square                               |
| 221. Address: 847 S. Ridgeland*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1908<br>Style: American Four Square<br>Garage: Contributing       | 222. Address: 523 S. Cuyler*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1917<br>Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 223. Address: 525 S. Cuyler*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1917<br>Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment<br>Garage: Non-Contributing | 224. Address: 527 S. Cuyler*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1915<br>Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment<br>Garage: Non-Contributing |
| 225. Address: 531 S. Cuyler*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1915<br>Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment<br>Garage: Contributing     | 226. Address: 533 S. Cuyler*<br>Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons<br>Date: 1915<br>Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment<br>Garage: Contributing     |

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227. Address: 537 S. Cuyler\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1915  
Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment  
Garage: Contributing

228. Address: 539 S. Cuyler\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1915  
Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment  
Garage: Non-Contributing

229. Address: 543 S. Cuyler\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1915  
Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment  
Garage: Non-Contributing

230. Address: 545 S. Cuyler\*  
Developer: S.T. Gunderson and Sons  
Date: 1915  
Style: Arts and Crafts Apartment  
Garage: Contributing

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### Summary

The Gunderson Historic District qualifies for listing in the National Register under criterion A for community planning and development and criterion C for architecture. The S.T. Gunderson and Sons firm used aggressive advertising techniques to lure middle-class Chicago residents to the Gunderson subdivision in Oak Park. The second Gunderson development came to be one of the most prominent subdivisions in south Oak Park, boasting large homes in the American Four Square style that was in national vogue in the early 1900s. The sameness of house style, identical setbacks, and other common features of this subdivision foreshadow the "cookie-cutter" subdivisions later in the century. The period of significance is from 1906 when the first house was built to 1920, the year the last contributing building was constructed.

### Community Planning and Development

The second Gunderson development was built as a new suburban community that catered to the middle class family. It was designed to provide homeownership to a burgeoning middle class, easy access to employment opportunities in the City of Chicago, and a safe haven in which to raise a family. The Gunderson firm built the area by means of a proven successful formula used by previous and contemporary developers.

### The Gunderson Family and Its Businesses

S.T. Gunderson and Sons represents a firm started by successful Norwegian immigrants. Severt T. Gunderson came to the United States in 1848 at the age of nine. At 18 he went into business as a builder, and quickly acquired important timber and mill holdings, all of which were destroyed by fire in 1875. He soon started a second business, manufacturing doors and sashes, which he operated with his son Seward. This business was also destroyed by fire. In 1885 Severt and his two sons formed the firm of S.T. Gunderson and Sons, "homebuilders"<sup>16</sup> and real estate investors. Severt remained closely tied to his ethnic roots. He married another first-generation Norwegian immigrant, Emily Olsen, and they lived in a Norwegian neighborhood in Chicago, where they spoke their native language and participated in local Scandinavian organizations.<sup>17</sup>

Severt and Emily had two sons, Seward and George, both of whom worked in the family business. Seward Miles Gunderson was born in Chicago on February 28, 1866. He was educated in public schools and at the Bryant and Stratten Business College in Chicago. In October 1894 he married Abigail K. Campbell, the daughter of a prosperous Chicago contractor, and had four children (Miles, Doris, Virginia, and Kathryn) and eight grandchildren. He joined his father in the lumber business in 1883<sup>18</sup> and became the managing partner in 1893.<sup>19</sup> George Gunderson was born in Chicago in 1863. He was also educated in public schools and at the Bryant and Stratten Business College of Chicago. He married Julia Jacobs in 1887 and had two daughters, four grandchildren, and four great grandchildren at the time of his death in 1945. His career began in his father's lumber company in 1881. He was later the manager of W.J. Frawley and Company, lumber inspectors. George joined his father and brother in business in 1885. In 1899 he organized the Acme Steel Company, Inc. and was treasurer and general manager until 1924.<sup>20</sup> Although George was a partner in the firm of S.T. Gunderson and Sons, he was not as active in the firm as his brother, Seward.

<sup>16</sup> According to Seward's daughter Virginia, Seward coined the phrase "homebuilder" in contrast to the term "housebuilder" as a reflection of his commitment to the family. As related to a meeting of the Gunderson Society, September 11, 1978.

<sup>17</sup> Kathryn Elizabeth Ratcliff, "The Making of a New Middle-Class Culture: Family and Community in a Midwest Suburb, 1890 - 1920" (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1990), 75. Kathryn is a granddaughter of Seward's daughter Kathryn Gunderson Ratcliff.

<sup>18</sup> Oak Leaves, July 13, 1950.

<sup>19</sup> "70 Years Young: Seward Gunderson," Oak Parker, February 29, 1936, p. 37.

<sup>20</sup> Oak Leaves, January 11, 1945, 47.

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Seward Gunderson followed the pattern of many first-generation immigrants by assimilating into the American culture. In 1907, he and his family moved to Oak Park, where they had built a large house in the heart of the second Gunderson development. Seward consciously constructed himself as an example for his neighbors to emulate.<sup>21</sup> He was a prominent member of the community and involved in social affairs as a member of many organizations: Oak Park's first zoning board; president of Oak Park Republican Club and delegate of National Republican convention in 1944; Oak Park Chamber of Commerce; Chicago Real Estate Board of Underwriters; Chicago Athletic Association; charter member of the Oak Park Country Club; treasurer of the park district of Oak Park from 1912 to 1920<sup>22</sup>; secretary of his brother's firm, the Acme Steel Company from 1899 to 1903; Metropolitan Lodge, Oriental Consistory; Knights Templar and Medinah Temple.<sup>23</sup>

Kathryn, Seward's youngest daughter, recalled that when a family from the "old Country" bought a house in her father's subdivision, they received a lesson in normative suburban behavior: women should wear hats, not babushkas; they should carry a pocketbook whenever they appeared in public; and the whole family should attend church on Sundays. Gunderson even encouraged homebuyers to bring their parents to the house contract closing so they could learn the proper decorum for suburban visits.<sup>24</sup>

The Village of Oak Park building permits for Gunderson homes indicate one aspect of the style of the operation of the firm. Large numbers of permits for separate buildings were pulled simultaneously as were "multiple" permits which each represented a large number of homes. The homes were built essentially one block at a time. This approach implies that this was an assembly line sort of construction. The firm took great steps to facilitate a more efficient and modern method of construction. A lumber and tool shed in the midst of the second development provided easy access to the necessary building supplies.<sup>25</sup> Oral history also indicates that, in the winter, S.T. Gunderson and Sons built house frames in a nearby warehouse on Madison Street.<sup>26</sup>

S.T. Gunderson and Sons continued to develop homes in Oak Park and Chicago through the 1920s. Between 1905 and 1920 Gunderson subdivided several tracts of land in south Oak Park and built, financed, and sold more than 600 single family homes for prices ranging from \$4,000 to \$12,000. The Gunderson firm subdivided an Oak Park neighborhood along Columbian and Fair Oaks Avenues north of Augusta Street in 1922; and the Greenfield subdivision at Harlem Avenue and Division Street in 1925. The firm continued to subdivide land in Chicago's Garfield Park neighborhood, and in Elmwood Park north of Oak Park. According to Seward Gunderson's obituary and an oral history with his daughter, Kathryn Gunderson Ratcliff, the firm acted as a realtor in these later subdivisions rather than as a builder.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Ratcliff, 75.

<sup>22</sup> Park District of Oak Park, Meeting Minutes, 1912-1920.

<sup>23</sup> *Oak Leaves*, July 13, 1950.

<sup>24</sup> Lee Brooke, *Yesterday When I Was Younger...Oak Park, River Forest Oral History*, (Privately printed, 1989), 122.

<sup>25</sup> The 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map depicts this lumber and tool shed at the northwest corner of Ridgeland Avenue and Van Buren Street.

<sup>26</sup> Virginia Gunderson (daughter of Seward Gunderson), as related to a meeting of the Gunderson Society on September 11, 1978.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, and an oral history with his daughter, Kathryn Gunderson Ratcliff, see Lee Brooke, *Yesterday when I was Younger*, 1989.

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### Oak Park History

Oak Park, abutting the west side of Chicago and located ten miles from Chicago's downtown, is bounded by Austin Boulevard and Harlem Avenue on the east and west, respectively, and by North Avenue and Roosevelt Road on the north and south. Only two miles wide and three miles long, Oak Park is home to nearly 54,000 individuals.<sup>28</sup>

Although the area was settled by homesteaders as early as 1835, when the Native peoples were forced west of the Mississippi River in the wake of the Blackhawk War, Oak Park was not incorporated as a separate municipality until 1902. Yet this period from the 1830s to 1902 was not a time of inactivity; instead, the foundations of the community were laid under the government of Cicero Township beginning in 1857. The 172 acres of land straddling Lake Street that were purchased by Joseph Kettlestrings in 1837 in what is now west central Oak Park is significant to the community's overall development for several reasons. The acreage formed the core of the community and its historic downtown, and it was the first to be subdivided as early as 1848. The Kettlestrings family, unlike the others who first purchased land in the community in the 1830s, stayed in the area and shaped its development as a residential enclave with special emphasis on academically excellent schools, churches, cultural pursuits, and a temperance ethic. Kettlestrings sold land to others such as James Scoville, Henry Austin Sr., and Edward Gale. These men shared Kettlestrings' values, like support of temperance. These men and their families closely directed the process of community development, from the sale of undeveloped land to the creation of community institutions that met the physical and intellectual needs (like fresh water and reading material) for its citizens.<sup>29</sup>

Under the watchful eyes of these pioneer families, Oak Park, as early as 1872, was becoming an elite suburb that had already outlawed the sale of alcohol, spearheaded construction of a substantial brick schoolhouse, boasted active congregations of all mainstream Protestant denominations, and widely advertised the fine homes of its leaders. The community at this early date was also dissatisfied with its perceived lack of representation in Cicero Township and looked forward to the day when it could stand alone. Just east of Oak Park along Lake Street and Sixty-Fourth (Ridgeland Avenue) was the similar settlement of Ridgeland, which shared Oak Park's leaders and pattern of development, and would eventually become one with Oak Park.<sup>30</sup>

While Oak Park was being uniquely shaped by these particular prominent families and the institutions they created, Oak Park was also following more global patterns of settlement and development in the United States. In many ways, Oak Park can be seen as a classic railroad suburb in its development from the 1870s until 1900. Oriented to its original axis along Lake Street and the parallel Chicago and North Western Railroad, which came to the area in 1848, Oak Park filled in with homes north and south of these twin transportation arteries to a distance of about one-half mile. While scattered homes, businesses, and truck farms existed north and south of the built-up area of the village, particularly northwest, these areas were commonly referred to as "North Prairie" and "South Prairie." The small strip of stores along Lake Street between Harlem Avenue and Marion Street contained a mix of mostly service businesses that catered to the locals.<sup>31</sup> The architecture of the homes being built four blocks north to Chicago Avenue and south to Madison Street also was quite typical of any community of the era. The vernacular

<sup>28</sup> Lesley M. Gilmore and Frank Lipo, *Contextual Report Historic Resources Survey of the Second Gunderson Development in the Village of Oak Park* (Unpublished, 1998), 12. Frank Lipo, Executive Director of the Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest, provided the section on the history of Oak Park and the Gunderson Development, and Lesley Gilmore provided the architectural analysis for the contextual report.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 13.

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cottages and homes designed in the popular Greek Revival and Italianate styles of the first years of European settlement were yielding in the 1880s and 1890s to the various Queen Anne styles of the late Victorian era, designed by local and regional architects. Architectural innovations offered by Frank Lloyd Wright, George Maher, and their like-minded colleagues of the Prairie School of architecture were just being tested. Some of their first progressive designs would be tried in this area of the community, within a few minutes walk of the Kettlestrings' first cabin.<sup>32</sup>

North of Chicago Avenue, the subdivision of Henry Austin Sr.'s farm into the Fair Oaks subdivision east of Oak Park Avenue in the 1890s set the stage for the creation of Oak Park's estate section of larger-than-typical lots and architect-designed homes for successful and upwardly mobile business executives from Chicago. Because of the concurrent experimentation of the Prairie School architects, this area became a fertile testing ground and showplace for this new type of architecture.<sup>33</sup>

The Great Chicago Fire of 1871 was the catalyst for a population explosion in Oak Park. The population increased from approximately 500 people in 1871 to almost 10,000 people in 1902, when Oak Park severed its ties with Cicero Township and was incorporated as a self-governing municipality. The population continued to grow, doubling every ten years to nearly 40,000 people in 1920. Real estate development and building construction was at a new high between 1906 and 1917. Between 300 and 400 building permits for new homes were issued annually until a peak was reached in 1915. Construction declined until 1918 when only 44 new home permits were issued.<sup>34</sup>

The most dramatic growth in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century occurred south of Madison Street. By 1915 one-third of Oak Park's population lived south of Madison Street.<sup>35</sup> This area, known for its small lots and mass-produced homes on the least expensive land, was the last section of the village to be settled.<sup>36</sup>

The new south side residents were people from Chicago, primarily men who were in business for themselves. Although self-employed, they were in Oak Park's lower income bracket.<sup>37</sup> There was no visible line dividing the north and south sides of the village, yet there were definite distinctions between the two neighborhoods. There were conflicts involving social, economic, and political issues that threatened to divide the community. Many south side residents were dissatisfied with village services and favored annexation to Chicago. Many editorials in the *Oak Leaves* addressed the issues of annexation and the need to provide better services to the south side of the village. In January 1909 an *Oak Leaves* article noted, "by next summer one-third of the total vote of Oak Park will be south of Madison Street."<sup>38</sup> This same article mentioned the improvements made to the south side: new school buildings, branch libraries, and water service. The question of annexation appeared on the ballot in 1910 and 1911 and was defeated both times.<sup>39</sup>

The settlement of the south side of Oak Park has been credited to two turn-of-the-century builders, Thomas H. Hulbert and Seward Gunderson. Both of these builders bought large sections of the "south prairie" and subdivided the land into tracts to construct affordable housing for the workingman and his family. *The Oak Park Reporter Argus* described the building boom:

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>34</sup> Jean Guarino, *Oak Park: A Pictorial History* (St. Louis: G. Bradley Publishing, Inc., 1988), 68.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>36</sup> Arthur Evans Le Gacy, *Improvers and Preservers: A History of Oak Park, Illinois, 1833-1940* (Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1967), 139.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>38</sup> *Oak Leaves*, January 30, 1909.

<sup>39</sup> Guarino, 68.

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Three Hundred New Houses Will Make Village of Prairie Land. The desirability of Oak Park as a residence suburb is becoming more manifest to the people of Chicago and other sections every day. A few years ago the land was one large prairie, with the blue grass waving in the summer breeze. Now the whole territory is dotted with handsome residences.<sup>40</sup>

Hulbert and Gunderson were constructing modest homes that cost from \$3,000 to \$10,000. The houses were bought as fast as they were built and the real estate values in that area increased rapidly.<sup>41</sup> Both builders highlighted the available convenient transportation, from these developments to Chicago, in their advertisements. This attention paid to transportation by both builders demonstrates the development pressure that came from those who wished to move from Chicago to a suburban setting.

The Gundersons established several subdivisions in Chicago and Oak Park between 1889 and 1925.<sup>42</sup> The earliest subdivisions were on the west side of Chicago. The first Gunderson development in Oak Park was the Gunderson and Gauglers addition, platted in 1890, located on Home and Wenonah Avenues between Harrison Street and Roosevelt Road.<sup>43</sup> Gunderson owned this land for fifteen years, waiting for a five-cent railroad fare to Chicago before commencing construction. With his own funds, Gunderson constructed a station of the Metropolitan elevated train line at nearby Maple Avenue for the convenience of the new residents.<sup>44</sup> The houses were quickly sold once construction began in 1905. This area is referred to as the first Gunderson development of Oak Park.

The second Gunderson development in Oak Park, located between Harrison and Madison Streets, and Gunderson and South Ridgeland Avenues, was constructed shortly after the first Oak Park subdivision.<sup>45</sup> Gunderson located this subdivision directly north of the Metropolitan Garfield elevated train line, with a station on Gunderson Avenue that connected Oak Park to Chicago. The firm located two branch offices in the core of the neighborhood - one at South Elmwood Avenue and Harrison Street, and one at South Elmwood Avenue and Adams Street. This second subdivision was prominently advertised in the local papers, with weekly advertisements in the *Oak Leaves*.

### Apartments

The construction of apartments was not initially welcomed in Oak Park, which was a community of single-family homeowners. Flats were thought to be a "menace to home life" and considered the "most dangerous of the enemies of that ideal Oak Park which this community has taken it to its heart to build up."<sup>46</sup> Editorials in the *Oak Leaves* in 1905 were dedicated to discussions of outlawing the construction of apartment buildings in the village. "Oak Park is threatened with an invasion - a foreign invasion - of flats" was the editorial headline of the *Oak Leaves* in April 1905. The village fathers sought, in vain, for some method of limiting the building of flats. They were only successful in imposing restrictions on construction methods.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>40</sup> *Oak Park Reporter Argus*, May 19, 1906.

<sup>41</sup> Gertrude Fox Hoagland, *Historical Survey of Oak Park, Illinois* (Oak Park Public Library, 1937).

<sup>42</sup> Atlas of Township of Cicero, 1917, the *Oak Leaves*, and building permits.

<sup>43</sup> Gunderson only developed the land on Home and Wenonah Avenues between Lexington and Filmore Streets. The two blocks to the north and south of the Gunderson homes were developed some time after 1908. The 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows no structures on the southernmost block of this subdivision, and the northern block has several homes. Review of permits of these blocks reveals that the Gunderson firm did not build here.

<sup>44</sup> *Oak Park Reporter Argus*, May 19, 1906.

<sup>45</sup> This second development is the district being nominated for listing on the National Register.

The first development is not being considered for nomination at this time due to the high percentage (78%) of homes with artificial siding.

<sup>46</sup> Guarino, 76 and *Oak Leaves*, May 27, 1905.

<sup>47</sup> *Oak Leaves*, April 22, 1905 Editorial.



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In 1913, it was a trend of Oak Park homeowners to convert single-family homes into one or more apartments. This transformation promised a larger income for landowners, which was the only effective cause for their alterations. These changes resulted in an increased - though less fixed - population.<sup>48</sup>

The fight over the construction of flats and apartment houses continued in Oak Park for many years. In 1913 the Tenement House Act was drafted, which, had it been adopted, would have abolished flats and large tenement structures in Oak Park. The measure did not specifically prohibit flats but instituted many limitations to the construction of the buildings, making work practically impossible.<sup>49</sup> In April 1914, the Tenement House Ordinance was defeated by referendum, making the construction of flats possible.<sup>50</sup> Despite the opposition, construction of large multi-unit apartments boomed in the 1920s.<sup>51</sup>

In 1921 the first zoning ordinance was passed, which controlled but did not prevent construction of large multi-unit apartment buildings.<sup>52</sup>

Gunderson originally subscribed to the beliefs of numerous Oak Park residents and did not support the construction of apartments in his subdivision. In an issue of "Homes: A Magazine for Rent Payers" Gunderson speculated that George Washington, the Father of his country, would be "gravely concerned" by the number of apartment buildings in 20<sup>th</sup> century Chicago. Gunderson concluded "that so large a proportion of our urban population is housed in the cubby holes of the modern apartment is a grave menace to the future of the race is a fact that needs no visitor from a long past century to point out."<sup>53</sup>

Advertisements for the Gunderson subdivision frequently promoted home ownership over renting. The *New Book of Standard Gunderson Homes* referred to the renter as "a piece of driftwood, subject to many buffeting gales, while the home-owner is a staunch ship, upon the same sea of life." One of the early ads for Gunderson Homes touted the importance "to realize that this is a community of homes - no flats, no apartments - nothing but artistic homes."<sup>54</sup> The warranty deeds conveyed to the purchaser of a Gunderson home prohibited the future erection of flat apartment buildings on the home's lot.<sup>55</sup>

Gunderson's opinions soon changed, when in 1915 he began constructing two-family homes at the northeast edge of the second Gunderson development. Gunderson's audience did not change; he was attracting homebuyers, not renters. The advertisements for these properties spoke of making the purchaser "a rent receiver instead of a rent payer."<sup>56</sup> The ads recommended that the purchaser should live in one unit and rent out the second. Seward's own son, Miles, lived in the two-flat building at 530 South Ridgeland in 1922.<sup>57</sup>

In 1920, S.T. Gunderson and Sons built their last apartment building in this development - it was also the largest. This apartment building was a two-story brick four-flat which was very similar to those that had been constructed by Gunderson before, yet it was essentially two of them placed side-by-side.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Oak Leaves, August 9, 1913.

<sup>49</sup> Oak Leaves, August 9, 1913.

<sup>50</sup> Oak Leaves, April 11, 1914.

<sup>51</sup> Guarino, 68.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>53</sup> Ratcliff, 79.

<sup>54</sup> Oak Leaves, (undated clipping).

<sup>55</sup> S.T. Gunderson & Sons, *New Book of Standard Gunderson Homes* (1908), 12.

<sup>56</sup> Oak Leaves, May 6, 1916.

<sup>57</sup> Oak Park Directory, 1922.

<sup>58</sup> This building has now made use of the English basement to provide two more dwelling units.

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### Advertisement

In 1905, S.T. Gunderson and Sons' first development sold out in less than fourteen months, its success no doubt due in part to an extensive advertising campaign. To publicize Gunderson homes Seward Gunderson issued postcards, brochures, and a monthly magazine/pamphlet entitled "Homes: A Magazine for Rent Payers."<sup>59</sup> In his literature, Gunderson portrayed himself as a public servant advancing the cause of traditional virtue. He explained in his brochures that he was able to pass substantial savings on to his customers because of his extensive holdings in the lumber industry. According to his promotional material, the provision of affordable single-family residences was not only an act of good business but also a mission of public service.<sup>60</sup>

The advertisements continued, possibly more standardized, for the sales of the second development. The Gunderson firm had a regular weekly ad in the local newspaper, the *Oak Leaves*. The advertisements touted the benefits of home ownership in lieu of leasing, the benefits of life in the suburbs, the quality of the homes and construction, and the easy accessibility to Chicago. Gunderson endeavored to coax Chicago residents to purchase homes in the suburbs. Potential homeowners were invited to "investigate Gunderson's wonderland of superior modern homes."<sup>61</sup> One ad described the second development, "Almost like a Fairy Tale or a Story from the Arabian Nights. It is the wonderful development of Gunderson's Standard Homes in South Oak Park. This section is destined to be one of the very finest residence districts in Oak Park"<sup>62</sup> S.T. Gunderson and Sons published a brochure, *The New Book of Standard Gunderson Homes*, which was distributed to potential homeowners. The brochure included images of the homes and streetscapes, and a description of the homes and subdivision. Gunderson used this medium to emphasize the importance of owning a home.<sup>63</sup> The *Oak Leaves* frequently dedicated a column to S.T. Gunderson and Sons' reports of recent sales in their subdivision. The list included the address of the property purchased and the name and occupation of the new owner.<sup>64</sup>

Thomas Hulbert handled advertisements similarly for his subdivision just blocks away on South Clinton Street and South Kenilworth Avenue between Madison and Harrison Streets. The two builders were obviously in competition for the same clientele. The advertisements were often nearly identical, demonstrating the developers' similar perception of the market. (See attachments for examples.)

Although other builders were using similar sales methods and constructing homes for first-time homeowners, Gunderson stood out because of his social involvement. Gunderson moved his family to a residence in the center of his own subdivision. His brother George, also a member of the firm, lived across the street. The Gundersons were setting the example for future homeowners. Both brothers were very active in Oak Park society.

### Other Developers

Although the Gunderson firm was innovative, they were not the only firm in Oak Park to use modern mass marketing techniques, advertising, and the appeal of Oak Park churches and schools. Firms such as E.A. Cummings Co., Fred A. Hill, and realtor Frank June had engaged in similar techniques for years and contemporaries like Thomas Hulbert also employed such techniques.<sup>65</sup> Hulbert is often referenced in the same context as Gunderson as their contemporary developments were just blocks from each other. Hulbert employed

<sup>59</sup> Ratcliff, 73.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 74.

<sup>61</sup> *Oak Leaves*, undated clipping.

<sup>62</sup> *Oak Leaves*, April 27, 1907.

<sup>63</sup> A single remaining original copy of the *New Book of Standard Gunderson Homes* from 1908 is located at the Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest.

<sup>64</sup> See *Oak Leaves*, October 8, 1910.

<sup>65</sup> See Halley's *Pictorial Oak Park*, 1898, and Cummings' ad in *Oak Leaves*, June 25, 1906.

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similar advertising techniques as Gunderson did, with weekly advertisements in *Oak Leaves*. Hulbert advertised his firm's "Built on Honor Houses" in the local *Oak Leaves*, applying the same themes as Gunderson. (See attachments for examples.) Common advertisement enticements included: the quality of workmanship, a reasonable price, a ban on apartment construction, and the liberating value of home ownership. One of the ads for Hulbert homes offered to send a free booklet to potential customers. Although no copies are known to remain at this time, the existence of Hulbert's booklet indicates a similar approach to the Gunderson firm's marketing effort.<sup>66</sup>

Despite similarities with competitors, the Gunderson firm set itself apart by melding good products and coordinated marketing with real acts of community involvement and community building. By living in the subdivision and becoming pillars of the community, the Gundersons came to represent the public image of successful middle-class businessmen.

Other homebuilders in south Oak Park purchased advertisements in the *South Oak Park Directory*. Their ads included photos of American Four Square style homes almost identical to those being built by S.T. Gunderson and Sons. Geo. H. Bartlett, a contractor and builder at 1027 Wesley, used the same photo to advertise his services as Paul Schulte of 947 Wesley did.<sup>67</sup>

This mass marketing technique was not unique to Oak Park or to this time period. As early as the 1880s, real estate developer S.E. Gross developed several working-class subdivisions throughout Chicago. Gross used marketing techniques that Gunderson and his contemporaries would use a few years later. Gross's office churned out colorful pamphlets, catalogs, and broadsides, which were freely distributed to interested customers. The publications emphasized the superiority of homeownership. Gross used his advertising campaigns to idealize the home as the "embodiment of stability, moral development, dedication to family, communion with nature, and protection from the vices of the city."<sup>68</sup> In Gross's subdivisions, the owner had the choice of building his own home or contracting Gross to construct the house from a choice of more than 400 house plans. Gross minimized the construction costs by buying mass-produced materials in bulk and building from standardized plans. Many of the house plans Gross used were available in published catalogues.<sup>69</sup> Similar to Gunderson, Gross became a director and shareholder of the Railroad in order to influence the routes, schedules, and fares of the lines to his subdivisions. When Gross developed a planned community west of Chicago (later named Brookfield), he spent \$5,000 to construct a train station on the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad.<sup>70</sup>

### This development compared to other Gunderson Developments

Most of S.T. Gunderson & Sons housing developments in Chicago were in the West Garfield Park neighborhood of Chicago and centered around Pulaski (4000 West) and what is now the Eisenhower Expressway (I-290). These earlier developments foreshadowed Gunderson's later method of choosing a lot size, building size, and building style appropriate for the place and time. In 1889, the firm constructed simple one-and-a-half story brick gable-front cottages with front porches on Colorado and Lexington Streets between 43<sup>rd</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> Avenues.<sup>71</sup> Colorado Street was demolished for the construction of the expressway in the

<sup>66</sup> Gilmore and Lipo, 20.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>68</sup> Emily Clark and Patrick Ashley, "The Merchant Prince of Cornwall," *Chicago History* (December 1992): 10.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>71</sup> Another area, on the west side of 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, between Madison and Harrison Streets, developed by Gunderson in 1889, was apparently demolished to make room for the expressway. All four of these Chicago area development sites discussed herein were identified on the Cicero Township Plat Map of 1917. They were cursorily surveyed by Lesley Gilmore on July 5, 2001.

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late 1950s; however, 8-10 of these buildings still remain on Lexington Street.

Approximately twenty similar brick cottages built by the Gunderson firm in 1901 remain on the south side of Lexington between 43<sup>rd</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> Avenues. A 1903 Gunderson development on Harrison and Colorado Streets, between 40<sup>th</sup> and 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenues, again used the same simple brick gable-front cottage; approximately one dozen of these remain on the south side of Harrison Street. They are visible from the Eisenhower Expressway.

The first Gunderson development in Oak Park, located on Home and Wenonah Avenues between Lexington and Filmore Streets, was constructed between 1905 and 1906. A local newspaper described these homes at the time of construction as "colonial type" and listed the names and addresses of 50 new homeowners "all being from Chicago."<sup>72</sup> The original intent of this subdivision was to have some homes on double lots. From reviewing the building permits for these properties, it is evident that all lots were developed later that same year.<sup>73</sup> The sixty-three houses in this subdivision are similar in style to, but smaller than, the later (second Gunderson) subdivision. These homes ranged in selling price from \$3,750 to \$4,000.<sup>74</sup>

The lots of the first development are consistently 150 feet deep and 35 feet wide. The development has a 16-foot wide alley to allow access to garages at the rear of the property. Although the majority of the homes have garages, they were not constructed at the time the house was built. All the houses have a uniform setback of 15 feet.

The administration of the firm changed between the first and second developments. S.T. Gunderson and Sons is listed as the owner of the properties on the permits for the first development while the contractor listed is Pellingier Brothers or W.A. Pellingier. The second development lists S.T. Gunderson and Sons as both owner and contractor. The permits of both developments were handled in a similar fashion. In the first development numerous permits were applied for on a single day; only four dates in 1905 are listed for permits for the entire development.<sup>75</sup> Essentially the development was constructed one block at a time. The Gundersons used the same method of permit application for the second development; multiple properties were listed on a single permit.

The Gunderson apartment development on South Ridgeland and South Cuyler Avenues in Oak Park was preceded by an earlier Gunderson apartment development on Jackson, VanBuren, and Gladys Avenues, between 47<sup>th</sup> and 48<sup>th</sup> Streets in the West Garfield Park neighborhood of Chicago.<sup>76</sup> This 1912 development, still extant today, contained brick two-flats with limestone trim and one-story front porches, on narrow lots. Twenty-five to thirty of these fill each side of each block. Stylistically, these apartments are much simpler than Gunderson's Oak Park apartments of five years later. The detailing is plain, with slight variations among the buildings in parapet profile and in the limestone trim in the upper walls of the porches. The porches are open entry porches, adjacent to full-height three-sided shallow bays at the living rooms.

<sup>72</sup> *The Oak Park Reporter-Argus*, May 19, 1906, p. 8.

<sup>73</sup> April 3, 1905, June 14, 1905, August 18, 1905, and November 27, 1905 were the only dates that permits were pulled by S.T. Gunderson and Sons for this subdivision. Numerous permits were pulled on each date.

<sup>74</sup> *Oak Park Reporter Argus*, May 19, 1906.

<sup>75</sup> Permits are dated April 3, 1905, June 14, 1905, August 18, 1905, and November 27, 1905.

<sup>76</sup> According to Seward Gunderson's daughter Virginia, Gladys Avenue was named after one of Seward's cousins. As related by Virginia to a meeting of the Gunderson Society, September 11, 1978.

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### Architecture

The architectural and construction style and details were paramount to the Gunderson development formula, just as they were to previous and contemporary developers. The Gunderson firm used popular styles that connoted comfort, stability, and durability to the middle class homeowner. The homes were built as American Four Squares with Prairie School, Arts & Crafts, and Colonial Revival style influences. Given this original design construct used by Gunderson's architect Frank DeMoney, this nomination treats the American Four Square as a style, not as a type. Seward Gunderson's home was an anomaly as the only Dutch Colonial Revival home in the area. The Gunderson two-flats, and the large bungalows on South Elmwood Avenue, were built in the Arts & Crafts style.

### The American Four Square

The American Four Square was one of the most popular home types at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Its popularity derived from its highly functional plan and restrained ornamentation, which was the trend after the 1880s. The home is generally two stories high, is set on a raised basement with the first floor approached by steps, has a full-width front porch, and is capped with a pyramidal roof that usually contains at least a front dormer. The interior plan is of four nearly equally sized rooms per floor with a side stairway.<sup>77</sup> The house takes many of its characteristics from the designer homes of the period. The wide eaves, low-sloped roof, porch support piers, and horizontal emphasis are borrowed from the Prairie School style. Its sense of solidity and bulk keeps the house grounded.

Other sub-styles provide interesting detail to the Gunderson Four Square. The Colonial Revival influence is evident in the Doric and Ionic columned porches with full entablatures, paired windows, front porch balustrades (at floor and roof level), and decorative rinceau<sup>78</sup> (typically of wood) set into the front gable of the front porch. The Arts & Crafts influence is evident in the side gable roofs, extended roof rafter tails, battered columns (often in pairs), and rough textured stucco cladding.

The American Four Square was most popular in the suburbs as a middle class home. Four Square homes were generally not architect-designed but constructed by contractors or builders in tract style subdivisions. In Oak Park the Four Square was the prevalent type on the south side of the village. In contrast, many homes on the north side of the village were designed by architects. Although many were not expensive homes, they were individualized for particular clients. The area south of Madison Street was developed by several builders who borrowed elements from houses by Frank Lloyd Wright, George Maher, and E.E. Roberts to incorporate into their Four Square homes.<sup>79</sup>

One of the differentiating aspects of the Gunderson Four Square home is that it was designed by an architect. The Gunderson firm engaged architect Frank O. DeMoney to design their prototypical homes. The sophisticated variations designed by DeMoney allowed the Gundersons to advertise a variety of 42 elevations and 15 floor plans. DeMoney was a friend of Seward Gunderson and described in the sales literature as "a man devoted to art as well as skilled in practical application."<sup>80</sup> The architect designed homes in all five of the Gunderson Oak Park subdivisions.<sup>81</sup> It is presumed that DeMoney was in essence the "staff architect" for homes in the Gunderson development and that he was the chief architect of the firm. It is not known who, if anyone, worked with him. In 1907 DeMoney

<sup>77</sup> Alan Gowans, *The Comfortable House* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1986), 84.

<sup>78</sup> According to Henry H. Saylor in a *Dictionary of Architecture* (NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1952), rinceau is "a strip pattern of ornament, usually in low relief, conventionalizing an undulating vine bearing leaves and fruits or flowers."

<sup>79</sup> Elizabeth Dull, "The Domestic Architecture of Oak Park, Illinois: 1900 - 1930" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1973) 12.

<sup>80</sup> S.T. Gunderson & Sons, *New Book of Standard Gunderson Homes* (1908), 11.

<sup>81</sup> Oak Leaves, February 27, 1947. obit.

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had a half-page ad in the *South Oak Park Directory* with an address of 144 LaSalle Street in Chicago. DeMoney's career included design of a fire station in Oak Park in 1912<sup>82</sup>, funeral chapels around the United States, the Hiawatha train which traveled between Chicago and Minneapolis, and a series of Pixley and Ehlers restaurants in Chicago. The cafeteria-style chain was popular as late as the 1960s. That commission was most likely derivative of DeMoney's relationship to the Pixley family; DeMoney's sister was married to restaurant founder Albert Pixley. In fact, DeMoney designed homes for Pixley and his partner B.C. Ehlers in 1936 in a popular revival style at, respectively, 830 and 1005 Ashland in River Forest, Illinois.<sup>83</sup>

### Prairie

Oak Park is the home of many landmark examples of the Prairie style. Vernacular examples were spread widely by pattern books and popular magazines; they were common in early 20<sup>th</sup> century suburbs throughout the country. Most were built between 1905 and 1915.<sup>84</sup> The Prairie homes in the Gunderson district are of the variety sometimes known as the Prairie Box. This subtype has a low-pitched hipped roof, symmetrical façade, hipped dormers, full-width front porches, and double-hung windows. The entrance, which is either centered or off-center, is the focal point of the façade. This was the earliest Prairie form and developed into the most common vernacular version.<sup>85</sup>

### Dutch Colonial Revival

Seward Gunderson's own home in his development varied the most from those he constructed here. His home, at 701 South Elmwood Avenue, was of the Dutch Colonial Revival style. This style, a subset of the Colonial Revival Style, is recognized by the gambrel roof. The home was built on a double lot, and though similar in width to the remaining Four Squares, is substantially longer. This three-story frame home has a side gambrel roof with a pair of dominant gabled dormers at the front elevation; this increases the living space of the third floor. The dormers are directly above two three-sided bay windows on the second floor. The front porch extends beyond the full width of the front façade. Until recently, the flat porch roof had a wooden balustrade.<sup>86</sup> The fenestration is also typical of the style. The double-hung windows have six-over-one and eight-over-one divided lites. These multi-pane upper sashes, and the bay windows on the second floor were common on Colonial Revival style homes. The two-story window opening/panel at the side gable is akin to the Palladian windows common to the style. It is comprised of double-hung windows at each the second and third floors, with a wood panel between. Arranged as a single composition, the top sash is arched and capped with a prominent wooden keystone.

The wall cladding is typical of the Shingle style influence on the Dutch Colonial Revival style. The second and third floor walls are covered with wood shingles. It is presumed that the lower walls, currently clad with aluminum siding, were originally clad with wood clapboards common to the style.

<sup>82</sup> "New Fire Patrol Station," *Oak Leaves*, September 14, 1912, p. 7. DeMoney is noted as the preparer of plans for the new fire patrol station at Harrison and East. The brick and stucco building had an estimated cost of \$7,000.

<sup>83</sup> Gilmore and Lipo, 15.

<sup>84</sup> Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984), 440.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, 439.

<sup>86</sup> On April 27, 1996, when the photograph was taken for the intensive survey of the district, the wooden balustrade was extant. This matched the balustrade evident in historic photographs of the home. When photographs were taken for this nomination, in April 2001, the balustrade was no longer extant.

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### Arts and Crafts

Two single-family homes in the district are strong examples of the Arts and Crafts style. These two large one-and-a-half story bungalows, at 639 and 641-47 South Elmwood Avenue, were built in 1920 and 1917 respectively. They illustrate many of the common features of the Arts and Crafts style. Both buildings have low-sloped cross gable roofs with wide eaves. One has jerkin gables and slate shingles, the other has Spanish style clay tile roofing pronounced with ridge tiles and end caps. The façades are decorated with patterned brick and simple stone inserts. Each has a deep inset open front porch with large square columns and low porch walls capped with limestone copings. The full-width, long, porches emphasize the typical ground-hugging characteristic of the Arts & Crafts bungalow. The entry stairs have low brick walls capped with limestone copings and limestone urns. The gables are stuccoed, with half-timbering in the gables of the bungalow at 641-47 South Elmwood.

The two-flats on South Ridgeland and South Cuyler Avenues are also of the Arts and Crafts style. The roofs of the main portion of the buildings are side gable roofs clad with clay tiles characteristic of the style. The prominent front porch roofs are front-gabled, hipped (of low slope), or flat. All of the sloped roofs have wide overhanging eaves; some have the characteristic Arts & Crafts exposed rafter tails. Heavy timber brackets support the gable roofs over the side entries, and some of the front gable roof eaves as well. The front gables characteristically are decorated with brick patterning or heavy timbering. The flat roofs are concealed by parapets with simple stone coping. The front sun porches are framed by substantial square brick columns that are capped with stone copings. All of the limestone coping, windowsills, and belt courses provide a strong horizontal emphasis that balances the verticality of the structures. The texture and patterning of the tapestry brick walls and stucco, and the clay tile roofing are also standard features of this style.

### Conclusion

The continued success of the second Gunderson subdivision demonstrates how effectively this builder was able to appeal to the upwardly mobile middle class families seeking homes in Oak Park. Using enticing direct marketing, advertising, and personal salesmanship, the Gunderson firm combined the cost-effectiveness of a large-scale development with the intimacy of choosing a new home from a neighbor. This method of marketing reflected a trend, as contemporary developers in Oak Park were using similar methods to coax potential homeowners from Chicago. The variety of custom-designed features offered by S.T. Gunderson and Sons appealed to the owner's sense of individualism. The Gunderson Homes were the result of the skillful and calculated blend of individualized choices within a framework of a large economy of scale that reduced the consumer's costs. This enabled a working family to buy a sizeable sturdy home for approximately \$4,000 to \$5,000. The Gunderson home is easily identifiable today and recognized as a desirable home. Current real estate ads boast both Gunderson and "Gunderson style" homes located on beautiful tree-lined streets. The enduring association with quality design and construction serve as testimony to Seward Gunderson's philosophy of building quality homes that would last. (See attachments.)

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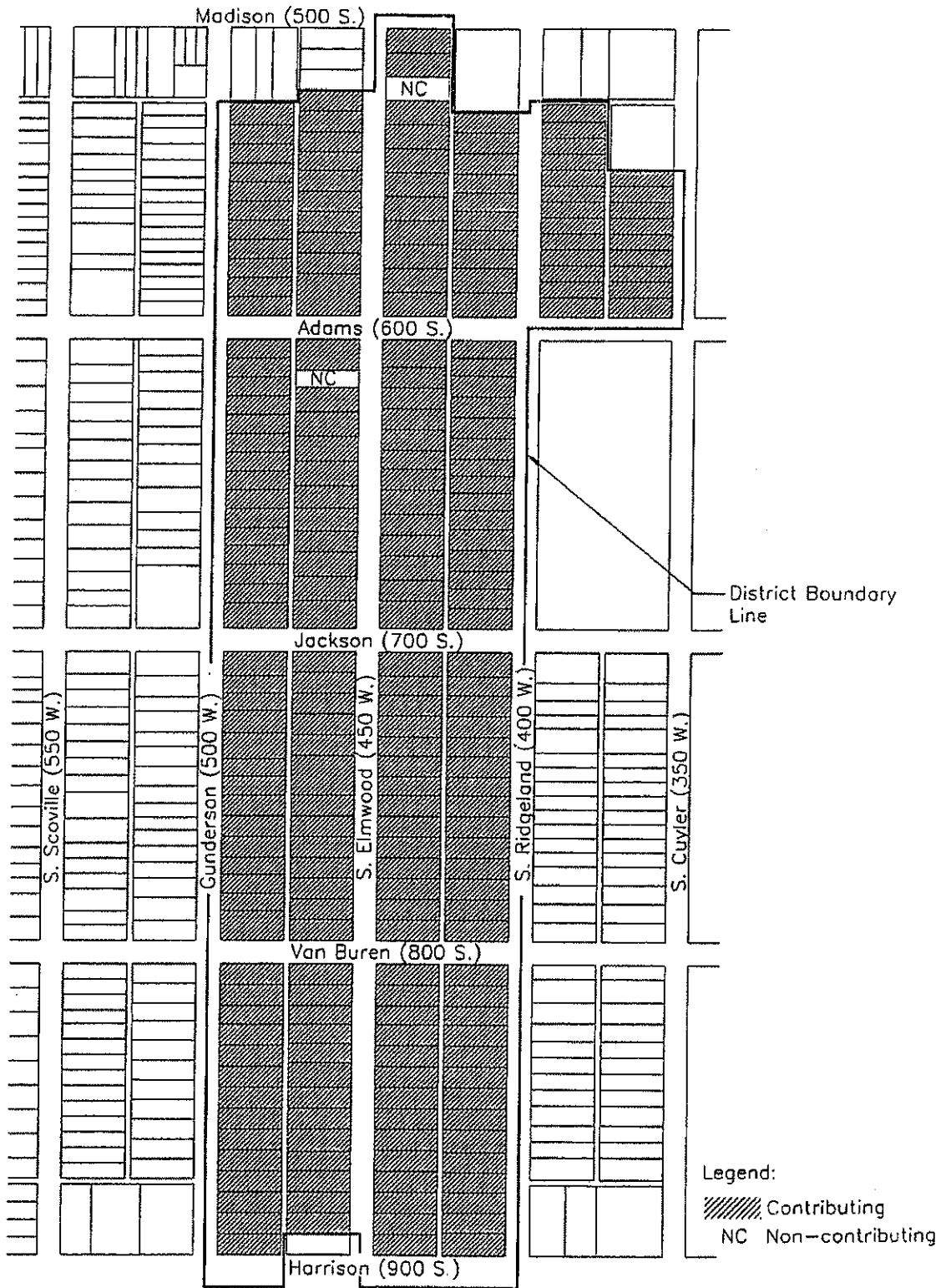
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### Verbal Boundary Description

East  $\frac{1}{2}$  of block 4 of B.F. Jervis' Subdivision of section 18 township 39 north range 13 east of third principle meridian except west  $\frac{1}{2}$  of southwest  $\frac{1}{4}$  thereof.

### Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Gunderson Historic District have been drawn to include all the buildings built by the development firm S.T. Gunderson and Sons from 1906 to 1920.



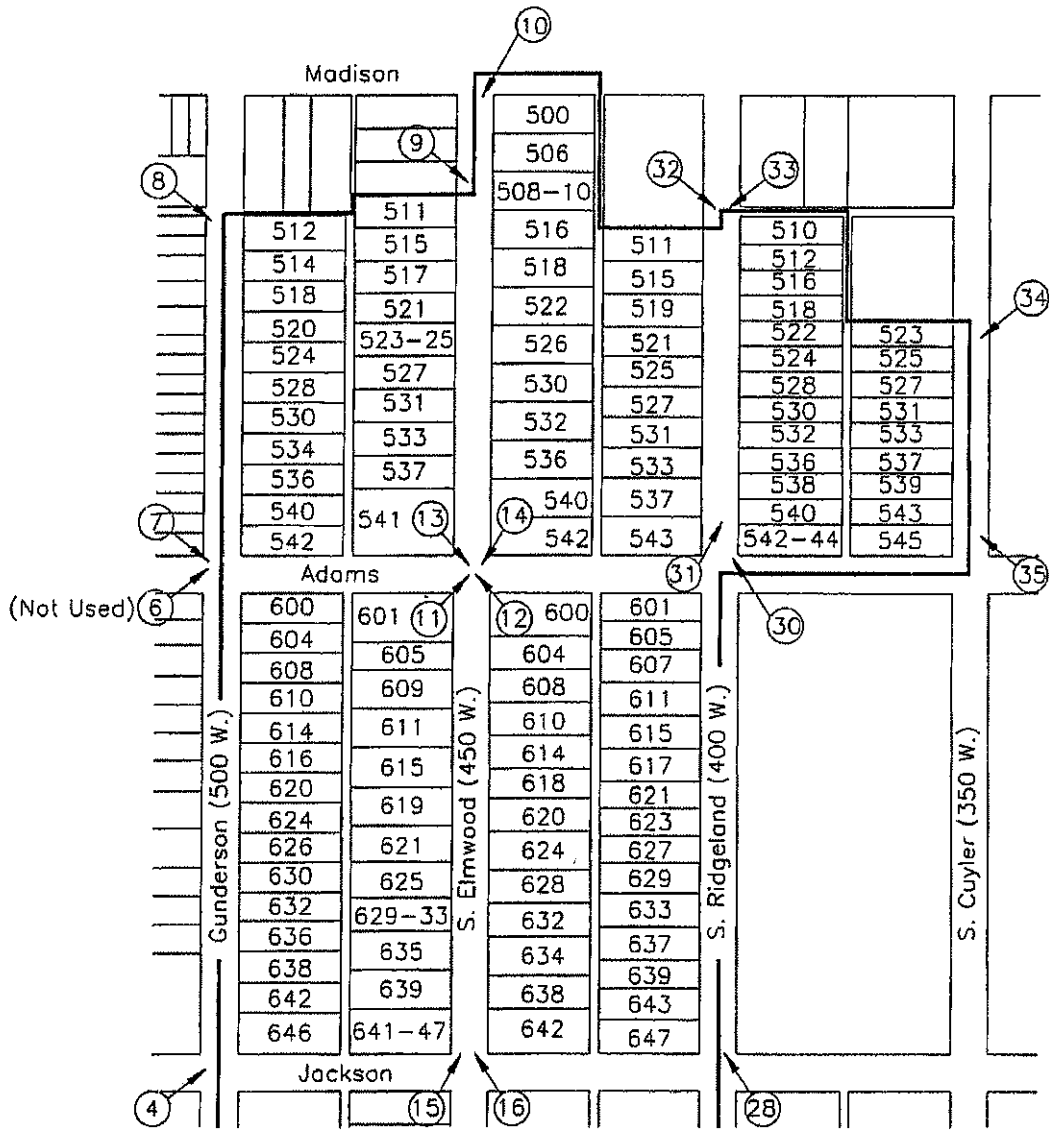
# Gunderson Historic District

Oak Park, Illinois

August 29, 2001

Scale: 1"=400'-0"





Photograph Key  
Northern Portion of District

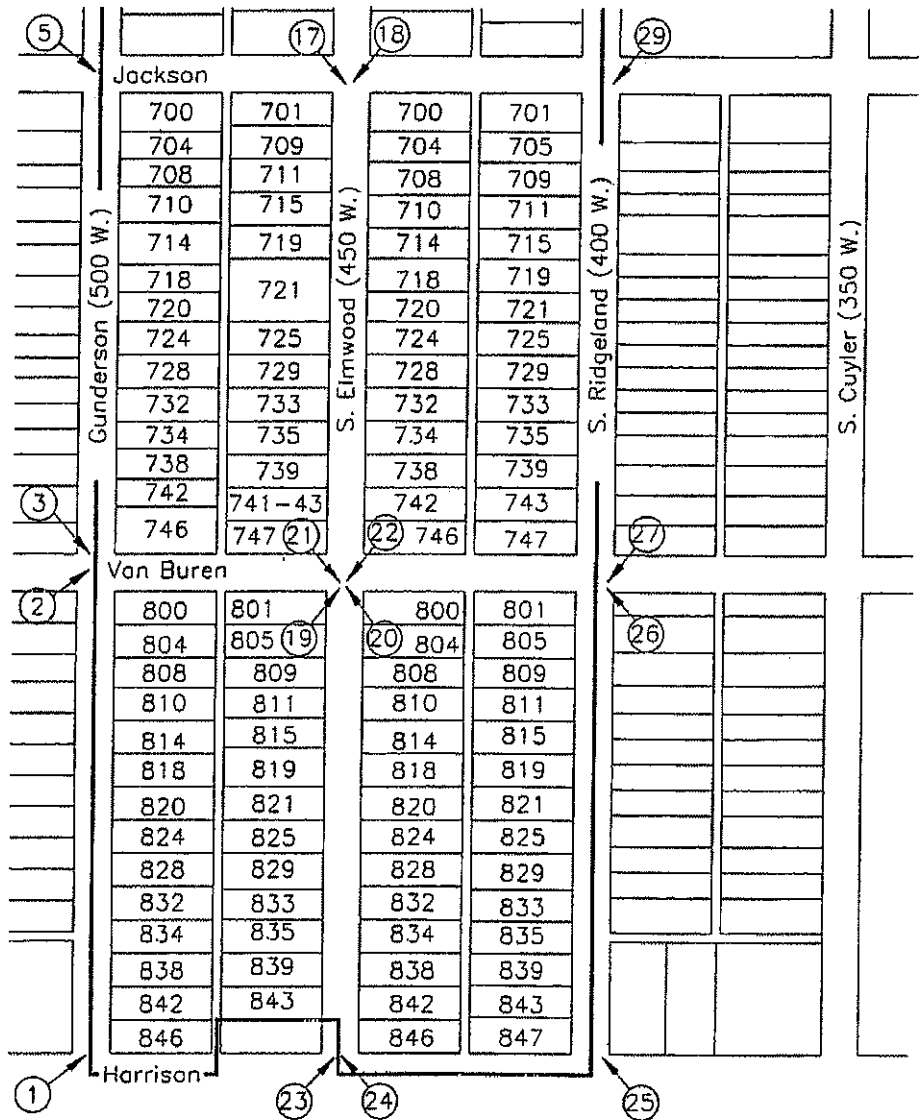
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Oak Park, Illinois

August 29, 2001

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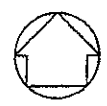
Photograph Key  
Southern Portion of District

# Gunderson Historic District

Oak Park, Illinois

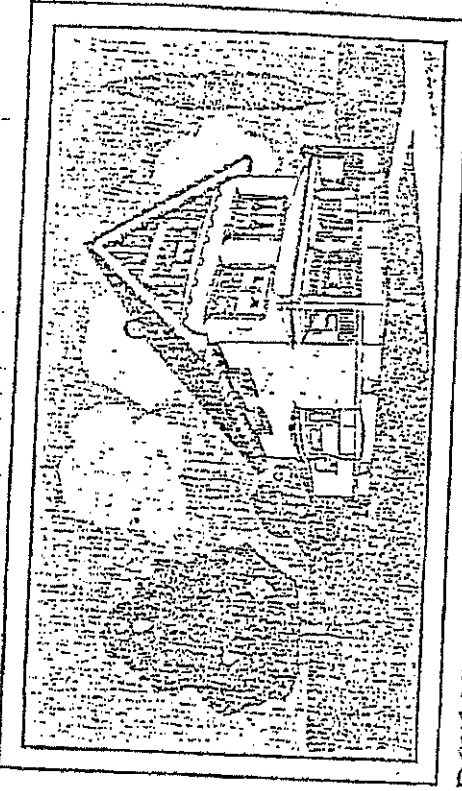
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*Substantial - Easily Acquired.*

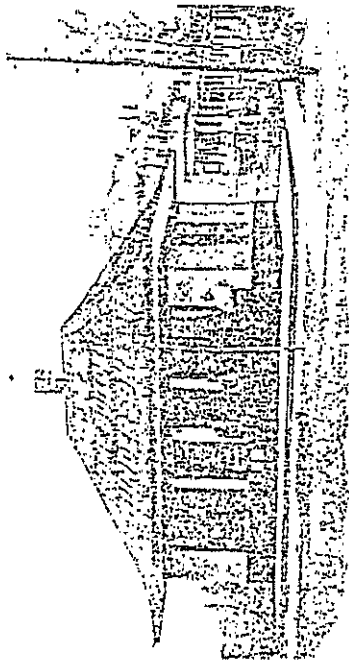
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HERE IS SHOWN THE BRANCH OFFICE OF



S. T. GUNDERSON & SONS  
CORNER OF ELAINWOOD AVE. AND HARRISON ST.  
TELEPHONE OAK PARK 785

(Seen on your right just before reaching  
Gunderson Avenue Station, going west)

#### HOW TO GET THERE.

The quickest and straightest way is by the Garfield Park line of the METROPOLITAN ELEVATED to GUNDERSON AVENUE STATION, which is close to our branch office shown in the photograph on this page. (5 - cent fare).

The LAKE STREET Elevated runs in a straight line and deposits you at its 67TH AVENUE STATION, only four blocks directly north of us. (5 - cent fare).

The MADISON STREET ELECTRIC cars run directly past our north line, with cars every three minutes and a 5 - cent fare downtown.

The 12TH STREET ELECTRIC runs but a short distance away, and reaches our property by one transfer.

The SUBURBAN ELECTRIC (La Grange line) passes our property on Harrison street and connects with both the Metropolitan and Lake Street "L" roads.

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The day  
you purchase  
YOUR OWN  
HOME  
is the Most  
Important day  
of your life  
(second only to your wedding day)

and the first morning you awake under your own roof, and look out on your own green grass, and breathe freely your own sweet, pure air, neither polluted by smoke nor jarred by discordant noises—that is the morning of the happiest day of your life—allowing for the same chivalrous exception noted above.

The world wears a different aspect, viewed from your own doorstep.

BROCHURE'S FIRST PAGE

# There Is No Feature Of The Modern Home — Which Is Not Included In — Gunderson Standard Homes

To appreciate their artistic beauty and superlative value they must be seen  
and thoroly inspected



These are the styles of HOMES we are building and selling all the time in Beautiful Oak Park. Bring along your experts and tell us where we could improve either the HOMES, the VALUES we offer, or our SELLING PLAN.

## S. T. Gunderson & Sons,

810 Chamber of Commerce, Chicago

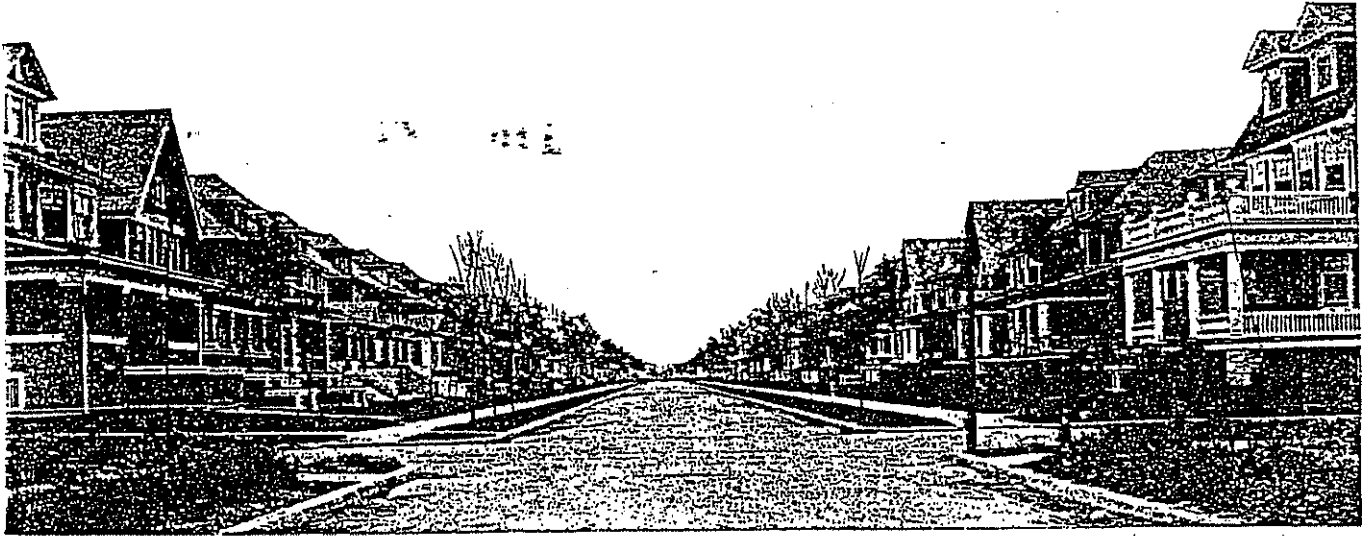
Branch offices, Elmwood and Harrison and Elmwood and Adams.

Phone O. P. 585



It is impossible to tell you briefly all the attractive features of

# Gundersons' Standard Homes



We invite you to come and see the wonderful transformation that is taking place in your immediate neighborhood. We want you to inspect these beautiful new modern homes. Those who give the most careful inspection are the first to buy. It is important to know that all the materials are bought in wholesale quantities at the lowest market prices.

But it is more important to realize that this is a community of homes—no flats, no apartments—nothing but artistic homes, individual in character and perfectly constructed of the very best materials, which include steel posts and girders in the basement—a point of superiority found only in the Gunderson homes. CASH OR TERMS TO SUIT.

These beautiful homes are located on Elmwood, Sixty-fourth and Gunderson Avenues, between Madison and Harrison Streets. Unexcelled transportation, Metropolitan "L" at Harrison Street and Electric line on Madison Street

## S. T. GUNDERSON & SONS

810 Chamber of Commerce - - - - - Chicago, Illinois

Branch Offices, Elmwood and Harrison, and Elmwood and Adams Phone Oak Park 585

# Just Stop and Consider



If you keep on paying rent all your life you can never own a home of your own. Hundreds of people have purchased homes from us and applied their rent money from month to month just the same as if they were paying rent, and today many of these people have the entire amount paid, and are the satisfied owners of beautiful modern homes which in all probability they never would have owned if they had not decided to make a start just when they did.

## It Is Never Too Late to Make a Beginning

We have a number of beautiful homes—the GUNDERSON standard, and that means none better—which are ready to move into. Why not decide now to own your home? You can buy from us and make the entire payment at once, or we will arrange terms to suit. Our proposition and our homes will bear the closest and most careful investigation. WE INVITE INSPECTION. These beautiful homes are located on Elmwood, Sixty-fourth and Gunderson Avenues, between Madison and Harrison Streets, and have unexcelled transportation—Metropolitan 'L' at Harrison Street, and Electric line on Madison Street.



# S. T. Gunderson & Sons

810 Chamber of Commerce, Chicago

Branch offices, Elmwood and Harrison and Elmwood and Adams Telephone Oak Park 585

### Hiram Storekeep Gives a Party

Hiram Storekeep, alias I. Kenton Elliott, evidently enjoys the garden party scene in 'The Boss' Away' at the Warrington last Friday and Saturday evening, by the Young Men's Bible class of the First Presbyterian church for early this week each member of the cast received the following:

Higher's Corner—His first 1910 year folks! Had such a good time at that garden party down to Mr. Farley's the other night that I'm going to have some done up in my own over to 219 South Kenilworth avenue this coming Thursday (February 21) and this is a invite to you to be present at 8:30 in the evening for the purpose of 'mixin' in the festivities. Most respectful.

#### HIRAM STOREKEEP:

Upwards of thirty of the guests of the mimic party responded to this unique invitation and spent a pleasant evening in telling fortunes, playing old-fashioned games and singing old-time songs. Mr. Elliott had on his new 'store clothes'.

## Closed on Sunday

I do NO WORK on my NEW SHOP on SUNDAY. I have moved from the Warrington Block just across the street to 107 Wisconsin Avenue. The new shop is larger than the old and it has been re-built, cleaned and equipped and I am prepared to give better service than ever on six days of the week—from 7 a. m. to 9 p. m., and on Saturday we are open till 11 p. m.

**CHARLES F. MILLER, Barber**  
107 Wisconsin Av., just off South Blvd  
Telephone Oak Park 1991

### 'The Calling of Dan Matthews'

At the First Methodist church, next Sunday morning the Rev. M. U. Williams will discuss 'The Calling of Dan Matthews' by Harold Bell Wright under the topic 'Ourelves as Others See Us' and will endeavor to point some of the fallacies expressed in it and enforce some of its obviously just demands upon the church of today.

This volume came from the press last year and is by the author of 'The Shepherd of the Hills' and other stories. The scene of this plot is laid out in the Ozark hills. It tells the story of a young man brought up on a ranch, but moved to give himself to the work of the Christian ministry. He began his work in a small pastorate in an obscure town out among the western hills near his boyhood home. He tries to put some of his inspirations into practice runs counter to the prejudices of the people of his church and finally leaves the ministry and becomes a mining capitalist.

This book is the severest arraignment of the Christian church that has been published for many a day. The position is maintained that the Church so far from leading men to Christ actually stands between Christ and the service He would render the world. In connection with this view of the Church, the Christian ministry comes in for its share of sarcastic censure the minister being spoken of as 'the most useless person in the world.' Every department of church life comes under the severe strictures of the author.

How much truth is there in this point of view? Such a book is likely to create

discussion. It may do some good to those who are able to use it in such a manner as to mirror their faults and derive from such reflection the resolve not to live as they do. It may do much harm to the thoughtless and uncritical and those who may be already somewhat prejudiced against the Church. There are many nowadays who are ready to groan at the mention of the Church, and cheer at the mention of the Christ. But if this book is read at all it ought to be with great care.

The choir will render in this service the following program:

- Quart. (include Romance) Lemate
- Quart. 'The Lord Is My Light' Parker
- Solo 'I'm Enough' from 'Elijah' Mendelssohn
- Frank Collins
- Quart. 'God Is Love' Stuellet
- Quart. 'Lullaby' March Rogers

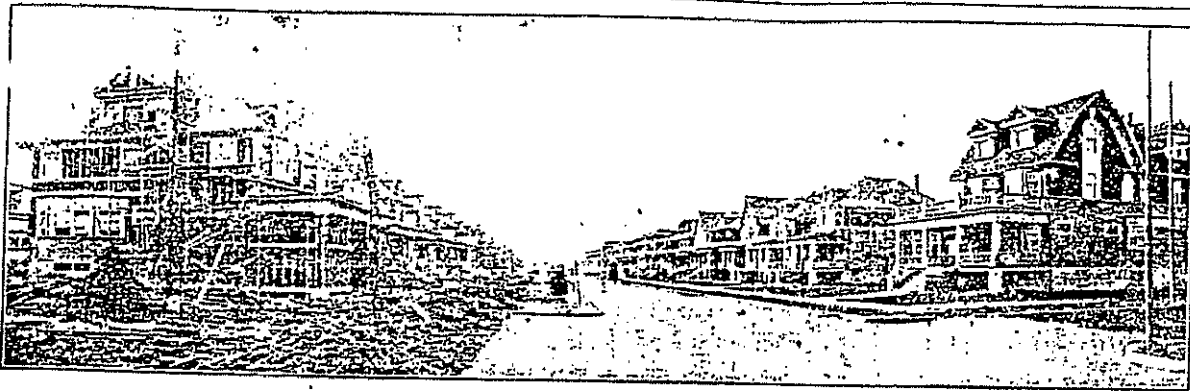
Miss Irene Hewes, 213 South Scoville Avenue, is visiting friends and relatives in Rochester and Syracuse, N. Y.

There is nothing better for your stomach than the judicious use of good **GINGER ALE**

Westphal's Ginger Ale is Good. "THERE IS GINGER IN IT" Phone Oak Park 252

Adolph Westphal Bottling Co.  
79 Lake St. River Forest, Ill.

1907



(SHOWING NEW GROUP OF HOMES ON SOUTH ELMWOOD AVENUE)

## Almost like a Fairy Tale or a Story from the Arabian Nights

Is the wonderful development of GUNDERSON'S STANDARD HOMES in South Oak Park. The above illustration shows a section now in course of construction. Two miles of solid street frontage is being improved with modern, up-to-date homes. These desirable dwellings are easy to buy because of the common-sense terms—a small payment down and the balance the same as rent.

This section is destined to be one of the very finest residence districts in Oak Park. Send for complete descriptive circular giving full particulars, and then see for yourselves this superb section of homes which surpass in completeness and elegance of finish any similar undertaking around Chicago.

---

# S. T. Gunderson & Sons

TESTED HOME BUILDERS

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUILDING

CHICAGO

Telephone Oak Park 585

Local office, corner Elmwood Av. and Harrison St.

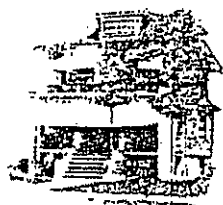


# It Costs You Nothing



To Investigate Gundersons' wonderland of superior modern homes

- ☐ The closest inspection is invited not only by yourself but by any experts you desire to bring with you.
- ☐ Come and see what we have to offer, and let us explain our methods—methods by which we have sold hundreds of homes to satisfied customers.
- ☐ Located on Elmwood, Sixty-fourth and Gunderson Avenues, between Madison and Harrison Streets. Unexcelled transportation. Metropolitan "L" at Harrison Street and electric line on Madison Street.



## S. T. Gunderson & Sons

HOME BUILDERS

810 Chamber of Commerce, Chicago

Branch Offices at Elmwood and Harrison and Elmwood and Adams Phone O. P. 585



The closest inspection is invited not only by yourself but by any experts you desire to bring with you.

Come and see what we have to offer, and let us explain our methods—methods by which we have sold hundreds of homes to satisfied customers.

Located on Elmwood, Sixty-fourth and Gunderson Avenues, between Madison and Harrison Streets. Unexcelled transportation. Metropolitan "L" at Harrison Street and electric line on Madison Street.

Then, too, the inspection is invited not only by yourself but by any experts you desire to bring with you.

Come and see what we have to offer, and let us explain our methods—methods by which we have sold hundreds of homes to satisfied customers.

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Come and see what we have to offer, and let us explain our methods—methods by which we have sold hundreds of homes to satisfied customers.

Located on Elmwood, Sixty-fourth and Gunderson Avenues, between Madison and Harrison Streets. Unexcelled transportation. Metropolitan "L" at Harrison Street and electric line on Madison Street.

**WESTPHAL'S  
GINGER ALE**

---

Is labeled Ginger Ale; smells like Ginger Ale; tastes like Ginger Ale; and IT IS Ginger Ale to the last drop  
**THERE IS GINGER IN IT**

Phone Oak Park 252  
Adolph Westphal Bottling Co.

**J. P. KRAFT**  
Optometrist and Optician

---

Eyes tested and Glasses fitted accurately. Jewelry and Optics repaired promptly. All work guaranteed.

147 Lake Street Phone 7164

For Sale

For Rent



Lots, 35 x 126 ft.

Paved Alleys

Large Sun Parlors  
Hot Water Heat

ON RIDGELAND AVENUE, OAK PARK

S. T. GUNDERSON & SONS'

New Oak Park

TWO FAMILY HOMES

Will make you a rent receiver instead of a rent payer

See them now—just completed. 5-5 and 6-6 room plans.

Make a note of these features: Mansard tile roofs, pressed brick, stone, steel and concrete construction. Large sun parlors. Hardwood finish. Hot water heat, either single or double plants. Rear porches screened in. Inside stair to the basement.

LOCATION—on Ridgeland and Cuyler Avenues, between Madison and Adams Streets, Oak Park. Convenient to both Oak Park "L" at Ridgeland Station and Metropolitan "L"—Garfield Park Branch—at Gunderson Station.

Prices always right. Cash or terms, as you like. Call at our Oak Park or city office for full particulars.

S. T. GUNDERSON & SONS

MAIN OFFICE  
Chamber of Commerce Building  
CHICAGO

OAK PARK OFFICE  
Cor. Madison St. and Cuyler Ave.  
OAK PARK

Those in charge of the decorating feel very grateful to John Muir, president of the town board, for the beautiful flowers and greens sent to the clubhouse for this occasion.

Friends of the club hope May festivals may be an established affair in River Forest, making one evening of common interest to its residents, and one long to be remembered by those taking part. Mrs. Mahler, who has been an officer of the club for the last two years, deserves great praise and congratulations as director of this May festival, which closes the very successful club year.

L. E. I.

Conley-Arnold Wedding

W. F. Arnold and Mrs. Drucilla Conley were quietly married on April 27 at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Edward S. La Bari, 412 Marion. Rev. C. K. Carpenter of the First Methodist church performed the ceremony. Mr and Mrs. Arnold will live at 916 Ontario, which has long been his residence.

Gaebelein Bible Conference

A. C. Gaebelein of New York will conduct a bible conference at the First Methodist Church of Oak Park from May 14 to May 19, inclusive. The meetings will be both afternoon and evening, and the public is invited.

Oak Parkers at Beloit College

Mr. and Mrs. Milton Denney have just returned from a visit to Beloit college, where, on Saturday evening last, they chaperoned the formal dance of Theta Psi Gamma Sorority. Their daughter Dorothy, as social chairman of the affair, headed the receiving line and both she and Miss Alice Kingsley of Oak Park, who planned the decorations, received many compliments for making this the most beautiful party of the season.

Mr and Mrs. A. J. Flitercraft have returned home from their wintering in Florida, having spent an enjoyable season at Winter Haven.

American College of Physical Education

Inclusive School for Physical Directors and School for Playground Workers

SUMMER SCHOOL 1916

CO-EDUCATIONAL—ACCREDITED

Five Weeks, June 28th to August 4th

CLASSES will be conducted in all branches of Physical Education. They will be open to beginners and advanced students. Each department will be in charge of a specialist. HUNDREDS of TEACHERS take up special work, such as is offered in our summer school, and combine it with their regular teaching work, and thus earn more money. THE SCHOOLS are housed in a quarter-of-a-million dollar building, provided with large gymnasium, swimming tank, tennis courts, etc. Send for our Announcement

TWO YEAR NORMAL COURSE begins September 15th

3/31/1926

2/21/26

OAK LEAVES

# The Hulbert Houses, Oak Park

\$4300 to \$7000 Booklet Sent Free

**RESIDENCES ONLY—NO FLATS ALLOWED**

The question is often asked why no portion of the Hulbert property at Oak Park will be sold without a house on it. In no other way can its high standard of excellence and attractiveness be maintained. When you buy a Hulbert House you not only get the best but you get with it the certainty that nothing but the best can come on to any part of the property. It has every convenience of city life, you do not wait for it to be finished, it has been finished before you come. It is in no sense a speculative proposition. It is an honest, substantial business project, and I ask always that my prices be compared with those of houses ordinarily offered for sale. The flat building and every objectionable thing, you will remember, are absolutely barred.

### TRANSPORTATION

Garfield Park branch of Metropolitan Elevated to Oak Park av., walk two blocks west. Lake Street Elevated to end of line, walk one block east, four blocks south. From west side Madison st. cars direct to Clinton av.

### "BUILT ON HONOR" HOUSES

# THOS. H. HULBERT

City Office, 6 Madison Street

Jackson Blvd. and Madison St., Oak Park

### Close Dancing School Season

The Misses Ingram closed the season of their dancing school at the Colonial club with one of the most enjoyable children's parties ever given in Oak Park. About one hundred of their little pupils were present and several hundred spectators gathered

### Home Bakery Goods Sale

Pies, cakes, doughnuts and rolls. The good cooks of the Euclid Avenue Ladies' Aid society will have a sale of delicious home bakery goods in conjunction with its luncheon next Friday, April 6, in the church parlor. Don't forget the sale, the luncheon or the date. The ladies have a sum to

# RUGS

MADE IN AMERICA

Made by us give

OAK LEAVES - JULY 27, 1907

# Takes This Beautiful New Residence

Balance Monthly—Same as Rent



No. 237 South Sixty-Fourth Avenue, Oak Park

**Open On Sunday. Owner On Premises**

Seven rooms and alcove, hot water heat, oak, mahogany and enamel finish. **BIG COOL VERANDAS, EAST FRONT,** 40-foot lot. Library with colonial brick fireplace, beamed ceiling, and paneled window seat, very cozy, dining room paneled in oak. **One of the best built and located houses in Oak Park; must be seen to be appreciated. Will decorate to suit.**

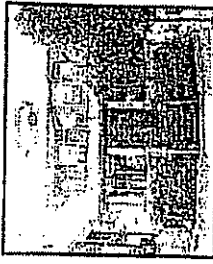
**BERT P. BIGGS, OWNER**

5522 WEST LAKE STREET, AUSTIN

Phone Austin 1724

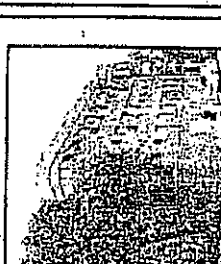
LOOKING for a 5 + bdrm home with a master suite? This Cantler home could be the one for you! Natural woodwork, hardwood floors, and lovely stained glass windows. 2 car garage and 2 parking spaces. Large enclosed front porch and many other special features. See it today. \$374,900

**OAK PARK**



LOOKING for a 5 + bdrm home with a master suite? This Cantler home could be the one for you! Natural woodwork, hardwood floors, and lovely stained glass windows. 2 car garage and 2 parking spaces. Large enclosed front porch and many other special features. See it today. \$374,900

**CHICAGO**



**HOT HOMAN AREA!!** Nine apartments and one front store - all rented. Great location. 7 minutes to loop. Many new amenities. \$279,900

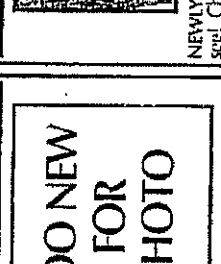
or Double parlor with decorative fireplace. \$269,000

**RIVER FOREST**



**THIS HOME IS FOR A BUSY EXECUTIVE** and his family! 12 sun floored rooms, 5 bdrms + 5 1/2 bath. Gourmet kitchen opens to dining room + great rm. Library, formal living room and 5 fireplaces. Lower level pool room w/wet bar, ig office, jacuzzi w/sauna. Too many amenities to mention. \$1,350,000

**MAYWOOD**



**BEAUTIFUL HOME** in south Maywood. Living room bright and spacious with skylight. 3 bedrooms, 2 full baths, large family room. 2 car attached garage. Show and sell. \$159,900

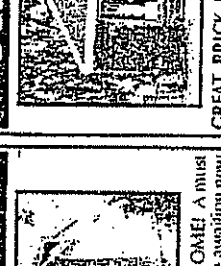
features off the beaten path, great closet space & parking for all. Call today for your private showing. \$110's

**FOREST PARK**



**2 FLAT - GREAT INVESTMENT.** Newer kitchens offer individual electric heating systems, water heater & separate electrical panel. Call today for your private showing. \$192,200

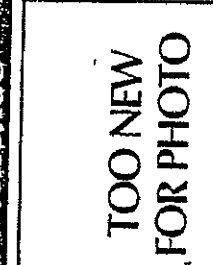
**LYONS**



**NEWLY UPDATED HOME!** A must see! Charming home awaiting new owner. New roof, siding, windows, bathrooms & updated kitchen. New hardwood floors and carpeting. New central air - nothing missing here. Copper plumbing and updated electric. \$199,500

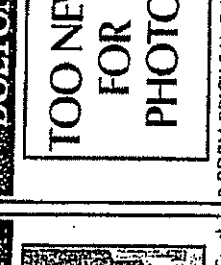
hot and the three bedrooms for easy walk to school, transportation and the center of town. \$320,000

**CHICAGO**



**TOO NEW FOR PHOTO**  
Nice 2 unit building on a quiet street. Live in one and let your tenant help you with the mortgage. Great location. Close to everything. \$110,000

**DOLTON**



**TOO NEW FOR PHOTO**  
3 BDRM BRICK RANCH. Nothing to do but move in. Freshly painted, new carpet & some new floors. Quiet street with wonderful neighbors. Fenced yard for family fun. 2 car garage w/extra slab for additional parking. Great home. \$89,900

equipment, many new windows, white draws. Close to train, park & shopping. This one won't last long. \$234,900

**CHICAGO**



**THAT'S RIGHT.** 4 bdrm, 2 baths, LR, lam rm, and full basement. This townhome features hardwood floors, appliances, fenced yard for great family entertainment and low-maintenance exterior. Call today, tomorrow may be too late. \$87,000

**CICERO**



**UPDATED BAY FRONT** yellow brick 2-flr abounds w/special features & storage. Owner's unit offers peninsula kitchen overlooking covered patio w/fenced & gated yard. 2 1/2 car garage. \$185,000

- |                |               |               |             |             |             |                 |                  |                 |               |              |            |                |               |              |                       |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|
|                |               |               |             |             |             |                 |                  |                 |               |              |            |                |               |              |                       |
| Michelle Burks | A.J. Chandler | Pauline Coyne | Larry Doyle | Doris Pough | David Green | W. Robert James | Greg Jaroszowski | Vee Jaroszowski | Cathy Manning | Janet Peloso | Joan Riess | Mellie Sirotek | David Thurman | Paul Spratka | Mary Callahan Ziebell |

GUNDERSON AD  
WEDNESDAY JOURNAL  
9.27.2001





Carmen Averhart  
 Fred Bernacchi  
 James Cavanagh  
 Angie Cresswell  
 Joan C. Cusack  
 Thomas Cusack  
 Rita Deer

Marcee Gavula  
 Frank Granala  
 Chester Gray  
 Carmen Guzman  
 Barbara Hendershot  
 Lynette Hill  
 Grace Inzary  
 Beryl Kimer-Garbrecht

# Century 21

## CLASSIC PROPERTIES

### (708)524-8400

1146 W. CHICAGO & HARLEM AVE. OAK PARK  
 e-mail: c21opr@aol.com  
 website: www.classichomes.net

HOURS:  
 MON & FRI 9-5  
 TUES-THURS. 9-7  
 SAT 9-5 SUN 10-4

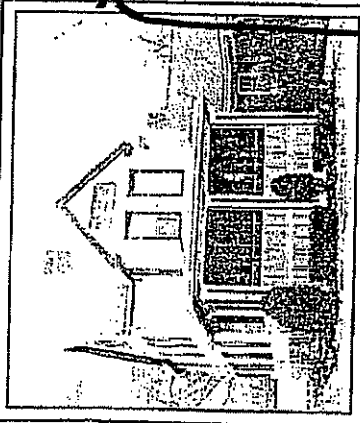
Joe Langely  
 Hattie Lockett  
 Fay Lockwood  
 Gary Mancuso  
 Margie McCarthy  
 Ralph McNabb  
 Therese Messuck  
 Daniel J. Pych  
 Kyra L. Pych  
 Kendall Field  
 Joanne Rosenbush  
 Trudy Roznos  
 Maureen C. Sansone

Pauline Trilik-Sharpe  
 James Spearman  
 Shane Slanciff  
 Jennifer Zaleski

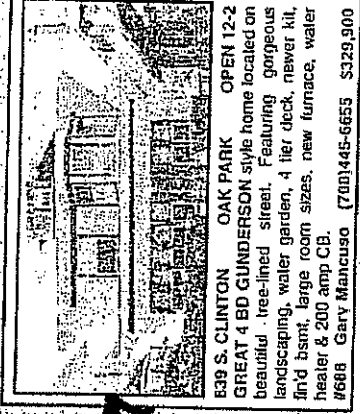
**CARMEL PERRONE -PEARSON & FRANK DIFEBO**  
 BROKERS OWNERS



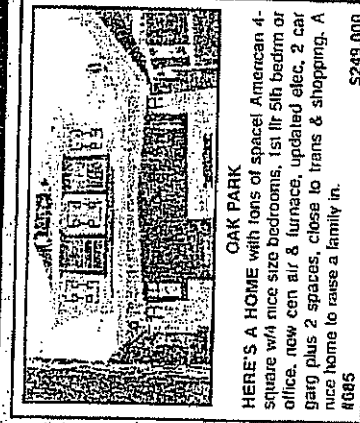
**CENTURION®**  
 Award Winning Office 1994-2000



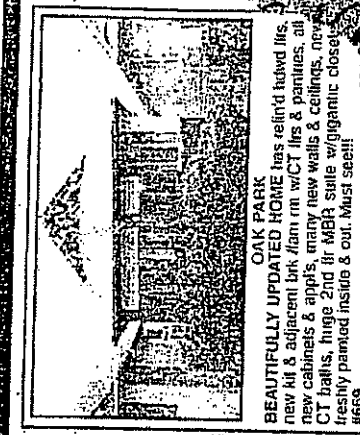
**OAK PARK**  
**NEW LISTING! WONDERFUL** spacious Victorian in fantastic historic district location on a quiet cul-de-sac. Features 5 bedrooms & 2.5 baths. Much updating done including many new windows, new 2nd flr bath & some new copper plumbing. Large 1st flr fam rm. Wrap around porch, nice sized yard. 2.5 car gar, very good condition. Short walk to transportation.  
 #594 Kyra Pych (708)445-2305 \$429,000



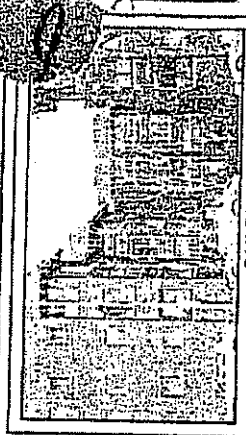
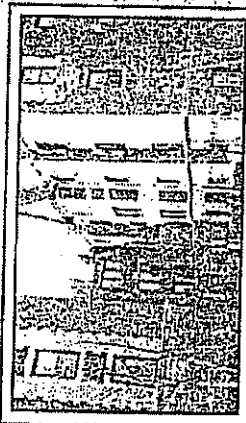
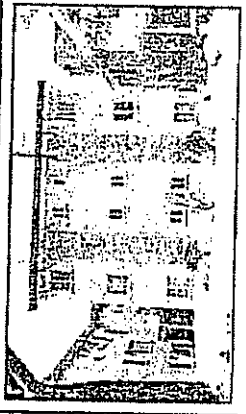
**539 S. CLINTON OAK PARK OPEN 12-2**  
**GREAT 4 BD GUNDERSON** style home located on beautiful tree-lined street. Featuring gorgeous landscaping, water garden, 4 tier deck, newer kitchen & bath, large room sizes, new furnace, water heater & 200 amp CB.  
 #688 Gary Mancuso (708)445-6655 \$329,900



**OAK PARK**  
**HERE'S A HOME** with tons of space! American 4-Square w/4 nice size bedrooms, 1st flr 5th bedroom or office, new cen air & furnace, updated elec, 2 car gar, plus 2 spaces, close to trans & shopping. A nice home to raise a family in.  
 #685 \$249,000



**OAK PARK**  
**BEAUTIFULLY UPDATED HOME** has ref'd hardwood flrs, new kit & adjacent bk /fam rm w/CT flrs & pantries, all new cabinets & appls, many new walls & ceilings, new CT baths, huge 2nd flr MBH suite w/organic closet, freshly painted inside & out. Must see!!  
 #669 \$279,000



GUNDERSON "STYLE" HOME  
 OAK LEAVES  
 3/28/2001





**VILLAGE OF OAK PARK  
HISTORIC DISTRICT NOMINATION REPORT**

This form is for use in nominating Oak Park historic districts. Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Gunderson Historic District  
 other names/site number First Gunderson Development

**2. Location**

street & number Roughly bounded by Lexington Street, Fillmore Street,  
Wenonah Avenue and Home Avenue  
 city or town Oak Park  
 state Illinois code IL county Cook Code 031 zip code 60304

**3. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>59</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>59</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

**4. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic/Single Dwelling Sub: \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic/Single Dwelling Sub: \_\_\_\_\_

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**5. Description**

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**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

American Four-SquareOther: Colonial RevivalOther: Prairie School**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stoneroof Asphalt Shinglewalls Clapboarding, wood shingle other**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**6. Statement of Significance**

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**Areas of Significance**

Community Planning and Development

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1905 to 1930

**Architect/Builder**

S.T. Gunderson and Sons, builder

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**7. Major Bibliographical References**

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**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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---

**8. Form Prepared By**

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name/title Doug Kaarre\*organization Village of Oak Parkdate January 9, 2003street & number 123 Madison Streetphone (708) 358-5417city or town Oak Parkstate IL zip code 60302

\*This form was prepared in large part from the National Register nomination form for the Gunderson Historic District (Second Gunderson Development) prepared by Suzanne Germann and Lesley Gilmore of Gilmore Franzen Architects, 2002.

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**Property Owner(s)**

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name Multiple owners

street &amp; number \_\_\_\_\_

telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_

state \_\_\_\_\_

zip code \_\_\_\_\_

## 5. Description of Development

The first Gunderson development is located on the south side of Oak Park south of the Eisenhower Expressway. The area is roughly bounded by Lexington Street on the north, Fillmore Street on the south, Home Avenue on the east and Wenonah Avenue on the west. The area consists of 28 homes on Wenonah Avenue and 31 homes on Home Avenue, for a total of 59 single-family homes. The area was developed in 1905 by S. T. Gunderson and Sons. It is referred to as the first Gunderson development in Oak Park; it was followed by S.T. Gunderson & Sons second development on S. Cuyler, S. Ridgeland, S. Elmwood and Gunderson Avenues between Madison and Harrison Streets, constructed between 1906 and 1920. The second Gunderson development was designated as the Gunderson Historic District in 2002. All 59 of the homes are considered to be contributing properties to the character of the district.<sup>1</sup> Although no permit information was available for 3 of the homes, all are believed to be part of the Gunderson development.

All of the Gunderson homes are American Foursquare types constructed in 1905. They are individualized with original detailing of Colonial Revival influences, such as wide and thin porch columns with Ionic and Doric capitals and returns on the front gable ends, and Prairie School influences, such as wide eaves and square porch posts and low-pitched hip roofs. Although massing is consistent on all the homes, there are several variations of detail on the homes throughout the development. Roof types vary between hipped roofs with hipped central dormers (25), hipped roofs with gabled central dormers (15) or houses with front gables (18). One house has a hipped roof with no dormer. The homes were originally clad with wood clapboards, wood shingles, or a combination thereof. Wood shingles were the typical roofing material at the time.

The American Four Square played a critical role in speculative developments throughout the United States; they were basic, comfortable homes affordable by the middle-class from 1895 through 1925.<sup>2</sup> The typical American Four Square home in the development is approximately 24 feet wide and varies from 28 to 32 feet deep, not including the front porch. This floor plate is slightly longer than the square floor plan of the standard Four Square. However, the building mass is the prototypical Four Square cube. The remainder of the features are representative of the American Four Square as defined by Alan Gowans in *The Comfortable House*: "two stories high, set on a raised basement with the first floor approached by steps, a verandah running the full width of the first story, capped by a low pyramidal roof that usually contains at least a front dormer, and an interior plan of four nearly equal sized rooms per floor plus side stairwell."<sup>3</sup> The front porch typically has only three columns, though some have two or four. The front entrance openings are typically asymmetrically arranged. The homes in the development are typically 2-1/2 stories high.

The American Four Square houses in the development are illustrative of the variety of secondary styles that often accompany the style. Most have strong horizontal lines, restraint in ornamentation, and wide eaves. Some of these features are strong enough to be considered the influence of the Prairie School style. Some are graced with a classical flair, often manifested in Ionic capitals on round porch columns. This building style is considered a distinctive new building style from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A common decorative window

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<sup>1</sup> Based on field surveys performed by Village Staff on June 12, September 25, and November 11, 2002 and HPC discussion on November 14, 2002. Artificial siding does not negate contributing status.

<sup>2</sup> James S. Massey and Shirley Maxwell, "Builder Style: America's Little Houses," *Old House Journal*, September/October, 1990, p. 45-49.

<sup>3</sup> Alan Gowans, *The Comfortable House: North American Suburban Architecture 1890-1930* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1986).

type featured in the homes is one with wood muntins forming diamond patterns or geometric shapes. This same decorative window was used again in the second Gunderson development, along with art glass windows. The first Gunderson development did not incorporate art glass as prevalently as in the second development. However, when art glass was used, it was found in the transom of the central window of the front first floor bay and/or the south first floor bay, or at the hall or closet window next to the front entry door. Art glass windows were only visible on 6 homes, while approximately 31 homes exhibited decorative windows.

Many of the homes have been altered and modernized similarly. 28 of the full-width front porches were enclosed, most likely in the 1920s. This enclosure typically consists of ribbons of tall casement windows set on the original low porch wall. The majority of the extant original casements have vertical divided lites in a three-over-two, three-over-one or six-over-one pattern. Although these are later alterations, they are historic and are seen consistently throughout the development. There has been a great deal of artificial siding applied to the homes.<sup>4</sup> Of the 59 homes in the development, 12 retain their original wall cladding. One home has been clad in stucco. The homes were originally constructed for middle-class first-time homeowners. The district remains middle-class. Although the artificial siding and enclosed porches on some of the buildings is not original, it does not diminish the integrity of the structures. The building massing, fenestration and detailing remain intact.

The majority of the lots in the development are 37.5 x 150 feet.<sup>5</sup> One house on Home was constructed on a double lot. The typical front yard setback is 15 feet. A 16-foot wide alley separates the blocks. The alleys provide access to the garages at the rear of the property, none of which were built simultaneously with the homes.

A local newspaper described these homes at the time of construction as "colonial type" and listed the names and addresses of 50 new homeowners "all being from Chicago."<sup>6</sup> The original intent of this subdivision was to have some homes on double lots. From reviewing the building permits for these properties, it is evident that all lots were developed later that same year.<sup>7</sup> The fifty-nine houses in this subdivision are similar in style to, but smaller than, the later (second Gunderson) subdivision. These homes ranged in selling price from \$3,750 to \$4,000.<sup>8</sup>

The most recognizable enduring historic features of the development are summarized as follows:

1. Green parkways with mature deciduous trees regularly spaced.
2. Equal setbacks (front, side and rear) for each property.
3. Consistent rhythm established by items #1 and #2 above.
4. Consistent building massing.
5. Consistent porch sizes and depths.
6. Consistent building height.

All 59 properties have been classified as contributing structures despite alterations to five specific homes at 1015, 1023, 1031 and 1105 Home and 1046 Wenonah. These homes do

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<sup>4</sup> "Artificial siding" includes asbestos siding, vinyl clapboards, aluminum siding, and asphalt siding or other composite materials.

<sup>5</sup> Based upon Sidwell map.

<sup>6</sup> *The Oak Park Reporter-Argus*, May 19, 1906, p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> April 3, 1905, June 14, 1905, August 18, 1905, and November 27, 1905 were the only dates that permits were pulled by S.T. Gunderson and Sons for this subdivision. Numerous permits were pulled on each date.

<sup>8</sup> *Oak Park Reporter Argus*, May 19, 1906.

retain their basic form and shape, despite missing or added porches or window alterations. The owners of these homes are encouraged to restore the homes back to the original design.

**1001 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Vinyl siding, decorative windows, porch alterations including new columns, front gable.

**1005 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Wood clapboard siding, decorative windows, art glass windows, front gable roof.

**1007 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Wood clapboard siding, wood windows, 1 decorative and 2 art glass on front first floor, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center. *Ray Kroc Boyhood Home*

**1011 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, decorative windows, enclosed front porch, aluminum soffits, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1015 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Wood or composite board siding, enclosed front porch with alterations, decorative windows, front gable roof.

**1017 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Wood clapboard siding, decorative windows, Ionic porch columns, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1019 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Wood clapboard siding, decorative windows, aluminum soffits, Ionic porch columns, hipped roof with gabled dormer at center.

**1023 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt horizontal siding, major alterations, hipped roof with no dormer.

**1025 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, decorative windows, square porch posts, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1029 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Vinyl siding on the first floor and wood shingles on the second floor, decorative windows, art glass windows, Doric porch columns, front gable roof.

**1031 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, decorative windows, second floor addition over front porch, Doric porch columns, front gable roof.

**1035 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, decorative windows, aluminum soffits, square porch posts, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1039 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Aluminum siding, decorative windows, aluminum soffits, Ionic porch columns, hipped roof with gabled dormer at center.

**1041 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Vinyl siding, vinyl windows, art glass windows, Ionic porch columns, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1043 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Vinyl siding, vinyl windows, hipped roof with gabled dormer at center.

**1047 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Composite siding, enclosed front porch, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1101 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Vinyl siding, enclosed front porch, vinyl windows, front gable roof.

**1105 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Vinyl siding, enclosed front porch, second floor addition over front porch, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1109 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, decorative windows, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1111 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Vinyl siding, square porch posts, decorative windows, flat front gable roof.

**1115 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Wood clapboard siding, enclosed front porch, front gable roof.

**1119 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Wood clapboard siding, Doric porch columns, decorative windows, hipped roof with gabled dormer at center.

**1121 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, enclosed front porch, decorative windows, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1125 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Vinyl siding, enclosed front porch, vinyl windows, hipped roof with gabled dormer at center.

**1127 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, enclosed front porch, decorative windows, front gable roof.

**1131 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, Ionic porch columns, hipped roof with gabled dormer at center.

**1133 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, enclosed front porch, hipped roof with gabled dormer at center.

**1137 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, enclosed front porch, decorative windows, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.



**1139 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Wood clapboard siding, aluminum soffits, decorative windows, front gable roof.

**1143 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Vinyl siding, decorative windows, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1147 Home Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, enclosed front porch, large wood brackets at front eaves, art glass windows, hipped roof with gabled dormer at center.

**1012 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, enclosed front porch, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1016 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, enclosed front porch, decorative windows, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1018 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, Doric porch columns, decorative windows, front gable roof.

**1022 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, enclosed front porch, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1024 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt and aluminum siding, square porch posts, hipped roof with gabled dormer at center.

**1028 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Vinyl siding, Doric porch columns, decorative windows, front gable roof.

**1030 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, Doric porch columns, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1034 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Wood clapboard siding on first floor and wood shingles on second floor, decorative windows, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1036 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Aluminum siding, enclosed front porch, front gable roof.

**1040 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Wood clapboard siding, square porch posts, hipped roof with gabled dormer at center.

**1042 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, Doric porch posts, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1046 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Vinyl siding, art glass windows, no front porch, front gable roof.

**1100 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Wood clapboard siding, Doric porch columns, decorative windows, hipped roof with gabled dormer at center.

**1104 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Vinyl siding, enclosed front porch, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1106 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Vinyl siding, enclosed front porch, hipped roof with gabled dormer at center.

**1110 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, decorative windows, square porch posts, circular gable window, front gable roof.

**1112 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Stucco siding on first floor and dormer, wood shingles on second floor, enclosed front porch, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1114 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Wood clapboard siding on first floor, wood shingles on second floor, decorative windows, Doric porch columns, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1118 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, enclosed front porch, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1122 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, enclosed front porch, elevator lift extending from front porch adjacent to stoop, front gable roof.

**1124 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, two-story bay on front elevation, half-width enclosed front porch with Ionic columns, decorative windows, hipped roof with gabled dormer at center.

**1126 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, enclosed front porch, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1130 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding, enclosed front porch, hipped roof with gabled dormer at center.

**1132 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Vinyl siding, enclosed front porch, Doric porch columns, front gable roof.

**1136 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Vinyl siding, enclosed front porch, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1138 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Asphalt siding on first floor, wood shingles on second floor, decorative windows, enclosed front porch, hipped roof with gabled dormer at center.

**1142 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Stucco cladding, decorative windows, enclosed front porch, hipped roof with hipped dormer at center.

**1146 Wenonah Avenue** – CONTRIBUTING

Aluminum siding, Doric porch columns, decorative windows, front gable roof.

## **6. Significance of Development**

The first Gunderson development is a prominent subdivision in south Oak Park, boasting middle-class homes in the American Four Square style that was in national vogue in the early 1900s. The sameness of house style, identical setbacks, and other common features of this subdivision foreshadow the "cookie-cutter" subdivisions later in the century. This development was also the first large-scale development for the firm S.T. Gunderson and Sons in Oak Park. Their second subdivision was listed on the National Register and designated an Oak Park historic district in 2002. The period of significance begins in 1905, the year the homes were constructed, and continues through 1930 to incorporate the early modifications that occurred. The first Gunderson development is being combined with the second Gunderson development into one historic district in two locations. The second Gunderson development was designated as the Gunderson Historic District in 2002. Together, the two developments will be referred to as the Gunderson Historic District.

### Community Planning and Development

The first Gunderson development was built as a new suburban community that catered to the middle class family. It was designed to provide homeownership to a burgeoning middle class, easy access to employment opportunities in the City of Chicago, and a safe haven in which to raise a family. The Gunderson firm built the area by means of a proven successful formula used by previous and contemporary developers.

### The Gunderson Family and Its Business

S.T. Gunderson and Sons represents a firm started by successful Norwegian immigrants. Severt T. Gunderson came to the United States in 1848 at the age of nine. At 18 he went into business as a builder, and quickly acquired important timber and mill holdings, all of which were destroyed by fire in 1875. He soon started a second business, manufacturing doors and sashes, which he operated with his son Seward. This business was also destroyed by fire. In 1885 Severt and his two sons formed the firm of S.T. Gunderson and Sons, "homebuilders"<sup>9</sup> and real estate investors. Severt also was associated in the firm of John A. Gauger & Company, who manufactured and shipped doors and window sash throughout the United States.<sup>10</sup> Severt remained closely tied to his ethnic roots. He married another first-generation Norwegian immigrant, Emily Olsen, and they lived in a Norwegian neighborhood in Chicago, where they spoke their native language and participated in local Scandinavian organizations.<sup>11</sup>

Severt and Emily had two sons, Seward and George, both of whom worked in the family business. Seward Miles Gunderson was born in Chicago on February 28, 1866. He was educated in public schools and at the Bryant and Stratten Business College in Chicago. In October 1894 he married Abigail K. Campbell, the daughter of a prosperous Chicago contractor, and had four children (Miles, Doris, Virginia, and Kathryn) and eight grandchildren. He joined his father in the lumber business in 1883<sup>12</sup> and became the managing partner in 1893.<sup>13</sup> George Gunderson was born in Chicago in 1863. He was also educated in public schools and at the Bryant and Stratten Business College of Chicago. He married Julia Jacobs in 1887 and

<sup>9</sup> According to Seward's daughter Virginia, Seward coined the phrase "homebuilder" in contrast to the term "housebuilder" as a reflection of his commitment to the family. As related to a meeting of the Gunderson Society, September 11, 1978.

<sup>10</sup> "Biographical Dictionary and Portrait Gallery of Representative Men of Chicago," Volume 2, 1892, page 692, Chicago Historical Society Collection.

<sup>11</sup> Kathryn Elizabeth Ratcliff, "The Making of a New Middle-Class Culture: Family and Community in a Midwest Suburb, 1890 – 1920" (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1990), 75. Kathryn is a granddaughter of Seward's daughter Kathryn Gunderson Ratcliff.

<sup>12</sup> *Oak Leaves*, July 13, 1950.

<sup>13</sup> "70 Years Young: Seward Gunderson," *Oak Parker*, February 29, 1936, p. 37.

had two daughters, four grandchildren, and four great grandchildren at the time of his death in 1945. His career began in his father's lumber company in 1881. He was later the manager of W.J. Frawley and Company, lumber inspectors. George joined his father and brother in business in 1885. In 1899 he organized the Acme Steel Company, Inc. and was treasurer and general manager until 1924.<sup>14</sup> Although George was a partner in the firm of S.T. Gunderson and Sons, he was not as active in the firm as his brother, Seward.

Seward Gunderson followed the pattern of many first-generation immigrants by assimilating into the American culture. In 1907, he and his family moved to Oak Park, where they had built a large house in the heart of the second Gunderson development. Seward consciously constructed himself as an example for his neighbors to emulate.<sup>15</sup> He was a prominent member of the community and involved in social affairs as a member of many organizations: Oak Park's first zoning board; president of Oak Park Republican Club and delegate of National Republican convention in 1944; Oak Park Chamber of Commerce; Chicago Real Estate Board of Underwriters; Chicago Athletic Association; charter member of the Oak Park Country Club; treasurer of the park district of Oak Park from 1912 to 1920<sup>16</sup>; secretary of his brother's firm, the Acme Steel Company from 1899 to 1903; Metropolitan Lodge, Oriental Consistory; Knights Templar and Medinah Temple.<sup>17</sup>

Kathryn, Seward's youngest daughter, recalled that when a family from the "old Country" bought a house in her father's subdivision, they received a lesson in normative suburban behavior: women should wear hats, not babushkas; they should carry a pocketbook whenever they appeared in public; and the whole family should attend church on Sundays. Gunderson even encouraged homebuyers to bring their parents to the house contract closing so they could learn the proper decorum for suburban visits.<sup>18</sup>

The Village of Oak Park building permits for Gunderson homes indicate one aspect of the style of the operation of the firm. Large numbers of permits for separate buildings were pulled simultaneously. The homes were built essentially one block at a time. This approach implies that this was an assembly line sort of construction. The firm took great steps to facilitate a more efficient and modern method of construction.

S.T. Gunderson and Sons continued to develop homes in Oak Park and Chicago through the 1920s. Between 1905 and 1920 Gunderson subdivided several tracts of land in south Oak Park and built, financed, and sold more than 600 single family homes for prices ranging from \$4,000 to \$12,000. The Gunderson firm subdivided an Oak Park neighborhood along Columbian and Fair Oaks Avenues north of Augusta Street in 1922; and the Greenfield subdivision at Harlem Avenue and Division Street in 1925. The firm continued to subdivide land in Chicago's Garfield Park neighborhood, and in Elmwood Park north of Oak Park. According to Seward Gunderson's obituary and an oral history with his daughter, Kathryn Gunderson Ratcliff, the firm acted as a realtor in these later subdivisions rather than as a builder.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *Oak Leaves*, January 11, 1945, 47.

<sup>15</sup> Ratcliff, 75.

<sup>16</sup> Park District of Oak Park, Meeting Minutes, 1912-1920.

<sup>17</sup> *Oak Leaves*, July 13, 1950.

<sup>18</sup> Lee Brooke, *Yesterday When I Was Younger...Oak Park, River Forest Oral History*, (Privately printed, 1989), 122.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, and an oral history with his daughter, Kathryn Gunderson Ratcliff, see Lee Brooke, *Yesterday when I was Younger*, 1989.

### Oak Park History

The Great Chicago Fire of 1871 was the catalyst for a population explosion in Oak Park. The population increased from approximately 500 people in 1871 to almost 10,000 people in 1902, when Oak Park severed its ties with Cicero Township and was incorporated as a self-governing municipality. The population continued to grow, doubling every ten years to nearly 40,000 people in 1920. Real estate development and building construction was at a new high between 1906 and 1917. Between 300 and 400 building permits for new homes were issued annually until a peak was reached in 1915. Construction declined until 1918 when only 44 new home permits were issued.<sup>20</sup>

The most dramatic growth in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century occurred south of Madison Street. By 1915 one-third of Oak Park's population lived south of Madison Street.<sup>21</sup> This area, known for its small lots and mass-produced homes on the least expensive land, was the last section of the village to be settled.<sup>22</sup>

The new south side residents were people from Chicago, primarily men who were in business for themselves. Although self-employed, they were in Oak Park's lower income bracket.<sup>23</sup> There was no visible line dividing the north and south sides of the village, yet there were definite distinctions between the two neighborhoods. There were conflicts involving social, economic, and political issues that threatened to divide the community. Many south side residents were dissatisfied with village services and favored annexation to Chicago. Many editorials in the *Oak Leaves* addressed the issues of annexation and the need to provide better services to the south side of the village. In January 1909 an *Oak Leaves* article noted, "by next summer one-third of the total vote of Oak Park will be south of Madison Street."<sup>24</sup> This same article mentioned the improvements made to the south side: new school buildings, branch libraries, and water service. The question of annexation appeared on the ballot in 1910 and 1911 and was defeated both times.<sup>25</sup>

The settlement of the south side of Oak Park has been credited to two turn-of-the-century builders, Thomas H. Hulbert and Seward Gunderson. Both of these builders bought large sections of the "south prairie" and subdivided the land into tracts to construct affordable housing for the workingman and his family. *The Oak Park Reporter Argus* described the building boom:

"Three Hundred New Houses Will Make Village of Prairie Land. The desirability of Oak Park as a residence suburb is becoming more manifest to the people of Chicago and other sections every day ... A few years ago the ... land was one large prairie, with the blue grass waving in the summer breeze. Now the whole territory is dotted with handsome residences."<sup>26</sup>

Hulbert and Gunderson were constructing modest homes that cost from \$3,000 to \$10,000. The houses were bought as fast as they were built and the real estate values in that area increased rapidly.<sup>27</sup> Both builders highlighted the available convenient transportation, from

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<sup>20</sup> Jean Guarino, *Oak Park: A Pictorial History* (St. Louis: G. Bradley Publishing, Inc., 1988), 68.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>22</sup> Arthur Evans Le Gacy, *Improvers and Preservers: A History of Oak Park, Illinois, 1833-1940* (Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1967), 139.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 140.

<sup>24</sup> *Oak Leaves*, January 30, 1909.

<sup>25</sup> Guarino, 68.

<sup>26</sup> *Oak Park Reporter Argus*, May 19, 1906.

<sup>27</sup> Gertrude Fox Hoagland, *Historical Survey of Oak Park, Illinois* (Oak Park Public Library, 1937).

these developments to Chicago, in their advertisements. This attention paid to transportation by both builders demonstrates the development pressure that came from those who wished to move from Chicago to a suburban setting.

The Gundersons established several subdivisions in Chicago and Oak Park between 1889 and 1925.<sup>28</sup> The earliest subdivisions were on the west side of Chicago. The first Gunderson development in Oak Park was the Gunderson and Gaugers addition, platted in 1890, located on Home and Wenonah Avenues between Harrison Street and Roosevelt Road. Gunderson owned this land for fifteen years, waiting for a five-cent railroad fare to Chicago before commencing construction. With his own funds, Gunderson constructed a station of the Metropolitan elevated train line at nearby Maple Avenue for the convenience of the new residents.<sup>29</sup> The houses were quickly sold once construction began in 1905. Gunderson mainly developed the land on Home and Wenonah Avenues between Lexington and Filmore Streets. The exception was seven homes constructed in 1905 at 900, 902, 912, 916 and 920 Wenonah Avenue and 915 and 931 Home Avenue. While several of these Gunderson homes are identical to those on the two blocks to the south, they are not being included in the historic district. This is due to the lack of continuity of building type which separates them from the first development. Most of the two blocks to the north and south of the Gunderson homes were developed over the next 10 to 15 years. The 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows no structures on the southernmost block of this subdivision. Review of permits of this block reveals that the Gunderson firm did not build here.

#### Advertisement

In 1905, S.T. Gunderson and Sons' first development sold out in less than fourteen months, its success no doubt due in part to an extensive advertising campaign. To publicize Gunderson homes Seward Gunderson issued postcards, brochures, and a monthly magazine/pamphlet entitled "Homes: A Magazine for Rent Payers."<sup>30</sup> In his literature, Gunderson portrayed himself as a public servant advancing the cause of traditional virtue. He explained in his brochures that he was able to pass substantial savings on to his customers because of his extensive holdings in the lumber industry. According to his promotional material, the provision of affordable single-family residences was not only an act of good business but also a mission of public service.<sup>31</sup>

The advertisements continued, possibly more standardized, for the sales of the second development. The Gunderson firm had a regular weekly ad in the local newspaper, the *Oak Leaves*. The advertisements touted the benefits of home ownership in lieu of leasing, the benefits of life in the suburbs, the quality of the homes and construction, and the easy accessibility to Chicago. Gunderson endeavored to coax Chicago residents to purchase homes in the suburbs. Potential homeowners were invited to "investigate Gunderson's wonderland of superior modern homes."<sup>32</sup> The *Oak Leaves* frequently dedicated a column to S.T. Gunderson and Sons' reports of recent sales in their subdivision. The list included the address of the property purchased and the name and occupation of the new owner.<sup>33</sup>

Thomas Hulbert handled advertisements similarly for his subdivision just blocks away on South Clinton Street and South Kenilworth Avenue between Madison and Harrison Streets. The two

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<sup>28</sup> Atlas of Township of Cicero, 1917, the *Oak Leaves*, and building permits.

<sup>29</sup> *Oak Park Reporter Argus*, May 19, 1906.

<sup>30</sup> Ratcliff, 73.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.

<sup>32</sup> *Oak Leaves*, undated clipping.

<sup>33</sup> See *Oak Leaves*, October 8, 1910.

builders were obviously in competition for the same clientele. The advertisements were often nearly identical, demonstrating the developers' similar perception of the market. (See attachments for examples.)

Although other builders were using similar sales methods and constructing homes for first-time homeowners, Gunderson stood out because of his social involvement. Gunderson moved his family to a residence in the center of his own subdivision. His brother George, also a member of the firm, lived across the street. The Gundersons were setting the example for future homeowners. Both brothers were very active in Oak Park society.

#### Other Developers

Although the Gunderson firm was innovative, they were not the only firm in Oak Park to use modern mass marketing techniques, advertising, and the appeal of Oak Park churches and schools. Firms such as E.A. Cummings Co., Fred A. Hill, and realtor Frank June had engaged in similar techniques for years and contemporaries like Thomas Hulbert also employed such techniques.<sup>34</sup> Hulbert is often referenced in the same context as Gunderson as their contemporary developments were just blocks from each other. Hulbert employed similar advertising techniques as Gunderson did, with weekly advertisements in *Oak Leaves*. Hulbert advertised his firm's "Built on Honor Houses" in the local *Oak Leaves*, applying the same themes as Gunderson. (See attachments for examples.) Common advertisement enticements included: the quality of workmanship, a reasonable price, a ban on apartment construction, and the liberating value of home ownership. One of the ads for Hulbert homes offered to send a free booklet to potential customers. Although no copies are known to remain at this time, the existence of Hulbert's booklet indicates a similar approach to the Gunderson firm's marketing effort.<sup>35</sup>

Despite similarities with competitors, the Gunderson firm set itself apart by melding good products and coordinated marketing with real acts of community involvement and community building. By living in the subdivision and becoming pillars of the community, the Gundersons came to represent the public image of successful middle-class businessmen.

Other homebuilders in south Oak Park purchased advertisements in the *South Oak Park Directory*. Their ads included photos of American Four Square style homes almost identical to those being built by S.T. Gunderson and Sons. Geo. H. Bartlett, a contractor and builder at 1027 Wesley, used the same photo to advertise his services as Paul Schulte of 947 Wesley did.<sup>36</sup>

This mass marketing technique was not unique to Oak Park or to this time period. As early as the 1880s, real estate developer S.E. Gross developed several working-class subdivisions throughout Chicago. Gross used marketing techniques that Gunderson and his contemporaries would use a few years later. Gross's office churned out colorful pamphlets, catalogs, and broadsides, which were freely distributed to interested customers. The publications emphasized the superiority of homeownership. Gross used his advertising campaigns to idealize the home as the "embodiment of stability, moral development, dedication to family, communion with nature, and protection from the vices of the city."<sup>37</sup> In Gross's subdivisions, the owner had the choice of building his own home or contracting Gross to construct the house from a choice of

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<sup>34</sup> See *Halley's Pictorial Oak Park*, 1898, and Cummings' ad in *Oak Leaves*, June 25, 1906.

<sup>35</sup> Gilmore and Lipo, 20.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>37</sup> Emily Clark and Patrick Ashley, "The Merchant Prince of Cornwall," *Chicago History* (December 1992): 10.

more than 400 house plans. Gross minimized the construction costs by buying mass-produced materials in bulk and building from standardized plans. Many of the house plans Gross used were available in published catalogues.<sup>38</sup> Similar to Gunderson, Gross became a director and shareholder of the Railroad in order to influence the routes, schedules, and fares of the lines to his subdivisions. When Gross developed a planned community west of Chicago (later named Brookfield), he spent \$5,000 to construct a train station on the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad.<sup>39</sup>

#### This development compared to other Gunderson Developments

Most of S.T. Gunderson & Sons housing developments in Chicago were in the West Garfield Park neighborhood of Chicago and centered around Pulaski (4000 West) and what is now the Eisenhower Expressway (I-290). These earlier developments foreshadowed Gunderson's later method of choosing a lot size, building size, and building style appropriate for the place and time. In 1889, the firm constructed simple one-and-a-half story brick gable-front cottages with front porches on Colorado and Lexington Streets between 43<sup>rd</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> Avenues.<sup>40</sup> Colorado Street was demolished for the construction of the expressway in the late 1950s; however, 8-10 of these buildings still remain on Lexington Street.

Approximately twenty similar brick cottages built by the Gunderson firm in 1901 remain on the south side of Lexington between 43<sup>rd</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> Avenues. A 1903 Gunderson development on Harrison and Colorado Streets, between 40<sup>th</sup> and 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenues, again used the same simple brick gable-front cottage; approximately one dozen of these remain on the south side of Harrison Street. They are visible from the Eisenhower Expressway.

The second Gunderson development in Oak Park, located between Harrison and Madison Streets, and Gunderson and South Ridgeland Avenues, was constructed shortly after the first Oak Park subdivision.<sup>41</sup> Gunderson located this subdivision directly north of the Metropolitan Garfield elevated train line, with a station on Gunderson Avenue that connected Oak Park to Chicago. The firm located two branch offices in the core of the neighborhood – one at South Elmwood Avenue and Harrison Street, and one at South Elmwood Avenue and Adams Street. This second subdivision was prominently advertised in the local papers, with weekly advertisements in the *Oak Leaves*.

The lots of the second development are consistently 130 feet deep and 40 feet wide. The development has a 15-foot wide alley to allow access to garages at the rear of the property. Although the majority of the homes have garages, they were not constructed at the time the house was built. All the houses have a uniform setback of 25 feet.

The administration of the firm changed between the first and second developments. S.T. Gunderson and Sons is listed as the owner of the properties on the permits for the first development while the contractor listed is Pillinger Brothers or W.A. Pillinger. The second development lists S.T. Gunderson and Sons as both owner and contractor. The permits of both developments were handled in a similar fashion. In the first development numerous permits were applied for on a single day; only four dates in 1905 are listed for permits for the entire

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>40</sup> Another area, on the west side of 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, between Madison and Harrison Streets, developed by Gunderson in 1889, was apparently demolished to make room for the expressway. All four of these Chicago area development sites discussed herein were identified on the Cicero Township Plat Map of 1917. They were cursorily surveyed by Lesley Gilmore on July 5, 2001.

<sup>41</sup> This second development was listed on the National Register and designated an Oak Park historic district in 2002.



development.<sup>42</sup> Essentially the development was constructed one block at a time. The Gundersons used the same method of permit application for the second development; multiple properties were listed on a single permit.

### Architecture

The architectural and construction style and details were paramount to the Gunderson development formula, just as they were to previous and contemporary developers. The Gunderson firm used popular styles that connoted comfort, stability, and durability to the middle class homeowner. The homes were built as American Four Squares with Prairie School and Colonial Revival style influences.

#### *The American Four Square*

The American Four Square was one of the most popular home types at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Its popularity derived from its highly functional plan and restrained ornamentation, which was the trend after the 1880s. The home is generally two stories high, is set on a raised basement with the first floor approached by steps, has a full-width front porch, and is capped with a pyramidal roof that usually contains at least a front dormer. The interior plan is of four nearly equally sized rooms per floor with a side stairway.<sup>43</sup> The house takes many of its characteristics from the designer homes of the period. The wide eaves, low-sloped roof, porch support piers, and horizontal emphasis are borrowed from the Prairie School style. Its sense of solidity and bulk keeps the house grounded.

Other sub-styles provide interesting detail to the Gunderson Four Square. The *Colonial Revival* influence is evident in the Doric and Ionic columned porches, pyramidal front gable dormers, and front porch balustrades. Oak Park is the home of many landmark examples of the *Prairie* style. Vernacular examples were spread widely by pattern books and popular magazines; they were common in early 20<sup>th</sup> century suburbs throughout the country. Most were built between 1905 and 1915.<sup>44</sup> The Prairie homes in the Gunderson district are of the variety sometimes known as the Prairie Box. This subtype has a low-pitched hipped roof, symmetrical façade, wide eaves, hipped dormers, full-width front porches, and double-hung windows. The entrance, which is either centered or off-center, is the focal point of the façade. This was the earliest Prairie form and developed into the most common vernacular version.<sup>45</sup>

The American Four Square was most popular in the suburbs as a middle class home. Four Square homes were generally not architect-designed but constructed by contractors or builders in tract style subdivisions. In Oak Park the Four Square was the prevalent type on the south side of the village. In contrast, many homes on the north side of the village were designed by architects for upper-middle class residents. The area south of Madison Street was developed by several builders who borrowed elements from houses by Frank Lloyd Wright, George Maher, and E.E. Roberts to incorporate into their Four Square homes.<sup>46</sup>

### Ray Kroc

Known to billions of people as the founder of the McDonald's Restaurant chain, Ray Kroc got his start in life as a resident of Oak Park. Kroc was born in Chicago in 1902 to parents Louis and Rose Kroc. He moved with his family to Oak Park soon after, and by 1908 was living at

<sup>42</sup> Permits are dated April 3, 1905, June 14, 1905, August 18, 1905, and November 27, 1905.

<sup>43</sup> Alan Gowans, *The Comfortable House* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1986), 84.

<sup>44</sup> Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984), 440.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 439.

<sup>46</sup> Elizabeth Dull, "The Domestic Architecture of Oak Park, Illinois: 1900 – 1930" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1973) 12.

1007 Home Avenue in the first Gunderson subdivision. Ray Kroc grew up in this home with his brother and sister, attending Oak Park schools Lincoln Elementary and Oak Park & River Forest High School. He left school at age fifteen after his sophomore year to become a Red Cross ambulance driver. He was admitted to the Red Cross Ambulance Corps by falsifying his age.<sup>47</sup> As the war was over, he returned to Oak Park and attended high school for one semester. He quit school for good and became a jazz pianist playing with orchestras and bands, as well as musical director for radio station WGES in Chicago. One of his discoveries was Sam and Henry, who later became Amos 'n' Andy.<sup>48</sup>

Ray Kroc married at age 20 and took a job with Lily Tulip Cup Co. He sold paper cups for several years before moving to Florida to sell real estate. He returned to Oak Park in 1926 and went back to selling paper cups until 1937. After that, he became the exclusive distributor for a soda fountain machine that could mix five milkshakes at a time.<sup>49</sup> In 1954 he met the McDonald brothers, who ran a restaurant in California. He was impressed by their success and began to franchise their restaurant by opening the first McDonald's franchise in Des Plaines at age 52.<sup>50</sup> He bought out the McDonald brothers in 1961 for \$2.7 million and went on to create the largest restaurant chain in the world.

Ray Kroc lived in Oak Park for almost half his life, and grew up in the first Gunderson development. According to the Oak Park Directories he still lived in Oak Park in 1939 at age 38. It wasn't until he was 52 years old that Ray Kroc became a millionaire with the McDonald's restaurant franchise. Following his success with the McDonald's restaurant, he moved to San Diego, where he owned the San Diego Padres baseball team for many years. In 1971 he received an honorary diploma from Oak Park & River Forest High School, and he donated \$7.5 million to Oak Park charitable organizations in 1972.<sup>51</sup> He died at age 81 in 1984.

### Conclusion

The continued success of the first Gunderson development demonstrates how effectively this builder was able to appeal to the upwardly mobile middle class families seeking homes in Oak Park. Using enticing direct marketing, advertising, and personal salesmanship, the Gunderson firm combined the cost-effectiveness of a large-scale development with the intimacy of choosing a new home from a neighbor. This method of marketing reflected a trend, as contemporary developers in Oak Park were using similar methods to coax potential homeowners from Chicago. The variety of custom-designed features offered by S.T. Gunderson and Sons appealed to the owner's sense of individualism. The Gunderson Homes were the result of the skillful and calculated blend of individualized choices within a framework of a large economy of scale that reduced the consumer's costs. This enabled a working family to buy a sizeable sturdy home for approximately \$3,750 to \$4,000. The Gunderson home is easily identifiable today and recognized as a desirable home. Current real estate ads boast both Gunderson and "Gunderson style" homes located on beautiful tree-lined streets. The enduring association with quality design and construction serve as testimony to Seward Gunderson's philosophy of building quality homes that would last.

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<sup>47</sup> Current Biography, "Kroc, Raymond A.," 1973, p. 230.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 230.

<sup>49</sup> "McDonald's founder Ray Kroc. Chicago Native Dies From Heart Failure at 81," Chicago Tribune, January 14, 1984.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> "OPRFHS 'Small Potatoes' for Hamburger King," Oak Leaves, January 18, 1984.

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**Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission**

# History of Historic Preservation in Oak Park



*Oak Park 2008 (Village photo)*

# It took a village

An overview of historic preservation in Oak Park

By **BOB TREZEVANT**

Contributor

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Bob Trezevant, a retired District 97 teacher and 37-year resident of Oak Park, is a member of the Historical Society of Oak Park-River Forest. Thanks to Frank Lipo, Frank Heitzman, Doug Kaare, John Thorpe, and the late Jeanette Fields for their assistance in compiling this chronology.

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In the fall of 2014 the Oak Park Village Hall was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. An important social factor for its designation is that village hall, completed in 1975, was intentionally located on the east side of the village as a statement to residents that Oak Park would actively resist the resegregation that was rapidly taking place in Austin. It thus became a significant use of architecture to strengthen the stability of the community.

In 1974, four decades earlier, another architectural event took place, the establishment of the Frank Lloyd Wright Home & Studio Foundation. This past spring and summer the Frank Lloyd Wright Trust (the expanded Home & Studio Foundation) honored the 40th anniversary of its beginnings here in Oak Park.

But the historic listing of village hall in 2014 and the founding of the Home & Studio in 1974 are part of the larger story of historic preservation

here. That story begins unfolding in Oak Park as early as 1946, more than a quarter-century before the Home & Studio's founding.

### **Building a tourist trade**

For the architectural heritage story, we can use 1974 as a pivotal date for recounting how Oak Park strove to assure its viability as a community. The main challenge to that viability was the resegregation of the Austin neighborhood of Chicago, immediately to the east of us. We were also facing the economic consequences posed by the development of the far western suburbs, which threatened the viability of our commercial districts. Thirdly, our aging building stock needed protection and restoration.

What Oak Park had going for it was a history of independence and community involvement. By voting in 1952 for a village manager form of government, the village gained control of its own destiny, giving it the flexibility and autonomy it needed to respond to our growing urban challenges. The village board and its many advisory commissions kept the public involved and informed about all aspects of local government.

In addition, nonprofit organizations were formed in response to specific situations. With an established tradition of community involvement, Oak Park had no shortage of volunteers to serve the village and other elected boards. Well-educated citizens through various nonprofit boards and action committees provided their time, expertise, and energy.

Historic preservation became one essential element in stabilizing the community. The preservation story closely paralleled and dovetailed with that of the Fair Housing Movement (1963-1968), the establishment of the Oak Park Housing Center (1972), and the economic initiatives of the Oak Park Development Corporation (1974).

In other words, the preservation movement in Oak Park did not happen in isolation. Given the community's long architectural history and its collection of significant structures, local leaders embraced and helped build the momentum for preservation that was also happening at national, state, and Chicago-area levels. The difference was that we had a much higher concentration of buildings to protect than did most other communities. In addition we had the strong, spontaneous leadership of insightful individuals who could focus on specific causes and coordinate enthusiastic citizen volunteers.

### **Preservation agencies**

No discussion of historic preservation can take place without naming key institutions and programs that define and support that process.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation was established in 1949 and funded by the federal government until the 1990s. As a private, non-governmental agency its role is to encourage preservation and in some cases to actually own historic properties (which has included the Wright Home & Studio). The National Trust also started its National Treasures program (which has included Wright's Robie House), and each year it publishes a list of Most Endangered Historical Places (which has included Wright's Unity Temple).

The National Park Service, an agency within the Department of the Interior, was created in 1916. In 1960 its National Historic Landmark program was established to designate specific buildings as very important to the nation. Illinois has 86 national historic landmark buildings and Oak Park has four. There are about 2,500 of these in the U.S.

In 1966 the National Park Service created the National Register of Historic Places. Oak Park has four national historic districts on the Register and River Forest has one. With the recent addition of village hall, Oak Park

now has 11 separate buildings listed. The National Register of Historic Places includes over 85,000 sites nationwide.

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, in addition to creating the National Register, also set up a program in each state to manage federal and state preservation. Ours is the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.

Similar in function to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois (referred to as Landmarks Illinois) was established in 1971. It, too, is a nonprofit organization for promoting historic preservation.

Lastly, Oak Park's Historic Preservation Commission, originally created as the Landmarks Commission in 1972, maintains its own list of locally significant structures, now numbering about 60. It has designated five local historic districts, four of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## **People power**

Since 1974 hundreds of residents have served on elected and volunteer boards, as well as commissions, committees, and interest groups. Hundreds of have received training as interpreters for the Home & Studio and Unity Temple.

Oak Park and River Forest gave Frank Lloyd Wright a home for the first 20 years of his career. In return he left us a legacy of 33 private homes, the Home & Studio, and Unity Temple. Other architects contributed additional significant structures. The historic preservation of this heritage -- through nonprofit groups, foundations, and national historic designations -- has immeasurably enhanced our communities.

Historic preservation also guarantees that our legacy attractions assure a steady flow of visitors to our communities. In the larger suburban context



the Visit Oak Park agency, centered in the village, includes 150 member organizations from 21 west Cook County communities. Its mission is marketing the Oak Park area to tourists to enhance our economy, with every dollar spent on marketing generating \$8 in revenue. The 21 communities tallied close to 2.5 million visitors in 2013. Oak Park itself had about 282,000, including the Home & Studio, Unity Temple, and the Hemingway sites.

The Frank Lloyd Wright Trust, of course, has its own very effective marketing program. In 2013 the Wright Trust hosted a total of 140,475 people at its five sites in the Chicago area, with 92,075 visitors to the Home & Studio and 3,330 to Unity Temple (in just three months). Our Wright and Hemingway legacy draws a national and international audience.

The Wright Trust uses 650 trained volunteers to meet almost 150,000 site visitors each year, and its programs reach one million virtual visitors around the world.

Volunteers, of course, are always welcome. Private homes are often opened to support local not-for-profit groups such as the Wright Trust, the Pleasant Home Foundation, the Historical Society of Oak Park-River Forest, the Infant Welfare Society, and Parenthesis. The Wright Trust requires 250 volunteers to staff the Home & Studio's schedule, with 65 more for Unity Temple. The annual Wright Plus house walk alone requires about 600 volunteers.

## **Resources**

Your own home may be of more interest than you think. The best way to find out is by obtaining the brochure *Researching Your Oak Park Home: A Citizen's Guide*, published by Oak Park's Historic Preservation Commission and available at village hall, the Oak Park Public Library, and the Historical Society, as well as at <[www.oak-park.us](http://www.oak-park.us)>. At village hall the

contact person is Doug Kaare, the village's staff liaison to our Historic Preservation Commission.

Each of the agencies and organizations mentioned in the Timeline can be researched independently for details by using their respective websites. Each one has its own story and represents the involvement of scores of citizens.

The Oak Park story about historic preservation, now sixty-five years long (1946-2014), is as much about people as about agencies and places. In the timeline each listing has its own back story involving myriad committed citizens, too numerous to name. Only a few people involved in any given endeavor have been singled out. This overview does not do justice to their efforts, but without those efforts we would not be the community we are today. Those leaders provided the imagination and energy that actually created something new in our community by focusing the commitment of many people around them.

The preservation of Oak Park really did take a village.

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GIVING THANKS

# Laying the foundation for historic preservation

A timeline, 1946-Present

By **BOB TREZEVANT**

Contributor

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Bob Trezevant, a retired District 97 teacher and 37-year resident of Oak Park, is a member of the Historical Society of Oak Park-River Forest. Thanks to Frank Lipo, Frank Heitzman, Doug Kaare, John Thorpe, and the late Jeanette Fields for their assistance in compiling this chronology.

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[Editor] What are you thankful for this Thanksgiving? If you live in Oak Park and River Forest and enjoy all these villages have to offer, you are likely thankful for the historic preservation movement, which didn't happen overnight. For an overview see WJ Homes, page 59. But here's the chronology:

1946- Clyde and Charlotte Nooker purchase Frank Lloyd Wright's Home & Studio complex at Chicago and Forest avenues with the intention of restoring it.

1949--The National Trust for Historic Preservation is created.

1950--Noted African-American chemist Dr. Percy Julian moves with his family to Oak Park. Their house is fire-bombed twice, but the family stays.

Decades later one of Oak Park's two new middle schools is renamed for him.

1952--To assure local control, Oak Parkers vote in favor of a village manager form of government to counter extensive machine politics with a non-partisan board of trustees and a professional village manager. The Village Manager Association wins the election in 1953.

1955--Oak Park directly experiences a major aspect of urbanization when the federally-financed Eisenhower Expressway begins cutting through the village. It is completed in 1960.

1956--As an urbanization project, Mies van der Rohe's Crown Hall at the Illinois Institute of Technology is built on the site of the apartment building where Gwendolyn Brooks lived while writing her early poetry. She became the first African-American poet laureate of Illinois, and Oak Park's other new middle school is later renamed for her.

1957--Chicago continues to experience the negative effects of increased urbanization. Red-lining and block-busting, often under the guise of "urban renewal," along with rapidly increasing real estate values, lead to the destruction of neighborhoods and historic buildings. Likewise, in Oak Park a number of private homes and significant buildings are eventually demolished.

1960--The National Park Service starts its National Historic Landmark program.

1964--A week-long "Frank Lloyd Wright in Oak Park" tour program is sponsored by the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. The only Wright building accessible to the public is Unity Temple. Under the leadership of its minister, Rev. Robert Rice, volunteers give tours of the Temple. A map of Wright sites in Oak Park and River Forest is supplied at a cost of \$1.

1965--Clyde and Charlotte Nooker open portions of their Wright property for tours.

1966--The National Park Service establishes its National Register of Historic Places program.

In Chicago, a group of architects bands together to preserve Glessner House. Jeanette Fields, a professional publicist, begins working there and ultimately becomes its director. By 1970 the group founds the Chicago Architecture Foundation. Jeanette creates a training program for docents for Glessner House and the Loop. Her first docent is newly-graduated architect John Thorpe.

*A Guide to the Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright in Oak Park and River Forest, Illinois* is prepared by Barbara Ballinger, director of the Oak Park Public Library, and published by The Prairie School Press.

1968--In response to the Illinois Sesquicentennial Year (1818-1968) the Historical Society of Oak Park-River Forest is formed through efforts of the Oak Park Beautification Committee, chaired by Elsie Jacobsen, and its history committee chair Sandra Nye. Other founders include Warren Stevens, Walter Kester, and Redd Griffin. The group requests space from the Park District of Oak Park. In 1970 the Park District allows it to lease space in the George Maher-designed Pleasant Home (John Farson House). The Park District purchased the property in 1939 from the Herbert Mills family, its second owners. In 2015 the Historical Society will renovate and move to another Oak Park landmark building, the former fire house at 129 Lake Street.

1969--The activist board of the village of Oak Park, having established Oak Park's landmark Fair Housing Ordinance in 1968, realizes the need for a strategic plan that includes preservation of the village's housing stock. They hire city planner Irwin Rohrbach to prepare a comprehensive plan.

Rohrbach, recognizing Oak Park's rich architectural heritage, asks Chicago architects Wilbert Hasbrouck and Paul Sprague (among the founders of the Chicago Architecture Foundation) to survey and identify the village's significant buildings. They find over 300 such sites, noting that Oak Park had more historic structures per capita than any other community in the nation. They urge the creation of a historic district. Rohrbach tells villagers to, "Look to your roots to create your future."

The national convention of the American Institute of Architects is held in Chicago, so a large number of Oak Parkers (individuals, groups, and the Chamber of Commerce) sponsor a month-long "Frank Lloyd Wright Festival." The range of events includes a day-long tour opportunity for people to enter more than just Unity Temple. For the first time, visitors can enter three of the privately-owned Wright homes. (All of the Wright homes in Oak Park and River Forest remain privately owned.) That tour, planned by Helena Gervais representing the Friends of the Library, costs \$2.50 per person, with 1,800 people attending. Awards are given to Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Nooker for their restoration work on the Wright Studio and to Rev. Robert Rice of Unity Temple for welcoming walk-in visitors to the Temple. The press notes the potential of tourism as an industry in Oak Park.

1970--The Oak Park Conservatory at East Avenue and Garfield, built by the Park District of Oak Park in 1929, is rescued from demolition by the Save the Garfield Conservatory Committee, led by Elsie Jacobsen.

Jeanette Fields moves from Hyde Park to Wright's Davenport House in River Forest.

Unity Temple experiences serious structural issues. Dedicated members of the congregation and others begin efforts to preserve and restore it. Unity Temple becomes Oak Park's first national historic landmark.

1972 – The village of Oak Park, with John Gearen as president, approves its first Historic Preservation Ordinance, which leads to the creation of a

Landmarks Commission, chaired by Bob Bell. The Oak Park Historic District, the village's first, is based on recommendations from the 1970 architectural survey.

The Oak Park Housing Center is established by Bobbie Raymond to facilitate the integration of rental housing throughout the entire village and to support integration in the wider housing stock. She and architect Tom Sturr prepare "Live in Oak Park," the first promotional booklet using architecture as an incentive for people to live in an integrated community.

John Thorpe, while a docent for the Chicago Architecture Foundation, starts CAF's walking and bicycle tours of Oak Park and River Forest. These tours continue through 1974.

Mrs. Nooker, the owner of the Wright Home & Studio complex, decides to sell the property. With the looming threat of the structure being demolished or even dismantled and sold off, the Committee to Purchase the Frank Lloyd Wright House and Studio is formed.

1973--The Unity Temple Restoration Foundation is incorporated, with Marion Herzog as chair. As the librarian at the Art Institute's Burnham Library, she assists Grant Manson with his definitive research on Wright's work in Oak Park prior to 1910.

The Oak Park Historic District is renamed the Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture National Historic District when it was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

1974--The Oak Park Public Library, under the direction of Barbara Ballinger, publishes *Frank Lloyd Wright Prairie School of Architecture: A Selection of Materials in the Oak Park Library*.

Jeanette Fields receives a Distinguished Service Award from the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects for her work as executive director of the Chicago Architecture Foundation.

After two years of negotiations led by Art Replogle of the Oak Park Development Corporation, Wright's Home & Studio complex is purchased by a consortium of local banks to take it off the market and put it under the ownership of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Of great assistance in the process is village president Jim McClure. On June 17, 1974, the Frank Lloyd Wright Home & Studio Foundation is incorporated, under the leadership of Dawn Goshorn.

The Home & Studio first opens for tours on July 17, 1974, with Ann Marohn as the first guide. The earliest volunteers hear talks by Don Kalec from the Art Institute faculty and architect Rick Twiss from the Chicago Architecture Foundation. Visiting at the time, Lloyd Wright tells the trainees, "You are to interpret the grammar of the building." Since then, the volunteers at the area's Wright sites are called interpreters, not docents. A formal volunteer training program is set up and tours publicized and coordinated by the new Oak Park Tour Center.

By 1974 Oak Park has one national historic landmark and a restoration foundation to support it, one national historic district, and six National Register sites. River Forest had two Register sites. There have been two Wright festivals that include public tours. Hundreds of citizen volunteers make all of these events possible. The purchase of the Home & Studio completes a 25-year preservation process and sets the stage for the next 40 years of architectural preservation and the beginning of our local tourism industry.

1975--Cheney Mansion is deeded to the Park District of Oak Park.

Oak Park's new village hall, designed by the firm of Harry Weese & Associates, opens at 123 Madison Street. Its location in east Oak Park is



chosen as a statement that no area in the village will be treated differently from any other.

The Home & Studio holds its first local house tour, Ten by Wright, coordinated by Elsie Jacobsen and modeled on the Festival tour of 1969. The annual tour later becomes known as Wright Plus when other architects and styles are included.

The Oak Park Tour Center manages tours of the Home & Studio itself and creates bus and walking tours. The Tour Center also promotes tourism's economic benefits to the village. Cathy Barker, who starts as a volunteer in 1975, becomes the director in 1976.

1976--Paul Sprague's *Guide to Frank Lloyd Wright and Prairie School Architecture* is published by the village of Oak Park, with the support of its Bicentennial Commission and Landmarks Commission.

Frank Lloyd Wright's Home & Studio becomes Oak Park's second national historic landmark.

The local League of Women Voters of Oak Park/River Forest, with Edith Slayton as president, successfully applies to the National Municipal League, which names Oak Park an All-American City. Three community organizations are identified for their leadership roles: the Oak Park Village Mall (Sara Bode, marketing services director) for economic development; the Oak Park Housing Center (Bobbie Raymond, director) for fair housing, and the Frank Lloyd Wright Home & Studio Foundation (Dawn Goshorn, president) for historic preservation.

1977-1987--The restoration of the Home & Studio takes place at a cost of \$3 million. The meticulous planning for it happens between 1974 and 1977. Most of the hands-on work is done by devoted volunteers.

Through the efforts of Jan Dressel, the River Forest Historic District is added to the National Register of Historic Places.

1981--The Oak Park Tour Center opens its first off-site facility, the Visitors Center, in the Forest Avenue parking garage at Forest and Lake. (The structure was razed in 2014.)

The Architectural Guidebook Committee of the River Forest Community Center publishes *A Guidebook to the Architecture of River Forest*, edited by Jeanette Fields.

1983--The Ridgeland/Oak Park Historic District is added to the National Register of Historic Places.

The Ernest Hemingway Foundation of Oak Park is incorporated under the leadership of Jerry Fallon. Original directors are Dwight Austin, Morris Buske, Jeanette Fields, Redd Griffin, and Roy Hlavacek.

1987--After ten years of work, the Home & Studio restoration is complete. The Home & Studio Foundation's Restoration Committee, led by John Thorpe, Bill Dring, Don Kalec, and Carl Hunter, receives two major awards: the American Institute of Architect's National Honor Award and the Chicago Chapter's Honor Award.

1989--To protect the remaining 335 Wright buildings located across the nation (of 435 built), a preservationist group is founded as the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy. Among its original board members are Jeanette Fields, Don Kalec, Sandra Wilcoxon, and Tim Sandvos. The Conservancy's first executive director, Carla Lind, is the former executive director of the Home & Studio.

1990--The Pleasant Home Foundation is incorporated under the leadership of Catherine Deam.

1992--The Ernest Hemingway Foundation, under the guidance of board chair Scott Schwar, purchases the Hemingway Birthplace Home, 339 N. Oak Park Avenue. Providing his services pro bono, restoration architect John Thorpe, leads a team of professional craftsmen and myriad volunteers in the \$1 million restoration. Former village clerk Virginia Cassin supervises the acquisition of period furnishings. The house museum opens in 1993 and is completed in 2001.

John Thorpe receives the Landmarks Illinois Richard D. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Award as a Distinguished Illinois Preservationist.

1993--The village of Oak Park creates the Oak Park Visitors Bureau, which assumes the responsibilities of the Visitors Center facility located in the Forest Avenue garage.

The Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission publishes *Ridgeland Revealed: Guide to the Architecture of the Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District*, edited by Arlene Sanderson.

1994--Jeanette Fields, former executive director of the Chicago Architecture Foundation, receives the Landmarks Illinois Richard D. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Award as a Distinguished Illinois Preservationist.

The village board approves a new historic preservation ordinance, which allows the Historic Preservation Commission to begin designating local historic landmarks. The board also adopts the Historic Preservation Commission's newly created Architectural Review Guidelines and Long Range Historic Preservation Plan.

1996--George W. Maher's Pleasant Home (John Farson House) becomes Oak Park's third national historic landmark.

1997--Because of its success in restoring and showcasing the Home & Studio, the Home & Studio Foundation is asked by the University of

Chicago, which owns Wright's Robie House, to take on that building's management, operations, and restoration.

2000--Wright's Heurtley House on Forest Avenue becomes Oak Park's fourth national historic landmark.

Twenty-five years after its founding, the expanded Home & Studio Foundation changes its name to the Frank Lloyd Wright Preservation Trust.

The Oak Park Visitor Bureau becomes the Oak Park Area Convention and Tourism Bureau.

The Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission creates a new *Guide to Oak Park's Frank Lloyd Wright and Prairie School Historic District*, edited by Molly Wickes.

2001--The Preservation Trust publishes *Building a Legacy: The Restoration of Frank Lloyd Wright's Oak Park Home and Studio*, edited by Zarine Weil.

The Ernest Hemingway Foundation purchases the Hemingway Boyhood Home, 600 N. Kenilworth Avenue, following the death of its long-time owner Eileen Burns.

2002--The Gunderson Historic District (Second Development, north of the Eisenhower) and Scoville Park in Oak Park are added to the National Register of Historic Places.

2003--The Gunderson Historic District (First Development, south of the Eisenhower) is created by the Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission but not listed on the National Register.

2008--The Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy, with John Thorpe on its board, nominates about a dozen Wright buildings across the country to

become UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The two sites in the Chicago area are Robie House and Unity Temple.

2009--The Oak Park Area Convention and Tourism Bureau becomes simply Visit Oak Park and moves its office and Visitors Center to its present location at 1010 Lake St.

The boundaries of the Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District are expanded.

2010 – The village board adopts the Historic Preservation Commission’s new Strategic Historic Preservation Plan to replace the previous long-range plan.

The Preservation Trust gains office space and another tour opportunity at Wright’s Rookery lobby in the Loop, its third site.

Peace Triumphant, the war memorial in Scoville Park, is restored and rededicated.

2011 – The village of Oak Park creates *Historic Resources of Oak Park*, an on-line interactive, Google-map-based inventory of its designated and identified historic properties, which can be found at the following link: [www.oak-park.us/village-services/planning/historic-preservation/historic-resources](http://www.oak-park.us/village-services/planning/historic-preservation/historic-resources).

2012--The Preservation Trust agrees to manage the tours at Wright’s Emil Bach House, its fourth Wright site. Also the Trust purchases the Home & Studio from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The Hemingway Foundation sells the boyhood home to buyers who plan to restore the house to its original single-family home status.

2013--Through an arrangement with the Unity Temple congregation and the Unity Temple Restoration Foundation, the Preservation Trust takes responsibility for the tour program at Unity Temple, bringing to five the number of sites it serves.

Unity Temple restoration efforts get a significant boost with funding from the Alphawood Foundation.

The Frank Lloyd Wright Preservation Trust becomes simply the Frank Lloyd Wright Trust.

2014--The Wright Trust establishes its Legacy Year calendar of events to honor the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Home & Studio Foundation and the 125th anniversary of the building of Frank Lloyd Wright's Home. During the founding years of the Frank Lloyd Wright Trust from 1972 through 1977, about 200 individuals and organizations from Oak Park, the Chicago area, state, and nation-wide are directly involved. The final list of Founders, honored by the Trust on June 17, includes 112 people. Of those, 73 are living and 50 attend. John Thorpe receives a special award from the Trust for his forty continuous years of service.

Oak Park Village Hall, built in 1975, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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The following may be added to indicate the influence of Oak Park related to historic preservation in neighboring communities:

1979--With support from Bobbie Raymond of the Oak Park Housing Center, the Austin-Schock Neighborhood Association is formed in neighboring Austin. For fifteen years, until 1994, it produces an annual house tour centered around the four Chicago landmark houses by architect Frederick Schock, with support for publicity from the village of Oak Park.

1985--The Austin Historic District just east of Oak Park in Chicago is added to the National Register.

2006--The Austin Town Hall Historic District east of Oak Park in Chicago is added to the National Register.

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1992--In conjunction with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Cathy Barker, former director of the Oak Park Tour Center, leads a Maywood community effort to have 14 additional buildings in Maywood placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Funding for the work comes from three house walks in Maywood.

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1993--Oak Parker Alice Sinkevitch, as executive director of the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, edits the *AIA Guide to Chicago*.

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Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission

# Architectural Review Guidelines & Historic Preservation Ordinance



*Unity Temple restoration project 2015 (Village photo)*





# Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission

## GUIDELINES



*The John Farson House known as "Pleasant Home" was designed by prominent Prairie School architect George W. Maher in 1897. It is an important example of early Prairie style and is a Landmark and a contributing property to the Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District.*

### PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES

The Architectural Review Guidelines (Guidelines) are intended to assist property owners with their projects while protecting Oak Park's historic resources for appreciation, education, and enjoyment of today's residents and visitors as well as those in the years to come. The Guidelines provide requirements, best practices, and information, for property owners, design professionals, contractors, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), Village officials, and Village staff. However, every property and project is different. The Guidelines are a reference but should not to replace consultation with qualified architects, contractors, the HPC, and Village staff.

The Guidelines Introduction explains the historic review processes in the Village. The HPC uses the Secretary of the Interior's Standards (10) and Requirements (12) in approving Certificates of Appropriateness for projects. The following Requirements and Guidelines sections are divided by material and resource type. They feature the requirements in green boxes with further explanation and historic preservation guidelines that may be considered for any project on a historic property. If you have any questions, please reach out to Village staff by calling, visiting Village Hall, or emailing [historicpreservation@oak-park.us](mailto:historicpreservation@oak-park.us).

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American Foursquare houses are a prominent piece of Oak Park's heritage, particularly in the Gunderson Historic District.

### IS YOUR PROJECT SUBJECT TO REVIEW?

While Oak Park has a large number of historic buildings and sites, only a portion of them have been officially designated as Landmarks or included in historic districts. Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs) are generally required from the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) for all projects requiring a building permit that are associated with Historic Landmarks, include full or partial demolition of properties in a historic district, or alter historic properties with Village, State, or Federal funding. Certificates of Advisory Review (Advisory Review) are required for some projects within the Village's historic districts that do not necessitate demolition, such as the construction of new buildings.

Although all properties within historic districts are important, they may or may not be considered contributing within the district, depending on their history and integrity. As such, they are classified into two categories:

**Contributing:** resources that are integral components because they are historically or architecturally significant within the context of the surrounding district

**Non-Contributing:** resources that are not historically or architecturally significant within the context of the district (for example, buildings built outside the district's period of significance)

While all properties in a historic district are subject to historic review, non-contributing resources do not require a COA. To find out if your building has been designated, you can reference the map of the historic districts and Landmarks at [www.oak-park.us](http://www.oak-park.us), or speak with staff by calling 708-358-5440, visiting Village Hall, or emailing [historicpreservation@oak-park.us](mailto:historicpreservation@oak-park.us).



Brick apartment buildings line many of the streets in the Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District.

### IF YOU ARE OUTSIDE A HISTORIC DISTRICT

Oak Park's historic buildings are not limited to the historic districts and Landmarks. In fact, the historic character that defines Oak Park can be found throughout the Village. While historic review is not required in these cases, the architects and preservation professionals on the HPC are happy to provide advice on how you can meet your goals for your building while preserving its character defining features. You may even find that your house is eligible to be an Oak Park Landmark. For additional information and resources, please contact Village staff by calling, visiting Village Hall, or emailing [historicpreservation@oak-park.us](mailto:historicpreservation@oak-park.us).



The Dr. Henry Bernhardt Cottage, designed by Jarvis Hunt in 1919, is a Landmark that is not located within a historic district.



*The Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District includes a variety of architectural styles from before, during, and after the Prairie style. The Queen Anne house above depicts one of the styles that preceded and informed the Prairie School architects.*

## OVERVIEW OF THE GUIDELINES & PERMIT REVIEW PROCESS

In most instances, property owners, contractors, and architects will interact with the HPC when applying for a building permit. The HPC reviews building permit applications for exterior alterations, additions, new construction, landmarked interiors, and full or partial demolition of properties located within historic districts or designated as Landmarks.

### Types of Work that Don't Require HPC or Staff Review

- Ordinary maintenance and repairs that do not require a building permit
- Exterior paint colors
- Interior alterations, unless they affect the exterior (e.g. window alterations) or affect Interior Landmarks
- Changes to exterior plantings (e.g. trees)

### Types of Work That Do Require Review

- Change of the exterior appearance of any building, structure, site, or object including additions, alteration, reconstruction, or replacement
- Construction of any new building
- Relocation or demolition of any building, structure, site, object, or improvement
- The addition or removal of signs and awnings on Landmarks

### Types of Work That Can Be Reviewed by Staff

It is important to note that Village staff can approve certain types of projects if they meet certain conditions.

## Nearly 95% of projects are reviewed by staff and never come before the HPC.

Your project can be approved by staff if it meets one of these conditions:

- Consists of interior work only
- Is on a non-contributing resource in a historic district
- Only makes exterior changes that are not visible from the sidewalk or street
- Does not change the existing exterior materials
- Restores the original/historic conditions (this requires documentation)
- Includes only changes that have limited effect on the property

If Village staff approve your project in one of these categories, your permit application will be approved and returned to the Permit Processing Division for completion.

### Projects Requiring HPC Review

Projects requiring review that do not meet the conditions outlined above will likely require review by the HPC or the HPC's subcommittee, the Architectural Review Committee (ARC). This may be a Certificate of Advisory Review or a Certificate of Appropriateness.

## THE TIMING OF YOUR REVIEW

Most building permit applications are reviewed by Village staff within five business days. If a project requires HPC review, the applicant will be asked to submit a COA or Advisory Review application. The HPC meets monthly, so applicants should anticipate approximately thirty days for review. If the HPC requests a change, or if all Village deadlines are not met, the issuance of permits and approvals may take several months.

**Who are the HPC and ARC?** The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) consists of 11 Oak Park residents appointed by the Village President who volunteer their time to evaluate proposals affecting the Village's landmarks and historic districts. At least eight members have demonstrated expertise in a historic-preservation-adjacent field. The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) is a subcommittee consisting of five Commissioners appointed by the HPC Chair.

## CERTIFICATE OF ADVISORY REVIEW

The Advisory Review process generally applies to proposed construction projects within historic districts that do not require a COA and do not meet the requirements for staff approval. For example, Advisory Review is required for the construction of new buildings in historic districts and for new garages on historic properties where a historic garage does not exist. Through Advisory Review, the HPC advises on how a project may best meet these Guidelines.

The Advisory Review process may be started either by submitting a building permit or by contacting Village staff about an intended project. Once the necessary information is received, the applicant will be informed of the next steps. Depending on the scope of the project, Advisory Review may be required from staff, the ARC, or the HPC.

If Advisory Review is required from the ARC or HPC, the applicant must attend a meeting at which the ARC or HPC will provide any relevant recommendations based on these Guidelines. Once these recommendations are received by the applicant, historic review is complete. While applicants are encouraged to take Advisory Review recommendations into account, the review consists of recommendations only. The applicant may choose to make any recommended revisions or may seek permits for the project as originally proposed.

## CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS REVIEW

### When is a COA Required?

A COA is required in order to obtain a building permit for projects involving full or partial demolition of a contributing resource in a historic district, exterior alterations to a Landmark, or alterations to properties with Village funding. Unlike Advisory Review, projects requiring a COA must be completed as approved. Village staff is available to answer questions prior to and throughout the COA process.

### How Does the Review Process Start?

The historic review process may be started either by submitting a building permit or by contacting Village staff about an intended project. Once the necessary information is received, one of the following may occur:

- Staff may expedite approval if work falls within certain set categories (see “Types of Work That Can Be Reviewed by Staff,” page 3).
- Staff may forward the application to the next regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the HPC
- The HPC may review the application and approve it if it meets the Guidelines
- The HPC may review the application and recommend revisions that meet the Guidelines

### How do You Obtain a COA?

If the project requires a COA, the applicant will be notified of the next scheduled HPC meeting and the requirements. Project permits will not be approved until an approved COA is received. The HPC meets monthly and submission materials are due seven days prior to the meeting date. Submission materials are detailed on the COA form and listed in “What You Need to Submit for Your Project” (page 5). If all the necessary information is not submitted, the review will be delayed until all the information is received.

The applicant may be required to submit additional information to assist the HPC with the review. If the HPC finds the proposed work is in accordance with the Guidelines, the COA will be approved.

A COA remains in effect for one year following approval. Any changes to the approved project or requests for time extensions after a COA has been issued will require additional review and approval by the HPC.

### What Happens if a COA is Not Approved?

If the HPC decides that a project does not meet the Guidelines, they may “take no action,” after which the applicant has three options:

1. Submit a revised application that meets the Guidelines,
2. Request a public hearing before the HPC
3. Withdraw the application

If the COA is denied after a public hearing, the applicant can appeal to the Village Board or, if applicable, request a public hearing before the HPC for a Certificate of Economic Hardship.

For a Certificate of Economic Hardship application, property owners must submit a completed application and all required documents for HPC review. Please contact staff for submission requirements and review criteria.



Many of the Village's historic properties, including that pictured above, are located in historic districts.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO SUBMIT FOR YOUR PROJECT

In order for your project to be reviewed as quickly and accurately as possible, all project details should be submitted to Village staff. Submitting a permit application will automatically begin the historic review process. However, you are encouraged to reach out to Village staff to begin the historic review process prior to permit application. Depending on the project and meeting dates, this may help streamline the process.

For ARC and HPC reviews, submission materials must be received by monthly deadlines for inclusion in the meeting agendas. You are welcome to contact Village staff at any point in your project for feedback on the review and materials required. In most cases, submission materials should include the following:

### For Repairs and Replacements

- 1 copy of completed COA form (if applicable)
- Project narrative describing areas and extent of work
- Labeled color photographs showing all exterior project locations
- Samples or manufacturer's brochures of materials to be used (if applicable)
- Any additional information that is requested after your initial consultation or review with staff

### For Alterations, Additions, New Construction, Relocation, and Demolition

- 1 copy of completed COA (if applicable)
- Project narrative describing areas and extent of work
- Labeled color photographs showing all exterior views of building or structure, the surrounding site, adjacent

properties and properties across the street

- Drawings indicating existing conditions, proposed changes, and new work. Include existing and proposed floor plans and elevations, a roof plan, and details or sections. Label all new materials to be used.
- Samples or manufacturer's brochures of materials of proposed materials
- Any additional information that is requested after your initial consultation or review with staff

For COA applications, a detailed list of requirements is found on the back of the COA form. If you have any questions about the submission requirements or process, please contact Village staff for assistance.



The Nathan G. Moore House is one of 25 buildings in the Village designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. It is a contributing building within the Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District.

## WORKING WITHOUT A PERMIT

Projects should not be started without appropriate permits. Projects started without permits will be stopped while appropriate approvals are received. Revisions to work may be required by the HPC in order to comply with the Guidelines.

Any work subject to HPC review that does not have the necessary approvals is subject to penalties listed in Oak Park's Historic Preservation Ordinance. This can include both civil remedies and criminal prosecution, with fines up to \$500 per day for a violation. Please contact Village staff with any questions.

## BEST PRACTICES FOR ALL PROJECTS

(Refer to individual Appendix C for a complete list of requirements.)

### Maintenance

- Preserve original materials on historic structures as long as possible through regular maintenance
- Avoid replacing original materials with new materials whenever possible
- Refer to *Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance* and topic-specific sections for additional maintenance information

### Repairs & Replacement

(Listed in order of preference)

1. Perform careful repairs -- focused specifically on damaged or deteriorated areas -- to preserve and protect the building's most important materials and features
2. Replace damaged historic materials and features with matching materials to the greatest extent possible, reproducing the original features and matching the original material, size, scale, finish, profile, detailing, and texture
3. Use compatible materials and techniques to create a new feature that is similar to the original feature in design, color, texture, finish, and overall appearance

### Alterations & Renovations

- Preserve the overall character and appearance of historic resources with new construction that is compatible and sympathetic to the original construction
- Provide compatible design elements, materials, details, and finishes
- Construct additions at rear or side elevations wherever possible, so they are secondary to the historic building in size and location, and compatible with the design of both the property and the surrounding neighborhood
- Construct additions in a way that does not radically change, obscure, damage, or destroy any historic building materials
- Refer to *Guidelines for New Construction & Additions in a Historic Context*

### Sustainable "Green" Building & Preservation

- Restore and reuse existing buildings and materials rather than building new
- Restore and utilize passive heating and cooling features such as exterior shutters or awnings to minimize solar heat gain, or natural ventilation through existing transom windows and vertical features such as corner towers
- Supplement inherently sustainable features with today's sustainable technology such as insulation and storm windows
- Utilize recycled and sustainable materials
- Install alternative energy sources such as solar panels or wind turbines in areas not visible from the street

### Demolition or Relocation of Structures

- Evaluate the significance of the historic resource (for example, the house may be a contributing resource within a historic district or a Landmark)
- Explore all options to reuse the historic resource before considering relocation or demolition

*The property owner shall not:*

- Demolish historic resources in whole or in part unless they consist entirely of a non-historic addition or portion of the building (such as a non-historic door) and will not negatively affect historic portions of the property or neighboring properties
- Demolish buildings or portions of buildings unless they consist entirely of a non-contributing resource that is not a Landmark and the demolition will not negatively affect historic portions of the property or neighboring properties
- Demolish all or part of a building or structure without a building permit or demolition permit

## MAINTENANCE IS PRESERVATION

Regular maintenance helps preserve historic resources, protects real estate values and investments, and keeps Oak Park an attractive place to live, work, and visit. Lack of regular upkeep can result in accelerated deterioration of building elements. In the case of historic buildings, these elements are often character-defining features that are difficult and costly to replace. Long-term lack of maintenance can seriously affect a building's structure, resulting in expensive repairs.

Buildings and sites should be regularly inspected to identify potential problems. If problems are detected early, minor maintenance may not only improve a property's overall appearance and value, but also can prevent or postpone extensive and costly future repairs. Regular maintenance items typically include cleaning gutters and painting exterior woodwork. Refer to the *Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance* for additional information.



*Replacement of exterior building materials such as roofing can maintain a weather-resistant enclosure and protect a home's interior.*

## REPAIR & REPLACEMENT

When it is no longer feasible to maintain historic features, repair or replacement may be required. Repairs maintain the existing building while making it weather-resistant and structurally sound. If repair is not possible, replacement in kind is encouraged. These activities can prevent or postpone extensive and costly future repairs.



*The Cheney Mansion, a former residence, is now publicly owned and used for special events and functions.*

## ALTERATIONS & RENOVATIONS

Alterations and renovations can include modifications to existing buildings that improve the quality of life for the occupants, such as installing a new window opening within a wall or adding a railing to a porch. They are sometimes needed to ensure the continued use of a building, but have the potential to alter the character of historic properties. When considering alterations or renovations, great care should be given to the original building and its relationship to the alteration or renovation.



*Enclosing a porch to provide more habitable space is an example of an alteration.*

## NEW CONSTRUCTION & ADDITIONS

Additions and new construction within a historic district or to a landmark can dramatically alter the appearance of a property and the surrounding district. An exact reproduction of historic buildings is not required or desired. Contemporary design compatible with the historic buildings and their surroundings is encouraged. Great care should be taken when proposing an addition or new construction in a historic district or to a landmark. Refer to *Requirements for New Construction & Additions within a Historic Context*.



*Retaining and maintaining serviceable historic materials, such as windows, is often a more sustainable approach than replacing them with new materials. This is particularly true if the windows are replaced with vinyl or other modern alternatives.*

## **SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE & PRESERVATION**

Sustainable architecture is a goal that both property owners and design professionals strive for in an effort to minimize the carbon footprint associated with buildings. Both preservationists and green building advocates acknowledge there is embodied energy in existing buildings that, if retained, can minimize the environmentally costly process of demolishing and transporting existing building materials to landfills, in addition to manufacturing, transporting, and installing new materials.

Historic buildings were often designed with sustainable features such as passive heating and cooling as well as daylight illumination. When effectively restored and used, these features can bring about substantial energy savings. In addition, today's sustainable technology, such as insulation and storm windows, can supplement inherently sustainable features without compromising unique historic character. It is generally agreed that sustainability begins with preservation.

Although retaining historic building materials is inherently sustainable, the HPC has worked with the Oak Park Environment and Energy Commission to provide sustainable recommendations throughout the Guidelines, if you are interested in trying to minimize your carbon footprint.

## **DEMOLITION OR RELOCATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES**

The demolition or relocation of historic resources within a historic district or on landmark is considered a drastic action since it can alter the character of the streetscape and surrounding buildings. Once resources or buildings that contribute to the heritage of the community are destroyed, they cannot be replaced. Similarly, if a building is relocated from its historic context, the character of the area is changed.

Both demolition and relocation could represent a lost educational resource for the community whether the building was an example of past construction techniques, or has associations with a significant architect, individual, or event in history. As a result, demolition or relocation of buildings or structures within a historic district or on a landmark is rarely considered to be an appropriate option. Please contact Village staff to clarify whether a COA is required for a proposed demolition or relocation project. Refer to *Requirements for New Construction & Additions within a Historic Context*.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Historic Preservation Commission would like to thank the following groups who helped make these Architectural Review Guidelines possible:

**Village of Oak Park - Board of Trustees**

**Historic Preservation Commission Staff Liaison**

**Environment & Energy Commission Guidelines Focus Group**

**Business Districts, Inc.**

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### **PREPARATION**

Components of the Architectural Review Guidelines, including text, graphic design, photography, and illustrations, were prepared by:

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Principal-in-Charge: Dominique M. Hawkins, AIA



# Historic Preservation and Oak Park's Historic Districts

The Village of Oak Park is known internationally for its architecture and nationally for its role as an early American suburb. Oak Park is known particularly for being the home of Frank Lloyd Wright from 1889-1909 and consequently holding the largest concentration of Prairie School architecture in the world, including 25 designs by Wright. Early historic preservation efforts ensured that the legacy of Wright and other local architects, as well as the story of Oak Park's development, was preserved for generations to come. Oak Park's Historic Preservation Commission was established in 1972, just six years after the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act (1966), putting Oak Park not just at the forefront of modern residential design but historic preservation efforts in America. Oak Park's first historic district, the Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District, was created by the Village in 1972 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1973.

Today, Oak Park has three historic districts listed both locally and nationally, as well as over 70 local landmarks. Oak Park's architecture tells the story of a developing Chicago suburb and an evolution in American design at both the high style and vernacular levels (the work of Wright and the Prairie school lead directly to the American Foursquare house form, also known as the "Prairie Box"). Oak Park's architecture is also the fabric of the community and an integral part of Oak Park's identity. You are invited to get to know your historic district through the summaries below. Additional information, including historic district maps, may be found online, as well as by reaching out to Village staff.

## FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT-PRAIRIE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE HISTORIC DISTRICT

**Period of Significance:** ca. 1865-1941



*The Rollin Furbeck House, by Frank Lloyd Wright, is a local landmark and contributes to the Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District.*

The Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District contains a wide range of

architectural styles from before, during, and after the Prairie style that serve as a visual documentation of Oak Park's evolution from a rural village to an urban suburb. The district is not only the world's largest concentration of residences by architects collectively known as the Prairie School, it also offers excellent examples of other architectural styles including the Queen Anne, Stick, Italianate, Shingle, Gothic Revival, Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, Art Deco, and Craftsman styles.

The district was listed locally in 1972 and on the NRHP in 1973. It is generally bounded by Division Street on the north, Lake and Ontario Streets on the south, Ridgeland Avenue on the east, and Harlem Avenue on the west. It consists of approximately 2,000 buildings, of which about 1,700 are considered contributing within the district.

*The Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District is significant in part for its*



*integration of single-family housing with early 20<sup>th</sup> century apartment buildings.*

## RIDGELAND-OAK PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT

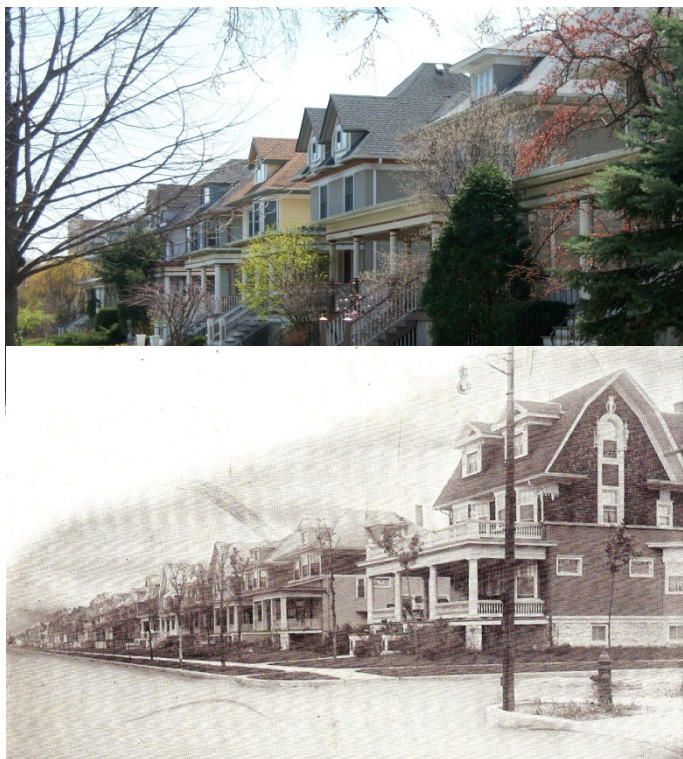
**Period of Significance:** 1870-1929

The Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District spans the decades from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, illustrating a major evolution in domestic architecture including the shift from wood to stucco exteriors and development of neighborhood design including parkway lawns. Single-family residence areas are bounded by streets lined with brick apartment buildings. Also included in the district are many of Oak Park's finest civic, religious, and commercial buildings. The largely successful attempts during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to plan, order, and regulate the merging of the urban apartment building form and the suburban single-family neighborhood in the district represents a significant precedent in American community planning. Oak Park was part of a national trend in the creation of such architectural and planning precedents.

The district was listed on the NRHP in 1983 and locally in 1994. It has irregular boundaries, but is generally bounded by Austin Boulevard on the east, Harlem Avenue on the west, Madison Street on the south, and South Boulevard, Superior Street, and Lake Street on the north. Of the approximately 1,700 buildings within the district, nearly 1,500 contribute to its historic and architectural character.

## GUNDERSON HISTORIC DISTRICT

Period of Significance: 1906-1920



*The Gunderson Historic District consists of a turn-of-the-century development built by S.T. Gunderson & Sons. Below: 1906 photo courtesy of Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest.*

The Gunderson Historic District consists of single-family and two-flat apartment buildings developed by the firm S.T. Gunderson & Sons during the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The single-family houses are predominately American Foursquare types. All of the buildings are individualized with original detailing in the Colonial Revival, Arts & Crafts, or Prairie style. The sameness of house style, identical setbacks, and other common features of the subdivisions foreshadow later suburban development. They were designed to provide homeownership to a burgeoning middle class. This meant building a community that emphasized both the proximity and good transportation to the jobs of nearby Chicago and the amenities of a high-class suburban community including excellent schools, plentiful churches, and other desired services.

The district was listed on the NRHP in 2002 and was recognized locally in 2003. It consists of two discrete subdivisions. The northern subdivision is roughly bounded by Gunderson Avenue, Madison Street, Ridgeland Avenue, and Harrison Street. The southern subdivision is roughly bounded by Wenonah Avenue, Lexington Street, Home Avenue, and Fillmore Street. Nearly all of the buildings in the Gunderson Historic District were built by S.T. Gunderson & Sons and are considered contributing to the district.

## OAK PARK'S LANDMARKS

A building that has architectural or historic significance may be designated as an Oak Park Landmark, a special category created under the 1994 Historic Preservation Ordinance. Owners of Landmarks may obtain professional advice and tax incentives, which enable to continued preservation of the integrity of their buildings while fostering continued contemporary uses. Oak Park has over 70 Landmarks. These landmarks include a wide range of buildings that tell a variety of stories in design and history. They include such buildings as the Oak Park Conservatory, Frank Lloyd Wright's Home & Studio, Pilgrim Congregational Church, and a variety of other buildings ranging in use from commercial to apartment buildings and single-family residences. A list of landmarks is available on the Village website and in the Historic Preservation Ordinance. If you have any questions about the status of a building, or are interested in nominating a landmark, please contact Village staff.

## GET TO KNOW YOUR HISTORIC HOUSE

Oak Park has numerous resources to assist those interested in learning more about their neighborhoods and even specific houses. Each historic building is a thread in Oak Park's rich tapestry of history and has a story to tell. Perhaps your house contributes to the broader significance and understanding of one of Oak Park's existing historic districts. Or perhaps your house's story is yet to be discovered. The Village of Oak Park keeps historic building permits (1902-present) and historic preservation files that can be referenced for research purposes. If you are interested, please reach out to Village staff for more information. The Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest and the Oak Park Public Library also contain invaluable resources.



*Oak Park Landmark, the John Schmidt House, was built ca. 1872 and renovated by prominent local architect E.E. Roberts in 1908.*



## APPENDIX A: ESTABLISHING HISTORIC CONTEXTUAL CHARACTER

The purpose for architectural review is to protect the unique visual qualities of a building and its site that define their sense of history from inappropriate proposed alterations that will reduce that sense. This is essential to retaining the historic integrity of both individual properties and the historic districts as a whole. The basic principles of review are to determine that the following qualities of the building and site are compatible with both the building in question and its neighborhood context:

- 1. Siting**
- 2. Massing**
- 3. Scale**
- 4. Materials**
- 5. Street rhythm**

Prior to review of any project, the Historic Preservation Commission will establish the historic character of the property being reviewed and its context through study of the drawings and visits to the site. To establish the inherent historic character of the building, the historic district, or the immediate neighborhood of the building in question, the Commission will determine the following:

### **1. Siting**

- a. Landscape style
- b. Major tree locations
- c. Building setbacks
- d. Garage and automobile access
- e. Driveways
- f. Fencing

### **2. Massing**

- a. Building height to width ratio
- b. Rhythm of facade opening spacing
- c. Major divisions of street facade into 'bays'
- d. Overall plan shape
- e. Roof shapes
- f. Roof slopes
- g. Chimney location (center, ridge, slope)
- h. Roof overhangs
- i. Ratio of solid to void in façade (i.e., window openings to wall)
- j. Height to width ratio of windows

### **3. Scale**

- a. Lot width to building width
- b. Number of stories
- c. Size of material textures

### **4. Materials**

- a. Roofing materials
- b. Gutters and downspouts
- c. Wall materials
- d. Trim around windows and doors
- e. Colors of roof, walls, and trim
- f. Decorative cornices
- g. Window types (double hung, casement, leaded glass, Palladian)
- h. Door types (flush, paneled, glazed)
- i. Porch types (partial, full, wrap-around, screened, enclosed, none)

### **5. Street rhythm**

- a. Historic styles in the area
- b. Building massing of adjacent buildings
- c. Roof shapes of adjacent buildings
- d. Roof slopes of adjacent buildings



# Village of Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission

## APPENDIX B: SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

### **SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION**

The following *Standards for Rehabilitation* were developed in 1995 by the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior ([www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab)). They are the national standard to guide rehabilitation work on historic buildings and sites. They are used by the Village of Oak Park's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) when making its recommendations.

*Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions, while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.*

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archaeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the historic property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

**Rehabilitation as a Treatment:** When repair and replacement of deteriorated features are necessary, when alterations or additions to the property are planned for a new or continued use, and when its depiction at a particular period of time is not appropriate, rehabilitation may be considered as a treatment. Prior to undertaking work, a documentation plan for rehabilitation should be developed.

### **HOW THESE STANDARDS APPLY TO A PROJECT**

The *Standards* are part of the Oak Park Architectural Review Guidelines and are used by the Historic Preservation Commission in determining the appropriateness of a project. If you have questions about how the *Standards* apply to a specific project, please contact Village staff to discuss.



# Village of Oak Park

## Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission

### APPENDIX C: REQUIREMENTS

#### OAK PARK HISTORIC PRESERVATION REQUIREMENTS

Requirements are summarized in the following pages. For more detailed information, including best practices and recommendations, see the corresponding sections in the Guidelines. Requirements follow by section:

1. Masonry or Stucco Projects Reviewed by the HPC
2. Exterior Wood Siding & Trim Projects Reviewed by the HPC
3. Window Projects Reviewed by the HPC
4. Door Projects Reviewed by the HPC
5. Porch, Balcony, or Deck Projects Reviewed by the HPC
6. Roofing Projects Reviewed by the HPC
7. New Construction, Addition, & Demolition Projects Reviewed by the HPC
8. Commercial Building Projects Reviewed by the HPC

#### 1. REQUIREMENTS FOR MASONRY OR STUCCO PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC

##### *Property Owners Shall:*

- Stabilize deteriorated or damaged masonry as a preliminary measure prior to undertaking appropriate preservation work.
- Retain historic masonry, trim and ornament.
- Repair stucco by removing the damaged material and patching with new stucco that duplicates the old in strength, composition, color and texture. Do not remove sound stucco or repair with new stucco that is stronger than the historic material or does not convey the same visual appearance.
- Selectively replace damaged or missing materials with new materials that match the original in size, shape, texture, color and overall appearance.
- Replace damaged or deteriorated original materials with the same size, shape, texture, color, pattern, material and overall appearance.
- Replace damaged or missing materials with new materials that are similar to the original in size, shape, texture, color, pattern and overall appearance if repair of the original is not possible.
- Repair masonry features by patching, piecing-in, or otherwise reinforcing the masonry using recognized preservation methods. Use proven mortar mixtures for historic buildings.
- Duplicate mortar joints in width and profile.

##### *Property Owners Shall NOT:*

- Remove or encapsulate masonry, trim or decorative features that characterize a property.
- Install artificial siding or stucco over masonry.
- Install alternatives to masonry and trim unless they match in exposure, thickness and detailing.
- Add detail or ornament not appropriate to the building type or style without historic documentation.
- Remove or replace masonry that could be stabilized, repaired and conserved; or use untested consolidants and untrained personnel, thus causing further damage to fragile materials.
- Sandblast masonry using abrasives.
- Use high-pressure water to blast masonry.
- Clean masonry with chemical products that will damage masonry
- Repoint with mortar with a high cement content that is stronger than the historic material, causing damage due to expansion.

- Use electric saws and hammers to remove deteriorated mortar from joints, as the joints can become overcut and brick may be damaged.
- Repoint with synthetic caulk or sealant.
- Paint, stucco or apply other coatings over masonry materials that have not historically been painted

## **2. REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTERIOR WOOD SIDING & TRIM PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC**

### **Exterior Wood Siding & Trim Repair & Replacement**

*Property Owners Shall:*

- Retain historic wood siding, trim and ornament.
- Selectively replace damaged or missing materials with new materials to match the original material in size, shape, texture, color and overall appearance.
- If the damage or deterioration of the original material is beyond repair, completely replace damaged or missing materials with new materials to match the original in size, shape, texture, pattern, color and overall appearance.
- If replacement matching original material is not possible, replace the damaged or missing materials with new materials that are similar in size, shape, texture, pattern, color and overall appearance with a paintable finish.

### **Substitute Exterior Wood Siding & Trim Materials**

*Property Owners Shall NOT:*

- Remove or encapsulate siding, trim or decorative trim features that characterize a property including siding, shingles, window and door trim, brackets, cornices, eaves, rafters, spindles, corner boards, columns, posts, etc.
- Install artificial siding or stucco over existing exterior wood siding or trim.
- Install alternatives to wood siding and trim unless they match in exposure, thickness, detailing and have a paintable smooth finish and not a wood- grained finish.
- Add detail or ornament not appropriate to the building type or style without historic documentation.

## **3. REQUIREMENTS FOR WINDOW PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC**

*Property Owners Shall:*

- Retain and repair original or historic windows, including decorative windows, which are visible from the street.
- Repair historic windows using the same materials constructed in the same configuration, size, and shape as the original.
- Replace deteriorated or rusted frame or mullion sections of steel windows using the same metal to match size, configuration, and finish of original.
- Retain and repair historic storm windows that are visible from the street.
- Match the muntin configuration and profiles of existing historic windows when replacement windows are used.
- Use true-divided lights (individual panes of glass) or simulated-divided lights (muntins permanently fixed to both the interior and exterior of the glass) when replacement windows are used.
- Design and detail of replacement window should be based on an existing example or documented historic appearance, or should be appropriate to the style.
- Make new windows look like the historic windows from the street, and match critical details such as size, shape, operation, glass (muntin) configuration, profiles, material, and finish. They should operate in the same manner as the historic windows and should be the same material.

- Replace a wood window with the same material, which may be vinyl or aluminum clad on the exterior. If the window is a simple 1-over-1 sash with non-ornamental frames, the new material may not have to match the original materials.
- Replace historic metal windows with new metal windows. Sash and frame profiles and finish should appear the same as the historic window from the street.
- Match the muntin configuration and profiles of replacement windows with existing historic windows. The windows should have true-divided lights (individual panes of glass) or simulated-divided lights (muntins permanently fixed to both the interior and exterior of the glass). Snap-in or removable muntins are not appropriate.

*Property Owners Shall NOT:*

- Remove or encapsulate window trim features that characterize a property.
- Remove historic decorative windows unless irreparably damaged and documented.
- Use snap-in or removable muntins, or flat muntins between panes of glass, when replacement windows are used.
- Install Plexiglas, acrylic, Lexan, or similar types of plastic glazing materials in place of historic glass that is visible from the street, unless documented that these products were used in the historic window.
- Install glass block as new or replacement windows that are visible from the street unless it is characteristic of the style of the building. If historic glass block is replaced, it shall be replaced with new glass block with similar shape, color, reflectivity and texture as the historic material.
- Close up or conceal historic windows or openings on the front façade. A side window which is visible from the street may be covered with a finished wall on the interior of the window if permitted by Code.
- Add new window openings to the front façade, unless documented that they previously existed. New windows which are similar to the proportion, size, shape, details, and materials of existing windows may be added in locations where none existed before, but only on side or rear façades of the building.
- Install skylights or roof windows that are substantially visible from the street.
- Use muntins in a replacement window if they were not used in the original window. In absence of historic evidence, they should only be used if characteristic of the style of the building.

## **4. REQUIREMENTS FOR DOOR PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC**

*Property Owners Shall:*

- Retain and repair original or historic doors that are visible from the street.
- Repair historic doors using the same materials constructed in the same configuration, size, and shape as the original.
- Retain and repair historic storm and screen doors that are visible from the street.
- Design and detail of replacement door should be based on an existing example or documented historic appearance, or should be appropriate to the style.
- Make new doors look like the historic doors from the street, and match critical details such as size, shape, operation, glass (muntin) configuration, profiles, material, and finish. They should operate in the same manner as the historic doors and should be the same material.

*Property Owners Shall NOT:*

- Remove or encapsulate door surround features that characterize a property.
- Add new door openings to the front façade, unless documented that they previously existed. New doors which are similar to the proportion, size, shape, details, and materials of historic doors may be added in locations where none existed before, but only on side or rear façades of the building.

## **5. REQUIREMENTS FOR PORCH, BALCONY, OR DECK PROJECTS REVIEWED**

## BY THE HPC

### *Property Owners Shall:*

- Maintain and repair historic porches and balconies which are visible from the street.
- Replace existing porches and balconies that have deteriorated or become badly damaged in the same size and shape with appropriate new materials.
- Replace deteriorated wood elements with another material, if the dimensions, appearance, size, profiles, texture, and finish match the historic elements.
- Paint new and existing wood on porches and balconies that are visible from the street, unless it can be documented that the original wood was unpainted or stained. Unpainted pressure-treated wood is not permitted in locations that are visible from the street.
- If opening a previously enclosed porch, property owners shall restore historic porches to their appearance during the period of significance unless the enclosure, by nature of its age, architectural significance, or other special circumstance has achieved historic significance of its own.
- Install removable wood-framed seasonal storm windows or screens rather than permanent and scale-changing storm and screens.
- If constructing a new porch, property owners shall construct proposed new porches to be similar to historic porches which have been removed with regard to size, style and detail, to the extent that such historic porches can be documented. Where inadequate documentation exists for the original porch, proposed new porches shall be typical of those built in the style of the historic building. Enclose porches as long as the changes are readily reversible and no character-defining features or architectural elements are damaged or obscured by the enclosure.

### *Property Owners Shall NOT:*

- Alter historic porches and balconies in such a manner that the characteristics of the style of the porch are lost, obscured or modified.
- Introduce new decorative elements that were not historically part of the porch or balcony.
- Destroy or conceal important architectural features or details.

## 6. REQUIREMENTS FOR ROOFING PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC

### **Substitute Roof Materials**

#### *Property Owners Shall:*

- Install roofing materials (not siding materials) on steep roof slopes.

### **Roof Repair & Replacement**

#### *Property Owners Shall:*

- Repair rather than replace historic roofing materials.
- Selectively replace damaged or missing historic materials with new materials that match the original material in size, shape, texture, color and appearance.
- Replace damaged or deteriorated materials with new materials that match in size, shape, texture, pattern, color, material and appearance.
- If repair of the original material is not possible, replace damaged or missing materials with new materials that are similar in size, shape, texture, pattern, color and appearance.

### **Roof Accessories**

#### *Property Owners Shall:*

- Retain and repair the historic drainage system and its appearance.

### **Roof Features**

#### *Property Owners Shall NOT:*

- Alter the original roof form, shape, or slope, unless reversing non-historic changes.



- Remove historic, character-defining roof features such as chimneys, dormers, cupolas, weathervanes, or finials.
- Add or alter rooftop features visible from the street that change the roof configuration including roof windows, roof decks, and chimney stacks.
- Add rooftop features that create a false sense of history (weathervanes, cupolas, wood shingles to replace an original slate roof) without producing supporting evidence.
- Add new features or modern amenities that are visible from the street and do not match the roof's character, scale, materials, or detailing. This includes satellite dishes and antennas, skylights, vents, mechanical equipment, and telecommunications equipment; and renewable energy sources such as solar panels, wind turbines.
- Cover decorative elements such as cornices and brackets with vinyl or aluminum capping or siding.

## **7. REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION, ADDITION, & DEMOLITION PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC**

### **Additions**

#### *Maintaining Historic Character*

- An addition shall not change the historic character of the historic building.
- An addition shall be compatible with the historic building to which it is attached, including siting, massing, scale, materials and street rhythm.
- An addition shall not remove character-defining features, historic windows, historic siding or other historic material from the historic building that are visible from the street.
- Exterior finish materials of the addition shall be compatible with that of the historic building.
- An addition shall protect the historic character of the building by making a visual distinction between the historic building and addition.

#### *Size and Configuration - Horizontal Additions*

- The size, configuration and massing of all additions shall be such that when viewed from the street, the addition does not visually overpower the historic building.
- Additions shall be constructed only on a rear or side façade so that the historic building retains its prominence as the primary structure viewed from the street.
- The shape and slope of roofs on an addition shall be compatible with those of the historic building.

#### *Size and Configuration - Vertical Additions*

- If a new floor or floors are added to a building, they shall be set back from the front façade an appropriate distance so as not to visually overwhelm the primary façade of the historic building.
- The overall massing and scale of a vertical addition shall be compatible with the scale of the neighboring buildings.
- The entire roof of a historic building shall not be raised vertically to provide attic headroom so that the attic would appear to be an additional floor.
- The shape and slope of roofs of an addition shall be compatible with those of the historic building.

#### *Size and Configuration - Dormer Additions*

- Any individual dormer visible from the street shall not cover more than 50% of the roof plane on which it sits. If more than one dormer is added, the aggregate configuration of all dormer additions shall not appear to add another floor to the existing building when viewed from the street.
- Dormer roof design shall be compatible with the slope of the main roof or be a slope and configuration characteristic of the style of the house.
- Every dormer shall have at least one window. Dormer windows shall be compatible with those used in the historic building.
- Exterior finish materials of dormer additions shall be compatible with that of the historic building.

### ***New Construction - Including Garages***

- New construction shall be compatible with the adjacent buildings and the historic district as a whole.
- New garages shall be accessed from the alley where alleys exist at the rear of any house. Where driveways and curb cuts exist, do not widen.
- New garages shall be compatible with the style, size, material, roof profile and details of the primary historic building on the lot.
- When a demolition of a significant accessory structure occurs, the new structure should closely resemble it to the greatest extent possible.

### ***Demolition and Relocation***

- Landmarks and contributing resources in historic districts shall be retained and repaired in their original location.
- Historic accessory buildings and structures, such as garages and coach houses, which are visible from the street shall be retained and repaired in their original location.
- In cases of demonstrated economic infeasibility, demolition or relocation of contributing resources in historic districts and historic accessory buildings visible from the street can be considered at the discretion of the Commission.

## **8. REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDING PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC**

### **Building Features**

#### *The Property Owner Shall:*

- Retain historic entrance stairs and doors.
- Retain residential characteristics of residences converted into commercial buildings (or vice versa).
- Retain and repair all character-defining features and decorative elements such as cornices and trim.
- Provide parking areas to the side and rear of buildings or along secondary elevations or streets whenever possible.
- Maintain the rhythm, size and shape of window and storefront openings and associated trim and moldings.

#### *The Property Owner Shall Not:*

- Infill or alter historic window, door or storefront openings visible from the street.
- Install any material other than clear glass within a display window.
- Introduce a new storefront or element that alters or destroys historic building materials.
- Enclose or remove elements such as building cornices and storefronts.
- Install stylistic or design elements from periods that are different from the storefront or building and do not complement the overall character.
- Install HVAC systems or louvers that are visible from the street.
- Remove, damage or alter historic architectural building features for the installation of signs and awnings.
- Install exposed conduit, junction boxes and raceways for channel letters or sign lighting.
- Remove, relocate, or modify architectural features to accommodate garage doors and openings.
- Install walk-up services such as Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) that include the removal of historic building fabric or negatively impact the historic character of the building.

### **Signs & Awnings**

#### *The Property Owner Shall:*

- Repair historic signage and awnings with materials to match the original whenever possible.
- Align awnings within storefront bays.

- Locate signs in traditional or historic signage locations. If no documentation is available, the size, materials and locations of new signs and awnings should be appropriate for the character of the building.

*The Property Owner Shall Not:*

- Remove historic signage.
- Obscure distinctive architectural elements and features with signage or awnings.
- Install billboards.
- Install internally illuminated box signs.
- Install awnings in locations where they are non- functional.
- Use contemporary or glossy awning materials not compatible with the historic building such as vinyl, plastics, or leatherette.
- Install internally illuminated awnings.
- Install awnings with a solid or closed underside.
- Use awning materials that act as wall signs.

### **Accessibility**

*The Property Owner Shall:*

- Comply with all aspects of accessibility requirements, while minimizing alterations of the primary building façade and historic architectural features.
- Integrate the accessibility provision with the historic design of the building.
- Install ramp or lift styles that are compatible with the building and are reversible and readily removable.
- Use railings that are simple and visually unobtrusive.



# Village of Oak Park

## Historic Preservation Commission

### APPENDIX D: PRESERVATION RESOURCES

#### ORGANIZATIONS

##### Local Organizations

###### *Village of Oak Park Historic Preservation*

Village Hall: 123 Madison St., Oak Park, IL 60302  
(708) 358-5417; [historicpreservation@oak-park.us](mailto:historicpreservation@oak-park.us)  
[www.oak-park.us/village-services/planning/historic-preservation](http://www.oak-park.us/village-services/planning/historic-preservation)

###### *The Historical Society of Oak Park & River Forest*

129 Lake Street, Oak Park, IL 60302  
(708) 848-6755; [www.oprfhistory.org](http://www.oprfhistory.org)

###### *Oak Park Public Library*

834 Lake Street, Oak Park, IL 60301  
(708) 383-8200, [www.oppl.org](http://www.oppl.org)

###### *Cook County Assessor's Office*

118 North Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60602  
(312) 443-7550; [www.cookcountyassessor.com](http://www.cookcountyassessor.com)

##### State Organizations

###### *Illinois State Historic Preservation Office*

###### *Illinois Department of Natural Resources*

1 Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702  
(217) 782-4836; [www.illinoishistory.gov](http://www.illinoishistory.gov)

###### *Landmarks Illinois*

30 N Michigan Ave, #2020; Chicago, IL 60602  
(312) 922-1742; [www.landmarks.org](http://www.landmarks.org)

##### National Organizations

###### *Advisory Council on Historic Preservation*

[www.achp.gov/nhpp.html](http://www.achp.gov/nhpp.html)

###### *National Park Service; History and Preservation*

[www.nps.gov/history](http://www.nps.gov/history)

###### *National Park Service; Education and Training*

[www.nps.gov/history/education-training](http://www.nps.gov/history/education-training)

###### *National Park Service; Historic Preservation Tax Incentives*

[www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax](http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax)

###### *National Center for Preservation Technology & Training*

(318) 356-7444; [www.ncptt.nps.gov](http://www.ncptt.nps.gov)

###### *National Trust for Historic Preservation*

(800) 944-6847; [www.savingplaces.org](http://www.savingplaces.org)

###### *U.S. Green Building Council*

(800) 795-1747; [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org)

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# Village of Oak Park

## Historic Preservation Commission

### APPENDIX E: PRESERVATION TAX INCENTIVES

#### PRESERVATION TAX INCENTIVES

There are federal, state, and county tax incentives programs available for historic properties. The submission and review requirements are rigorous and it is highly recommended that applicants contact the applicable agency at the early planning stages of a potential project.

##### Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives

The Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program rewards private investment in rehabilitating historic income producing properties such as offices, rental housing, and retail stores. The program, established by the Tax Reform Act of 1986, is jointly administered by the Department of the Treasury and the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Owner-occupied single family residences are not eligible for the program. If eligible, up to 20 cents on every dollar spent on qualified rehabilitation work (including most architectural and engineering fees) would be available as a credit against income taxes. The 20% tax credit is available to buildings that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as a contributing building in a National Register historic district, or as a contributing building within a local historic district that has been certified by the Department of the Interior. To be eligible for the 20% tax credit, project work must be certified as meeting *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

##### Illinois Historic Preservation Agency – Property Tax Assessment Freeze Program for Historic Residences

The Property Tax Assessment Freeze Program provides tax incentives to owner-occupants of certified historic residences who rehabilitate their homes. To be eligible, the property: must be a registered historic structure either by listing on the National Register or by an approved local historic preservation ordinance; must be owner occupied with a maximum of six units; must have a minimum of 25% of the assessed market value spent on the approved rehabilitation; and the rehabilitation must be substantial, significantly improving the condition of the building in a manner that meets *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.



*The Boulevard Arcade Building is a Landmark that used the Cook County Class L tax incentive to restore the façade and interior for office use.*



**Landmarks Illinois – Preservation Easement Program**

Owners of historic buildings and structures throughout Illinois have protected their properties in perpetuity by donating preservation easements to non-profit entities such as Landmarks Illinois. Qualified properties must be individually listed or a contributing resource within a district listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The preservation easement donation is typically coupled with a cash donation (for monitoring and enforcing the easement), and allows owners to protect their property and receive associated tax benefits.

##### Cook County Class L Property Tax Incentive

The Class L property tax incentive encourages the preservation and rehabilitation of designated historic commercial, industrial, and income-producing non-profit building owners can have the property tax assessment levels of their buildings, and potentially their properties, reduced provided they complete a substantial rehabilitation project that has been approved by the local Preservation Commission.



# Village of Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission

## APPENDIX F: HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

The Historic Preservation Ordinance is Chapter 7, Article 9, within the Code of the Village of Oak Park, Illinois. A current version of the Village Code may be found through the Village website or by following this direct link: <https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/oakparkil/latest/overview>

### **Chapter 7, Article 9 of the Village Code Historic Preservation**

7-9-1: Purpose Of Article

7-9-2: Definitions

7-9-3: Historic Districts

7-9-4: Criteria For Designation Of Historic Landmarks And Interior Historic Landmarks

7-9-5: Nomination And Preliminary Determination Of Eligibility For Designation As A Historic Landmark Or Interior Historic Landmark

7-9-6: Designation Hearing

7-9-7: Designation Of Historic Landmarks And Interior Historic Landmarks

7-9-8: Work Requiring The Issuance Of A Certificate Of Appropriateness, A Certificate Of Economic Hardship Or A Certificate Of Advisory Review

7-9-9: Zoning And Subdivision Actions Affecting Any Nominated, Eligible Or Designated Historic Landmarks Or Designated Historic Districts

7-9-10: Acquisition Or Use Of Public Property

7-9-11: Review Criteria For Certificate Of Appropriateness And Certificate Of Advisory Review

7-9-12: Procedures For Certificate Of Appropriateness

7-9-13: Procedures For Certificate Of Economic Hardship

7-9-14: Appeals

7-9-15: Advisory Review Procedures

7-9-16: Prevention Of Demolition By Neglect

7-9-17: Hazardous Structures And Public Nuisances

7-9-18: Handicapped Accessibility Provisions

7-9-19: Enforcement And Penalties For Violation

7-9-20: Judicial Review Of Final Decision

**7-9-1: PURPOSE OF ARTICLE:**

The purpose of this Article is to promote the economic, educational, cultural and general welfare of Oak Park by:

- A. Providing a municipal process to identify, preserve, protect and enhance the distinctive historic and architectural heritage of Oak Park representing elements of the Village's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history;
- B. Conserving and improving the value of properties designated as historic landmarks or located within historic districts;
- C. Enhancing the attractiveness of the Village to homeowners, visitors, tourists, and shoppers and, thereby, supporting business, commerce and industry in the Village and providing economic benefits to the Village;
- D. Fostering civic pride in the accomplishments of the past as manifested in properties, structures, improvements and areas of historical and architectural significance within the Village;
- E. Fostering and encouraging the preservation, restoration and rehabilitation of properties, structures, improvements and areas and, thereby, preventing deterioration, dilapidation and blight.

**7-9-2: DEFINITIONS:**

For the purposes of this Article, the following words and phrases shall have the following meanings; and words and phrases used in the context of this Article but not defined below shall have the meanings ascribed to them in section 1-1-2 of this code and this chapter, other than this Article, including the building, mechanical, electrical and plumbing codes adopted by reference in this Code. All other words and phrases used in the context of this Article shall have the commonly understood meanings normally ascribed to them.

**ADVISORY REVIEW:** The process of examining the documents prepared by an owner of property and/or an improvement within a historic district that is not a historic landmark which describe proposed construction on such property and/or improvement, which will lead to a certificate of advisory review.

**ALTERATION:** Any act or process that changes one or more of the exterior architectural features of property which has been designated as a historic landmark under this Article, or any interior architectural feature of any structure when such interior has been specifically designated as an interior historic landmark.

**ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE:** A Committee of no less than three (3) members of the Commission, of which one member need not possess the demonstrated expertise required under

subsection 2-23-1C of this Code for at least eight (8) members of the full Commission, appointed by the chairperson to review documents for certificates of advisory review which shall be issued by the Commission, based upon the Committee's review of the documents and recommendations to the owner. Subsection 7-9-11C of this Article authorizes the Commission to recommend and the Village Board to adopt amended rules and regulations which would expand Committee and/or Commission staff liaison authority to minimal types of construction and alteration work requiring a certificate of appropriateness.

**BUILDING PERMIT:** Any permit required by the Development Customer Services Department of the Village of Oak Park.

**CERTIFICATE OF ADVISORY REVIEW:** A certificate issued by the Commission after advisory review of plans for construction on, or relocation of, property and/or improvements located within a historic district which have not been designated as historic landmarks, indicating that the Commission has conducted a review of the plans and has made recommendations to the owner with regard to same.

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS:** A certificate issued by the Commission indicating its approval of plans for the alteration, or construction, or relocation of a historic landmark, or the removal or demolition of a historic landmark or a building, structure or improvement within a historic district.

**CERTIFICATE OF ECONOMIC HARDSHIP:** A certificate issued by the Commission, after denying a certificate of appropriateness, which authorizes the performance of alterations, construction or relocation with regard to historic landmarks, or the removal or demolition of a historic landmark or a building, structure or improvement within a historic district when such historic landmarks, or properties within a historic district, cannot be put to a reasonably beneficial use or the owner will suffer a substantial economic loss thereon without the proposed alteration, construction, relocation, removal or demolition; and the owner is not responsible in any way for the hardship from which he or she is seeking relief.

**COMMISSION:** The Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission as established pursuant to Article 23 ("Historic Preservation") of Chapter 2 ("Administration") of this Code.

**COMMISSION STAFF LIAISON:** An employee of the Village assigned by the Village Manager or the Village Manager's designee as staff liaison to the Commission.

**CONSTRUCTION:** Any act or process which requires a building permit, including the act of adding to a structure by an addition, or the erection of a new principal or accessory structure on a lot or property.

**CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE:** A property and/or improvement located within a historic district that represents the significant historical and/or aesthetic characteristics which qualified that district as a historic district under this Article.



DAY: A calendar day, except where otherwise specified in this Article.

DEMOLITION: The razing or destruction, whether entirely or in significant part of a building, structure, site or object. Demolition includes the removal of a building, structure or object from its site or the removal or destruction of its facade or surface.

ELIGIBLE HISTORIC LANDMARK: Any property and/or improvement nominated for designation as a historic landmark which has been determined by the Commission, after notice and an opportunity to be heard for the owner(s), nominators and other interested parties in accordance with Section 7-9-4 of this Article, to be eligible for designation by resolution and recommendation of the Commission to the Village Board, but which has not yet been so designated by the Village Board.

EXTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES: The architectural character and general composition of the exterior of a structure or improvement, including the kind and texture of all the building materials and the type, design and character of all architectural details, including, but not limited to, windows, walls, roofs, doors, light fixtures, fences, signs and appurtenant elements.

HISTORIC DISTRICT: A historic district is an area with geographically definable boundaries, possessing a significant concentration, linkage or continuity of properties and/or improvements united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development that has been designated as an Oak Park historic district pursuant to Village ordinance. A district may include properties and/or improvements which are individually designated as historic landmarks under this Article and may also contain other properties and/or improvements which, while not of such individual historical and/or architectural value to be designated historic landmarks, nevertheless contribute to the overall special character or value of the landmark or landmarks located within the district.

HISTORIC LANDMARK: Any property and/or improvement which has special character or significant historical, cultural, architectural, archeological, community or aesthetic value as part of the heritage of the Village of Oak Park, the State of Illinois, or the United States which has been designated as an Oak Park historic landmark pursuant to this Article and shall include all designated interior historic landmarks.

IMPROVEMENT: Any visible built feature constituting a physical addition or any part of such addition to a property, including any building, structure, fixture, bridge, work of art, place, parking facility, fence, gate, wall, landscaping or paving.

INTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES: The architectural character and general composition of the interior of a structure, including the room design and configuration, color and texture of materials, and the type, pattern and character of all architectural details and elements, including, but not limited to, staircases, doors, hardware, moldings, trim, plaster work, light fixtures and wall coverings.

INTERIOR HISTORIC LANDMARK: An interior, or part thereof, which is normally open or accessible to the public and which has a significant historical or aesthetic interest or value as part of the

development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the Village, State of Illinois or United States and which has been designated as an interior landmark pursuant to the provisions of this Article.

**NOMINATED HISTORIC LANDMARK:** A property and/or improvement nominated by an interested party for consideration by the Commission for designation as a historic landmark prior to determination by the Commission that it is eligible for historic landmark designation.

**NONCONTRIBUTING RESOURCE:** A property and/or improvement located within a historic district that does not represent significant historical and/or aesthetic characteristics which qualified that district as a historic district under this Article.

**OWNER:** Owner of record as determined by the tax rolls except where otherwise specified in this Article.

**PROPERTY:** Land and improvements identified as a separate lot for purposes of the zoning regulations of the Village of Oak Park.

**PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT:** Work carried out by the Village of Oak Park for public use or service, including, but not limited to, the installation, major repair or improvements to streets, curbs and gutters, alleys, sidewalks, public utilities, streetlights, signs, banners and traffic signals.

**RELOCATION:** Any repositioning of an improvement on the same property upon which it is located.

**REMOVAL:** Any moving of an improvement from the property upon which it was originally located.

**REPAIR:** Minor work which does not require a building permit and which does not affect the architectural features of an improvement.

**REVIEW:** The process of examining the plans and documents prepared by an owner of property and/or an improvement designated as a historic landmark which describes proposed work on the landmark, which will lead to the decision to grant or deny a certificate of appropriateness or a certificate of economic hardship.

**SITE:** The location of an event, activity, building, structure or improvement.

**STRUCTURE:** Anything constructed or erected, the use of which requires permanent or semi-permanent location on or in the ground.

**THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS:** The "Secretary Of The Interior's Standards For Rehabilitation And Guidelines For Rehabilitating Historic Buildings", revised U.S. 1990, Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Preservation Assistance Division, Washington, D.C.

**WORK:** Any construction, alteration, repair, relocation, removal or demolition of an

improvement.

### **7-9-3: HISTORIC DISTRICTS:**

- A. Historic districts shall be designated, amended and removed only upon by an ordinance adopted by the Village Board
  
- B. Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District:
  - 1. On February 7, 1972, the Oak Park Historic District, renamed the Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District, was recognized and affirmed as a locally designated historic district within the Village of Oak Park.
  - 2. On December 6, 1973, the Oak Park Historic District, renamed the Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places where such district remains officially registered as the Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District.
  - 3. On May 22, 2009, a newly expanded Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
  - 4. On February 12, 2012, a newly expanded Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District was recognized and affirmed as a locally designated historic district within the Village of Oak Park.
  - 5. The Village hereby designates the area set forth on the map attached to Ordinance 1972-O-8 as Exhibit A which is incorporated in this Article by reference, as amended, historic district within the Village known as the Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District. Such designation shall be reflected in the official zoning map of the Village.
  
- C. Ridgeland/Oak Park Historic District:
  - 1. On July 20, 1983, the Ridgeland/Oak Park Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places where such district remains officially registered as the Ridgeland/Oak Park Historic District.
  - 2. On February 26, 1993, the Ridgeland/Oak Park Historic District was recognized and affirmed as a locally designated historic district within the Village of Oak Park.
  - 3. The Village hereby designates the area set forth on the map on file in the office of the Village Clerk attached to Ordinance 1993-O-12 as Exhibit A which is incorporated in this Article by reference, as amended, as a historic district within the Village known as the Ridgeland/Oak Park Historic District. Such designation shall be reflected on the official zoning map of the Village.

D. Gunderson Historic District:

1. On March 1, 2002, the Gunderson Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places where such district remains officially registered as the Gunderson Historic District.
2. On June 17, 2002, the Gunderson Historic District was recognized and affirmed as a locally designated historic district within the Village of Oak Park.
3. On May 19, 2003, a newly expanded Gunderson Historic District was recognized and affirmed as a locally designated historic district within the Village of Oak Park.
4. The Village hereby designates the area set forth on the map on file in the office of the Village Clerk attached to Ordinance 2003-0-28 as Exhibit A which is incorporated in this Article by reference, as amended, as a historic district within the Village known as the Gunderson Historic District. Such designation shall be reflected on the official zoning map of the Village.-

**7-9-4: CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION OF HISTORIC LANDMARKS AND INTERIOR HISTORIC LANDMARKS:**

A. The Commission, in determining whether to recommend for designation, and the Village Board, in determining whether to approve designation of particular sites, structures, or improvements as historic landmarks and/or interiors of structures or parts thereof as interior historic landmarks, shall consider the following criteria:

B. Historical And/Or Cultural Importance

1. Significance as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic or social development or heritage of the Village of Oak Park, the state, or the United States;
2. Location as a site of a historic event, with a significant effect on the Village of Oak Park, the state, or the United States;
3. Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the architectural, cultural, economic, historic or social heritage, or other aspect, of the Village of Oak Park, the State, or the United States;

C. Architectural And/Or Engineering Importance

1. Existence on the National Register of Historic Places;
2. Embodiment of those distinguishing characteristics of significant architectural

type, or style, or engineering specimen;

3. Identification as the work of a builder, designer, architect, craftsperson, engineer or landscape architect whose individual work is significant in the development of the Village of Oak Park, the State, or the United States;
  4. Contains design elements, detail, materials or craftsmanship that make the property or building structurally or architecturally innovative, rare or unique;
  5. Representation of an architectural, cultural, economic, historic or social theme, style or period, expressed in distinctive areas, districts, places, buildings or structures that may or may not be contiguous.
- D. Any site, structure or improvement that meets one or more of the above criteria shall also be at least fifty (50) years old and shall have sufficient integrity of location, design, materials and workmanship to make it worthy of preservation or restoration.
- E. It shall be within the discretion of the Village Board to deny designation of any historic landmark, irrespective of whether or not the proposed landmark satisfies one or more of the above listed criteria.

**7-9-5: NOMINATION AND PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR DESIGNATION AS A HISTORIC LANDMARK OR INTERIOR HISTORIC LANDMARK:**

- A. Submission Of Nominations: Historic landmark and interior historic landmark nominations may be submitted to the Commission by any person, group of persons, or association, including any member of the Commission, on a nomination form provided by the Commission. The nomination form shall include, or be accompanied by, the following:
1. The name and address of the owner of the property proposed for designation, including the names of the beneficial owners of property held in a land trust, where possible.
  2. The legal description and common street address of the property proposed for designation.
  3. An indication of whether or not the owner is in favor of the proposed designation.
  4. A written statement describing the property and setting forth reasons in support of the proposed designation.
  5. Photographs of the property or selected properties within a district.
  6. Such other information as may be required by the Commission.
- B. Commission Action:

1. The Commission staff liaison shall, upon receipt of a properly completed nomination, immediately the Director of the Development Customer Services Department or the Director's designee of the Commission's receipt of such nomination and shall deliver copies of same to the and Development Customer Services Department as soon thereafter as is possible and shall make a preliminary determination of eligibility within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the nomination, or by the Commission's next regularly scheduled meeting, whichever occurs later. A determination by the Commission of preliminary eligibility must be based upon a finding by the Commission that there is a likelihood that a nominated historic landmark will meet one or more of the "Criteria for Designation" set forth in Section 7-9-4 of this Article.
2. If a majority of the Commission members determine that there is not a likelihood that the nominated historic landmark may meet at least one of the criteria for designation, it shall enter a formal denial of the nomination and so notify the party making the nomination in writing. Such a denial shall be the final administrative decision. The Commission may not reconsider the preliminary eligibility of such a historic landmark for at least one year following the submission of the original nomination and, then, only upon further evidence of qualification. If a preliminary determination is made that there is a likelihood that the nominated historic landmark may meet one or more criteria, the Commission shall schedule a designation hearing to be held within forty five (45) days of the preliminary determination and shall send the owner of record written notice of same no less than fifteen (15) days in advance of such hearing by regular and electronic mail, properly addressed to the owner of record as shown in the records of the Recorder of Deeds or Registrar of Titles, whichever is appropriate, and with sufficient postage affixed thereto. Failure to receive notice shall not invalidate the proceedings of the Commission.

#### **7-9-6: DESIGNATION HEARING:**

- A. Following a preliminary determination by the Commission that there is a likelihood that a proposed historic landmark may be eligible for designation, the Commission shall conduct a hearing and shall notify the party making the nomination, the owner(s) of record of the proposed historic landmark and the owners of record of any property within two hundred fifty feet (250') of the proposed historic landmark, by regular mail as to the date, time, place and purpose of the public hearing. Notice shall also be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the Village. The notice shall be sent and published not less than fifteen (15) days nor more than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the hearing. Such notice shall include the date, time and place of the hearing, a general description of the request to be heard, and the address or location of the property to which the request applies. If the owner(s) of record is not the party making the nomination, the Commission's notice to the owner(s) of record of the proposed historic landmark shall also include a copy of the nominating petition, any supporting documentation submitted

therewith and a form for use by the owner entitled the "Owner(s) of Record Statement of Position" form indicating the owner's support for or opposition to the proposed designation and a brief statement of the owner's position. The form shall provide a return address for the Commission and shall direct the owner to return the completed form to the Commission no less than seven (7) days prior to the scheduled hearing. The form shall further indicate that the owner's failure to respond shall be presumed by the Commission to indicate the owner's support for the proposed designation. The owner may rebut this presumption by appearing at the hearing and testifying in opposition to the proposed designation. The Commission shall make every reasonable effort to contact personally or by telephone owner(s) of record who have not returned an executed owner's form to explain the designation process and to encourage the return of the signed form.

- B. At the hearing the Commission shall take testimony and receive evidence from the nominators, owner(s) of record, and any other interested parties who wish to be heard and/or present evidence on the application of the criteria for designation, set forth in Section 7-9-4 of this Article, to the proposed historic landmark. The Commission shall hear testimony and receive evidence in accordance with such procedural rules that are not inconsistent with this Article as the Commission may, from time to time, propose and the Village Board may, from time to time, adopt for the purpose of governing the conduct of such hearings before the Commission.

#### **7-9-7: DESIGNATION OF HISTORIC LANDMARKS AND INTERIOR HISTORIC LANDMARKS:**

- A. Within forty five (45) days following completion of the public hearing(s), the Commission shall determine, based on the criteria set forth in Section 7-9-4 of this Article whether to recommend designation of a historical landmark to the Village Board and shall deliver to the nominator, the Village Board, the Village Clerk or the Village Clerk's designee, the Development Customer Service Department and to the owner(s) of record, a resolution and report recommending designation if such a determination has been made by the Commission. The resolution shall require an affirmative vote of a majority of the ~~full~~ members of the Commission to recommend designation to the Village Board. The resolution shall include or be accompanied by a written report summarizing the evidence presented at the hearing, setting forth findings of fact based thereon, and explaining the basis for the Commission's recommendation. A decision by the Commission not to recommend designation is final and will terminate the designation process. The Commission shall notify the owner and nominators of its decision not to recommend designation within forty-five (45) days of the completion of the public hearing. The Commission shall not consider the re-nomination of the same or a substantially similar historic landmark for at least one year following submission of the original nomination and the nominated property shall not be considered an eligible historic landmark during that time.
- B. Within thirty (30) days after receiving the resolution and report containing the recommendation for designation from the Commission, the Village Board shall either

designate the historic landmark or reject the nomination by a majority vote of the Village Board, unless the owner is opposed to the nomination, in which case designation of the historic landmark may only occur upon a unanimous vote of the Village Board. In making this determination, the Village Board shall apply the designation criteria set forth in Section 7-9-4 of this Article and shall give due consideration to the record of the public hearing(s), and findings and recommendations of the Commission set forth in the Commission’s resolution and report and may take public testimony with regard to same. Upon a majority vote of the Village Board to approve designation, the Village Board shall enact an ordinance designating the historic landmark, which ordinance shall provide that the newly designated historic landmark shall be subject to the provisions of this Article.

- C. Upon designation of a historic landmark by the Village Board, the Commission shall provide written notification by regular and electronic mail to the owner(s) of record of the designated historic landmark which notification shall include a copy of the ordinance designating same. Failure to receive electronic notice shall not invalidate the proceedings of the Commission. The Village shall file a copy of the designation ordinance with the Cook County Clerk for each historic landmark designated. A copy of the designation ordinance shall be sent to the Village Development Customer Services Department and the Village Clerk.
- D. If the Board of Trustees does not approve a designation, then a nomination for the same or a substantially similar historic landmark may not be considered by the Commission for at least one year from the date of the Village Board action and the nominated property shall not be considered an eligible historic landmark during that time.
- E. Designations may be amended or rescinded by the same procedure and according to the same criteria set forth in this Article for an original designation.
- F. The following properties and/or improvements have been designated as Oak Park historic landmarks (including interior landmarks) pursuant to this Article:

	Landmark Properties	Designation Date
1.	Frank Lloyd Wright Home & Studio	June 17, 1996
	428 Forest and 951 Chicago Avenue	
	Interior, exterior and improvements	
2.	John Farson Home	June 17, 1996
	217 Home Avenue	



	Exterior, walk and fence	
3.	Pilgrim Congregational Church	June 17, 1996
	460 Lake Street	
	Exterior	
4.	Unity Temple	June 17, 1996
	875 Lake Street	
	Interior and exterior	
5.	Ernest Hemingway Birthplace Home	June 17, 1996
	339 N. Oak Park Avenue	
	Interior and exterior	
6.	The Plaza Hotel	March 16, 1998
	123 S. Marion Street	
	Exterior	
7.	The Plaza Hotel	March 16, 1998
	123 S. Marion Street	
	Interior	
	The lobby or foyer area including: the four-story atrium with a turned spindle latticework stairway, the ornamental stained and beveled glass door surround between the foyer of the original building and the former dining area in the addition, and the	

	two (2) brick archways leading off from the foyer area.	
8.	The Hills-DeCaro House	January 7, 2002
	313 Forest Avenue	
	Exterior	
9.	The Rollin Furbeck House	January 7, 2002
	515 Fair Oaks Avenue	
	Exterior	
10.	The Harry S. Adams House	January 7, 2002
	710 Augusta Street	
	Exterior – house and coach house	
11.	The George Furbeck House	November 18, 2002
	223 N. Euclid Avenue	
	Exterior	
12.	The Thomas Gale House	November 18, 2002
	1027 Chicago Avenue	
	Exterior	
13.	The Oak Park and River Forest Day Nursery	November 18, 2002

	1139 Randolph Street	
	Exterior	
14.	Charles Roberts House	December 2, 2002
	321 N. Euclid Avenue	
	Exterior – house and garage	
15.	Roberts Building	December 2, 2002
	300-304 N. Grove Avenue/818 Erie Street	
	Exterior	
16.	Odd Fellows Hall	November 17, 2003
	812-818 Harrison Street	
	Exterior	
17.	The Albert and Kittie Ernst House	November 17, 2003
	1023 Wenonah Avenue	
	Exterior	
18.	Oak Park Conservatory	June 21, 2004
	615 Garfield Street	
	Exterior – original structure	

19.	Park Grove and Park View Manor	June 21, 2004
	173-181 N. Grove Avenue	
	Exterior	
20.	Bishop Quarter School Addition	June 21, 2004
	605 Lake Street	
	Exterior	
21.	C.A. Sharpe House (Dole/Cheney Mansion)	July 6, 2004
	220 N. Euclid Avenue	
	Exterior – house, greenhouse, coach house, fence	
22.	Andreas Brisch House	December 6, 2004
	701 S. East Avenue	
	Exterior	
23.	Harold C. Lewis House	December 6, 2004
	950 Columbian Avenue	
	Exterior	
24.	George and James Tough House	December 6, 2004
	1045 Wesley Avenue	
	Exterior – house and garage	

25.	Poley Building	December 6, 2004
	408-410 S. Austin Boulevard	
	Exterior	
26.	Margaret Morse House	February 22, 2005
	1036 Fair Oaks Avenue	
	Exterior	
27.	Albert Schneider House	February 22, 2005
	553 N. Marion Street	
	Exterior	
28.	Dorothy Manor Apartments	June 20, 2005
	424-426 S. Austin Boulevard	
	Exterior	
29.	Maze Branch Library	November 7, 2005
	845 Gunderson Avenue	
	Exterior, interior (main floor, foyer)	
30.	First United Methodist Church	November 7, 2005
	324 N. Oak Park Avenue	

	Exterior	
31.	Howard Jenkins House	May 1, 2006
	500 Linden Avenue	
	Exterior – house and garage	
32.	Dr. Harry Bernhardt Cottage	May 1, 2006
	705 S. East Avenue	
	Exterior – house and garage	
33.	Charles W. Eils House	November 6, 2006
	625 S. Oak Park Avenue	
	Exterior – house and garage	
34.	Boulevard Arcade Building	June 4, 2007
	1033 South Boulevard	
	Exterior	
35.	Cicero Fire House No. 2	June 16, 2008
	129 Lake Street	
	Exterior	
36.	Gustaf and Fride Benson House	July 20, 2009

	1139 Woodbine Avenue	
	Exterior – house and garage	
37.	Robert Parker House	July 20, 2009
	1019 Chicago Avenue	
	Exterior	
38.	Linden Apartments	October 6, 2009
	175-181 Linden Avenue/643-645 Ontario Street	
	Exterior – building and garage	
39.	Charles Schwerin House	March 15, 2010
	639 Fair Oaks Avenue	
	Exterior – house and garage	
40.	Edward and Caroline McCready House	March 15, 2010
	231 N. Euclid Avenue	
	Exterior – house, garage, and retaining wall	
41.	Russell Wallace House	March 15, 2010
	178 N. Euclid Avenue	
	Exterior – house and garage	

42.	Charles S. Castle House	March 15, 2010
	647 Linden Avenue	
	Exterior – house and garage	
43.	Joseph D. Everett House	May 17, 2010
	228 Forest Avenue	
	Exterior	
44.	Chester Flitcraft House	June 21, 2010
	845 Chicago Avenue	
	Exterior	
45.	Paul Blatchford House No. 1	June 21, 2010
	250 Forest Avenue	
	Exterior	
46.	William A. Douglass House	September 20, 2010
	317 N. Kenilworth Avenue	
	Exterior, coach house	
47.	Nineteenth Century Club	September 20, 2010
	178 Forest Avenue	
	Exterior	



48.	Rutherford-Dodge House	January 3, 2011
	308 N. Oak Park Avenue	
	Exterior	
49.	Vernon W. Skiff House	January 3, 2011
	633 N. East Avenue	
	Exterior, coach house, fence	
50.	Charles E. Matthews House	February 22, 2011
	432 N. Kenilworth Avenue	
	Exterior, garage	
51.	Harlem Office Building	March 7, 2011
	1515 N. Harlem Avenue	
	Exterior	
52.	John D. Caldwell House	July 5, 2011
	130 S. East Avenue	
	Exterior	
53.	Charles W. Helder House	July 5, 2011
	629 Fair Oaks Avenue	

	Exterior, garage	
54.	Freeman Landon House	September 19, 2011
	700 S. Lombard Avenue	
	Exterior, garage	
55.	George and Mary Sheppard House	October 3, 2011
	217 S. Humphrey Avenue	
	Exterior	
56.	Rankin-Hemingway House	November 28, 2011
	639 N. Oak Park Avenue	
	Exterior, garage	
57.	William J. Ehlers Flats	July 2, 2012
	241 S. Elmwood Avenue	
	Exterior, garage	
58.	Edwin H. Ehrman House	July 2, 2012
	410 N. Kenilworth Avenue	
	Exterior	
59.	George L. Smith House	November 5, 2012

	743 Columbian Avenue	
	Exterior, garage	
60.	Charlton H. Catlin Flats	April 1, 2013
	209 – 211 S. Elmwood Avenue	
	Exterior, garage	
61.	Andreas Brisch House no. 1	July 1, 2013
	745 S. East Avenue	
	Exterior	
62.	Purcell-Yager House	May 5, 2014
	300 Forest Avenue	
	Exterior, garage	
63.	Walter S. Gerts House	October 6, 2014
	200 S. East Avenue	
	Exterior	
64.	Edward B. Kittle House	October 6, 2014
	636 Fair Oaks Avenue	
	Exterior	

65.	I.M. and Fannabell Fixman House	December 8, 2014
	1010 Fair Oaks Avenue	
	Exterior	
66.	Charles Roberts Stables	November 21, 2016
	317 North Euclid Avenue	
	Exterior	
67.	James T. Hayden House	June 5, 2017
	209 Forest Avenue	
	Exterior	
68.	Edgar Rice Burroughs House no. 1	December 11, 2017
	414 Augusta Street	
	Exterior	
69.	John J. Schmidt House	May 7, 2018
	400 North Kenilworth Avenue	
	Exterior	
70.	Robbins-Chapmen House	November 4, 2019
	408 North Kenilworth Ave	
	Exterior	

71.	Telfer MacArthur House	February 1, 2021
	609 Linden Ave	
	Exterior, coach house	

**7-9-8: WORK REQUIRING THE ISSUANCE OF A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, A CERTIFICATE OF ECONOMIC HARDSHIP OR A CERTIFICATE OF ADVISORY REVIEW:**

- A. No building permit or demolition permit shall be issued and no alteration authorized by the Development Customer Services affecting any site, building, structure or improvement designated in this Article until such time as the corresponding requirement or requirements set forth in this Article for each such designated site, building, structure or improvement shall first have been satisfied:
1. In the case of the construction on, and/or the alteration, relocation, demolition or removal of an eligible historic landmark, the building or demolition permit shall be issued or the alteration authorized upon the denial of designation of historic landmark status by the Village Board; provided, however, that if the site, building, structure or improvement which has been denied landmark status is located within a designated historic district, then the issuance of a building or demolition permit shall also be contingent upon satisfying the requirements set forth in this Article for property located within a designated historic district; or
  2. In the case of a demolition or removal of: a) an eligible or designated historic landmark; b) any site, building, structure or improvement within a designated historic district; or c) a site, building, structure or improvement located in a designated historic district or listed in the National Register of Historic Places, which is wholly or partially financed by the Village or by one or more Federal, State or Village funding sources which are dispersed through or administered by the Village, the demolition permit shall be issued upon the authorization of such a permit by formal resolution of the Village Board as being necessary to protect the public health, safety or welfare; or
  3. In the case of: a) the construction on, and/or the alteration, relocation, demolition or removal of an eligible or designated historic landmark; b) the alteration, demolition or removal of a site, building, structure or improvement located in a designated historic district or listed in the National Register of Historic Places which is wholly or partially financed by the Village or by one or more Federal, State

or Village funding sources which are dispersed through or administered by the Village; or c) the removal or demolition of any building, structure or improvement located within a designated historic district for which demolition has not been authorized under subsection 7-9-8A2 of this section, the building or demolition permit shall be issued or the alteration shall be authorized upon the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness in accordance with Section 7-9-12 of this Article or a certificate of economic hardship in accordance with Section 7-9-13 of this Article.

- B. No building permit for construction shall be issued by the Development Customer Services Department affecting any non-landmark property or structure within a designated historic district unless a certificate of advisory review is issued in accordance with Section 7-9-15 of this Article.
- C. The Development Customer Services Department shall provide written authorization for alteration work affecting eligible or designated historic landmarks, which does not require a building permit, upon receipt of the certificate of appropriateness or certificate of economic hardship for such alteration work. Such authorization must be given prior to commencement of such alteration work.
- D. No work requiring the issuance of a building or demolition permit or the authorization of an alteration by the Development Customer Services Department, shall commence prior to such issuance or authorization in accordance with this Section.
- E. Public works projects within designated historic districts or affecting eligible or designated historic landmarks shall require a certificate of advisory review. The Director of Public Works or the Director's designee shall report such projects to the Commission as they are proposed by the Director or Director's designee in a timely fashion. In emergency situations, or where time constraints otherwise require the immediate commencement of such projects, work may commence prior to the issuance of the certificate of advisory review.

**7-9-9: ZONING AND SUBDIVISION ACTIONS AFFECTING ANY NOMINATED, ELIGIBLE OR DESIGNATED HISTORIC LANDMARKS OR DESIGNATED HISTORIC DISTRICTS:**

- A. The Director of the Development Customer Services Department or applicable Village staff, in the case of applications before the Zoning Board of Appeals, Plan Commission, or Community Design Commission, shall notify the Commission staff liaison, a reasonable time of submission to the Department, of all applications for zoning amendments, variances, special use permits, design review applications, subdivision or planned unit developments affecting: 1) property in any designated historic district, 2) any eligible or designated historic landmarks, or 3) any property located within two hundred fifty feet (250') of such landmark.

- B. In furtherance of its duties as set forth in subsection 2-23-2F of the Village Code, the Commission, or Commission staff liaison when appropriate, shall evaluate the anticipated effect of the zoning action requested in the application on the designated historic district or nominated, eligible or designated historic landmark(s) and shall consider the long-term compatibility of the proposed zoning action with the character of the affected historic resources and the effect of any proposed zoning action on the long-range preservation of these resources. In its review, the Commission shall also consider the criteria specified in Section 7-9-11 of this Article.
- C. The Commission may present its evaluation or opinion on the effects of such anticipated zoning action on a historic district or nominated, eligible or designated landmark to the board or commission hearing such zoning action.
- D. In no event shall the provisions of this Section preclude the necessity of obtaining a certificate of appropriateness or a certificate of economic hardship when required under Section 7-9-12 or 7-9-13 of this Article.

**7-9-10: ACQUISITION OR USE OF PUBLIC PROPERTY:**

- A. The Village Manager shall advise the Commission, in a timely manner, of all proposed or pending acquisitions, sales or changes in use by the Village or by any other public agency, including any other unit of local government, when known to the Village, of any property designated as a historic landmark, or located within two hundred fifty feet (250') of a landmark, or located in a historic district. The Commission shall advise the Village Board, other appropriate public agency or other units of local government, as to the effects of such actions on the special historic, architectural, community or aesthetic interest or value of such properties to Oak Park.
- B. The Commission shall request that other public agencies serving the community agree to advise the Commission of pending acquisition, sales or changes by such agencies in use of property designated as a historic landmark or located within two hundred fifty feet (250') of a landmark, or located in a historic district, in order that the Commission may advise such agencies as to the impact of such actions on the historic, architectural, community or aesthetic interest or value of such properties to Oak Park. The Commission shall take appropriate steps to notify all public agencies which own or may acquire property in the Village about the existence and character of designated historic landmarks and historic districts, and the Commission shall provide a current record of such landmarks and districts to such public agencies for their maintenance.

**7-9-11: REVIEW CRITERIA FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS; CERTIFICATE OF ADVISORY REVIEW; NONCONTRIBUTING RESOURCES:**

- A. Guidelines For Construction, Alteration And Relocation Work: In making a determination to issue or deny a certificate of appropriateness for construction, alteration or relocation work affecting an eligible or designated historic landmark, or a determination to conduct an

advisory review and either approve or make recommendations with regard to construction or relocation work on property located in a designated historic district, either the Commission or the Village Board, when considering an appeal, shall consider the effect of the proposed construction, alteration, or relocation on the architectural features and on the historic, aesthetic or architectural value, characteristics and significance of the eligible or designated historic landmark or designated historic district

- B. In determining whether to issue a certificate of appropriateness or a certificate of advisory review, the Commission, or the Village Board when considering an appeal, shall follow the “Secretary of the Interior’s Standards”, revised 1990, as amended in this Article, and such other criteria and guidelines as the Commission may recommend, and which the Village Board may adopt, for use by the Commission, or the Village Board when considering an appeal. Such criteria shall include, but are not limited to, the following:
1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
  2. The significant original qualities and/or historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal or alteration of historic or distinctive architectural materials or features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
  3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
  4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
  5. Distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
  6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, inherent and not renewable color, texture and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.
  7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.



8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
  9. The historic and architectural integrity of the property and its environment shall be protected by making the new work compatible with the existing structures, surrounding structures, streetscape or the character of the historic district, whenever one or more of these elements is affected by such work, with respect to the following design criteria:
    - a. The height of the alteration, addition or construction;
    - b. Proportions between the width and height of structure's front façade;
    - c. The proportions and relationships between doors and window-;
    - d. Relationship of building masses and the open space around them, including setbacks and placement on the lot;
    - e. The design of the roof shapes, forms and materials;
    - f. Landscaping and appurtenances which should also be sensitive to the individual structure, its occupants and their needs;
    - g. The scale of the proposed structure;
    - h. Dominant horizontal or vertical directional expression of front elevation; and
    - i. Architectural style, design, details and materials, including textures and patterns, but not necessarily color.
  10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.
- C. Guidelines For Removal Or Demolition Of Historic Landmarks, Or Buildings, Structures Or Improvements Located Within A Historic District: Guidelines to be used by the Commission, or by the Village Board when considering an appeal, in determining of appropriateness of the removal or demolition of a landmark or a building, structure or improvement in a historic district shall include, but not be limited to, the guidelines set forth in subsection 7-9-11A of this Section.
- D. Noncontributing Resources: A property or improvement shall be considered to be a noncontributing resource if it is contained as a noncontributing resource in the National Register Historic District nomination form for the historic district. A noncontributing

resource is not subject to the requirements of this Article, except for advisory reviews pursuant to Section 7-9-15 of this Article or if the resource is listed as an Oak Park Landmark.

**7-9-12: PROCEDURES FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS:**

- A. Preapplication: Any owner of a historic landmark may, at any time, request the Commission to make a preliminary review of proposed work in order to determine whether the proposed work will meet the criteria set forth in this Article. The Commission or Committee may, on the basis of documents and other material presented, make a preliminary finding of acceptability which may then be used by the Commission to expedite the processing of a certificate of appropriateness after the owner has applied for a building permit and/or a certificate of appropriateness. The certificate of appropriateness will be issued by the Commission only if the work described on the permit documents submitted by the owner to obtain the permit are found to be substantially the same as that which was preapproved. If, during the preapplication review, the Commission or Committee finds that the proposed work does not meet the criteria, the Commission or Committee may advise the owner on possible ways to meet the criteria.
  
- B. Application: Any application for a building permit and/or certificate of appropriateness for construction, alteration or relocation affecting an eligible or designated historic landmark or for the removal of an eligible or designated historic landmark or the removal of a building, structure or improvement from a property within a designated historic district and any application for a demolition permit for the demolition of an eligible or designated historic landmark or for the demolition of a building, structure or improvement in a designated historic district shall be sent by the Development Customer Services Department, within three (3) working days of receipt, to the Commission. At the time of receipt of the application(s), the Development Customer Services Department shall issue to the applicant a historic preservation guidelines pamphlet prepared by the Commission which summarizes the preservation requirements and preservation assistance available in the Village with regard to the historic landmarks and historic districts. The Development Customer Services Department shall not issue a building permit and shall not authorize any alterations until a certificate of appropriateness or certificate of economic hardship has been issued.
  
- C. Architectural Review Committee And Commission Staff Liaison Review And Issuance Of Certificate of Appropriateness: The Commission may propose, and the Village Board may adopt rules, procedures and criteria under which a committee of the Commission and/or Commission staff liaison may approve applications for certificates of appropriateness when the proposed work involves: 1) restoration to original conditions, or 2) no changes in materials, or 3) changes not visible from the street and not affecting an interior landmark, or 4) other types of activities determined by the Commission to have limited effect on the historic, architectural or aesthetic qualities of landmarks or districts. Such

rules, procedures and criteria for the above-mentioned limited activities only, if adopted, shall provide that Commission staff liaison shall act within five (5) working days from receipt of the application to review, approve and issue a certificate of appropriateness, refer the application to the Architectural Review Committee, or refer the application to the full Commission for its consideration.

- D. Commission Review: If rules, procedures and criteria are adopted providing for committee and/or staff issuance of certificates of appropriateness under certain limited circumstances, applications which would not meet the criteria for committee or staff review under subsection 7-9-12C of this Section, shall be referred to the Commission by such committee or Commission staff liaison, or applications which have been denied a certificate of appropriateness by committee or Commission staff liaison shall be referred to the Commission. Except as otherwise provided for in rules and procedures adopted in accordance with subsection 7-9-12C of this Section, all applications for certificates of appropriateness shall be referred directly to the full Commission for review. The Commission shall review the completed application and supporting information within forty-five (45) days of receiving same, either from a committee or directly from the Development Customer Services Department. The applicant shall be notified, in writing, of the date, time and place of the meeting at which Commission review on the proposed work shall take place. The applicant shall be requested to submit such plans, drawings, photographs or other information the Commission may request to complete its review. Requested information shall not delay the meeting. The notice shall be sent no less than five (5) days before the meeting at which the proposed work is to be reviewed. The requirement for this five (5) day advance notice may be waived by the applicant. A final vote, as to approval or denial, shall be made within forty-five (45) days of the receipt of a complete application. If a decision is not made within forty-five (45) days, it will constitute an automatic withdrawal of the application and the Commission staff liaison will reschedule the application if appropriate.
- E. Acceptance Of Proposed Work And Issuance Of Certificate Of Appropriateness: If, upon review, a majority of a quorum of the Commission finds the proposed work is in accordance with the applicable criteria set forth in Section 7-9-11 of this Article and the purposes of this Article, it may issue a certificate of appropriateness, with or without conditions reasonably related to the review guidelines. Notice of the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness shall be provided to the applicant and the Development Customer Services Department within five (5) working days after the decision. A certificate of appropriateness shall expire one year after the date of issuance. Any change in the proposed work after issuance of a certificate of appropriateness shall require inspection by the Commission staff liaison to determine whether the work is still in substantial compliance with the certificate of appropriateness. If staff determines that the change in work is not in substantial compliance with the certificate of appropriateness, then the owner must immediately cease work upon notification and submit a revised application to the Commission for review. The owner may be required to revise plans and redo work to comply with the certificate of appropriateness. The

owner may dispute conditions regarding a certificate of appropriateness at a public hearing as set forth below.

- F. **Failure To Issue A Certificate Of Appropriateness:** If the Commission finds that the proposed work does not meet the established criteria and, will adversely affect or destroy any significant historic, aesthetic or architectural feature or value of an eligible or designated historic landmark, or that the demolition or removal of a building, structure or improvement in a designated historic district will adversely affect the historic, aesthetic or architectural character or value of the historic district or is inappropriate or inconsistent with the spirit and purposes of this Article, it shall not take action on the application and shall so advise the applicant and the Development Customer Services Department, in writing, within five (5) working days of the determination not to act on the application and shall further indicate to the applicant at that time that the applicant may submit an amended application for expedited review or may request a public hearing.

Within the same five (5) working day time frame, the Commission shall send a letter to the applicant explaining any changes recommended by the Commission before an amended application may be considered. The letter will address the appropriate review criteria and other points deemed pertinent by the Commission. The applicant may either amend the application and resubmit same for expedited review, or the applicant may request a public hearing on the application. If the applicant submits an amended application and it is determined to conform to Commission recommendations, a certificate of appropriateness may be issued by a majority of a quorum of the Commission.

- G. **Public Hearing Following Denial Of A Certificate Of Appropriateness Or Disputed Conditions:** Within fifteen (15) days of notice to the applicant of either an approval of a certificate of appropriateness with conditions or to file an amended application or request a public hearing, the applicant may request that the Commission hold a public hearing where additional evidence and testimony may be heard regarding the application for a certificate of appropriateness. The Commission shall hold such a public hearing within forty-five (45) days of receipt of the written request.
1. Notice of the date, time, place and purpose of the public hearing shall be sent by regular and electronic mail to the applicant and by regular mail to property owners within two hundred fifty feet (250') of the property for which the application has been made, and said notice shall also be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the Village of Oak Park. The notice shall be sent and published not less than fifteen (15) days nor more than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the hearing. Such notice shall include the date, time and place of the hearing, a general description of the request to be heard, and the address or location of the property to which the request applies. Failure to receive electronic notice shall not invalidate the proceedings of the Commission.

2. At the public hearing, the Commission shall take testimony presented by the applicant and any other interested parties concerning the effect of the proposed alteration, construction, relocation, removal or demolition of an eligible or designated historic landmark upon an eligible or designated historic landmark and the surrounding neighborhood or the effect of the proposed removal or demolition of any structure, building or improvement within a historic district upon the district, and shall conduct such hearings in a manner consistent with the Rules of Procedure for Hearings before the Historic Preservation Commission, as amended from time to time, which are, adopted pursuant to this Article and made a part hereof and as may be amended, from time to time, by action of the Commission and the Village Board. The hearing may be continued to a date certain, with the concurrence of the applicant.
  3. Within fifteen (15) days following the completion of the public hearing, the Commission shall issue or deny the certificate of appropriateness or modify or keep intact conditions of approval related thereto. Notice of the Commission's decision will be sent to the applicant and owner and the Development Customer Services Department within five (5) working days of rendering the decision. Notification procedures outlined under Sections 7-9-6 and 7-9-7 of this Article will apply.
- H. Appeal To The Village Board: Upon denial of the application for a certificate of appropriateness by the Commission or denial of a request to modify conditions related thereto, the applicant may either appeal the denial to the Village Board or may request a certificate of economic hardship.

#### **7-9-13: PROCEDURES FOR CERTIFICATE OF ECONOMIC HARDSHIP:**

- A. Application: Following denial of a certificate of appropriateness by the Commission or by the Village Board on appeal, the owner or designated representative may apply for a certificate of economic hardship by submitting to the Commission a completed application for a certificate of economic hardship, which form shall be available in the Village Hall and in particular, at the Development Customer Services Department.
- B. Public Hearing Process: The Commission shall hold a public hearing within forty-five (45) days of receipt of a completed application for a certificate of economic hardship. Notice of the public hearing shall be sent by regular and electronic mail to the applicant and by regular mail to property owners within two hundred fifty feet (250') of the property for which application has been made. Notice also shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the Village of Oak Park. The notice shall be sent not less than fifteen (15) days nor more than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the hearing. Such notice shall include the date, time and place of the hearing, a general description of the contents of the request to be heard and the address or location of the property to which the request applies. Failure to receive electronic notice shall not invalidate the proceedings of the Commission.

At the public hearing, the Commission shall take testimony presented by the owner(s) and any other interested parties concerning the effect of the proposed alteration, construction, relocation, removal or demolition of an eligible or designated historic landmark or removal or demolition of a building, structure or improvement within a designated historic district based upon the criteria set forth in Section 7-9-11 of this Article and shall conduct such hearing in a manner consistent with the rules of procedure for hearings before the Commission. The hearing may be continued to a date certain. A record shall be kept of all proceedings.

- C. Standards For Commission Decision And Factors To Be Considered: The Commission shall issue a certificate of economic hardship only if the Commission finds that the subject property cannot be put to any reasonably beneficial use or that the owner/applicant will suffer a substantial economic loss thereon without the alteration, construction, relocation, removal or demolition being sought by the owner/applicant and that the owner/applicant is not responsible in any way for the hardship from which he or she is seeking relief. The factors to be considered by the Commission and the Village Board on the issue of economic hardship shall include, but are not limited to, the following:
1. A substantial decrease in the fair market value of the property as a result of the denial of the certificate of appropriateness;
  2. A substantial decrease in the pretax or after-tax return to owners of record or other investors in the property as a result of the denial of the certificate of appropriateness;
  3. The cost of the proposed construction, alteration, relocation or demolition, and an estimate of any additional cost that would be incurred to comply with the recommendations of the Commission for changes necessary for the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness;
  4. The structural soundness of any structures on the property and their suitability for rehabilitation;
  5. The economic feasibility of rehabilitation or reuse of the existing structure or improvement on the property in the case of a proposed demolition.
  6. The owner/applicant's purchase of the subject property after the enactment of the relevant provisions of this Article without making said purchase contingent upon the owner/applicant first obtaining necessary Board and/or Commission approvals under this Article shall be deemed to be conclusive evidence of the fact that the applicant is responsible for the applicant's own economic hardship, if any.
- D. Evidence: The Commission may solicit expert testimony. The applicant may be required to submit evidence at the hearing to support any of the factors, including those listed above, which the applicant believes to have contributed to the economic hardship which the applicant alleges he or she would suffer if the applicant is not granted a certificate of

appropriateness. Specific information and documentation which should be presented by the applicant as competent evidence at the hearing shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. The amount paid for the property, the date of purchase and the party from whom purchased (including description of the relationship, if any, between the owner and the person from whom the property was purchased);
2. The assessed value of the land and improvements thereon according to the two (2) most recent assessments;
3. Real estate taxes for the previous two (2) years;
4. Annual debt service, if any, for the previous two (2) years;
5. All appraisals obtained within the previous two (2) years by the owner or applicant in connection with the owner or applicant's purchase, financing or ownership of the property;
6. Any listing of the property for sale or rent, price asked and offers received, if any;
7. Any consideration by the owner as to profitable adaptive uses for the property;
8. If the property is income-producing, the annual gross income from the property for the previous two (2) years, itemized operating and maintenance expenses for the previous two (2) years, and annual cash flow, if any, during the same period;
9. Executed construction agreements or proposals;
10. Engineering or architect reports on the structural integrity of the building or structure upon which work is being proposed.

In the event that any of the required information is not reasonably available to the applicant and cannot be obtained by the applicant, the applicant shall provide to the Commission a statement of the information which cannot be obtained and describe the reasons why such information cannot be obtained.

E. Issuance Or Denial Of Certificate of Economic Hardship:

1. If the Commission finds that the owner/applicant has not established that the owner/applicant will suffer a demonstrable economic hardship as a result of the denial of a certificate of appropriateness, then the Commission shall deny the applicant's application for a certificate of economic hardship.
2. If the Commission makes an initial determination that the applicant has presented a case which may establish that without approval of the proposed work all

reasonable use of, or return from, a designated historic landmark or building, structure, or improvement within a designated historic district will be denied a property owner, but the Commission finds that reasonable alternatives may exist which should be addressed by the applicant, then the application shall be delayed for a period of no more than sixty (60) days following the finding. During the first thirty (30) days of this period, the Commission shall investigate plans and make recommendations to the owner and Village Board which are intended to provide for reasonable use of, or return from the property, or to otherwise preserve the subject property. During the second thirty (30) days of this period, the applicant will investigate the proposal of the Commission and provide the Commission with written response thereto.

3. If, at the end of this sixty (60) day period, after reviewing its initial finding and its subsequent proposals and the applicant's response thereto, the Commission finds that without approval of the proposed work the property cannot be put to any reasonable use or the owner cannot obtain a reasonable economic return ~~therefrom~~, then the Commission shall issue a certificate of economic hardship approving the proposed work. If the Commission finds otherwise, it shall deny the application for a certificate of economic hardship. Within fifteen (15) days following the completion of the public hearing and within fifteen (15) days of the sixty (60) day delay period provided for in subsection 7-9-13E\_of this Section, if applicable, the Commission shall render its decision on the certificate of economic hardship by adopting a resolution which shall set forth the findings of fact and decision of the Commission either granting or denying the certificate of economic hardship.
4. An executed copy of the resolution shall be sent to the applicant and property owner and the Development Customer Services Department within five (5) working days after the decision.

#### **7-9-14: APPEALS:**

- A. Within fifteen (15) days of receipt of a final denial of a certificate of appropriateness or a certificate of economic hardship by the Commission, the applicant and/or the applicant's representative may appeal the Commission's decision to the Village Board. The Village Board, within forty-five (45) days of the applicant filing an appeal, shall affirm, reverse or modify the decision of the Commission after due consideration of the facts contained in the record, which the Commission shall submit to the Village Board within ten (10) working days of the filing of the appeal. The Village Board may receive comments on the contents of the record, orally at the meeting or in writing, not less than ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which the Board will first consider the appeal but shall not consider any new matters that were not presented during the Commission hearings.



- B. The Village Board shall, within ten (10) days of its decision, advise the applicants and the Commission, in writing, of its final decision and shall direct the Village Manager or the Village Manager’s designee to advise all affected departments of the Village government.
- C. The failure of the Village Board to affirm, modify or reverse the decision of the Commission within forty-five (45) days of the applicant filing an appeal shall be considered as an affirmance by the Village Board of the decision of the Commission and a denial of the appeal, and the Commission shall so notify the applicant and the affected departments of the Village government

The decision of the Village Board will be the final administrative decision of the Village.

**7-9-15: ADVISORY REVIEW PROCEDURES:**

- A. Application For Advisory Review:
  - 1. Advisory review is provided by the Commission as a service to the public. Any owner may, at any time, consult with the Commission to determine whether intended work on a structure may comply with the review guidelines and seek the Commission’s advice on how best to accomplish the work to comply with them.
  - 2. Except as otherwise provided by rules and procedures adopted in accordance with subsection 7-9-15B\_of this Section, any application for a building permit for construction or relocation work on a property within a historic district other than historic landmarks, government-funded projects and structures intended to be demolished (which receive certificate of appropriateness reviews as outlined above), shall be sent to Commission staff by the Development Customer Services Department. The Development Customer Services Department shall not issue a building permit until the Commission, Architectural Review Committee, and/or Commission staff, have reviewed the permit application and acted, or until the passage of thirty (30) days from the filing of the said application, whichever occurs first.
- B. Architectural Review Committee And Commission Liaison Staff Review And Approval: The Commission may propose and the Village Board may approve rules, procedures and criteria under which a committee of the Commission, or the Commission staff liaison, may review applications for advisory review when the proposed work involves: 1) restoration to original conditions, or 2) no changes in materials, or 3) changes not visible the street, or 4) other types of activities determined by the Commission to have limited effect on the historic, architectural or aesthetic qualities of the structure. Such committee or Commission staff liaison shall take one of the following actions within five (5) days from receipt of the application from the Development Customer Services Department:
  - 1. Review the permit application return to the Development Customer Services Department marked: “approved”;

2. Request that the owner meet with the review committee to receive suggestions concerning revisions to the proposed work which will bring it in line with review criteria. As soon as possible, but no later than ten (10) days after the meeting, staff will provide a review summary and confirmation to the applicant and will mark the permit as “approved” for historic review. At this point the applicant is free to either revise the applicant’s plans in accordance with the suggested changes and proceed with the permit process without changes; and
  3. Meet with the owner and/or submit the permit application and project description to the full Commission to review at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
- C. Commission Review: Applications which have been referred to the Commission either directly from the Development Customer Services Department or indirectly through the committee or Commission staff liaison shall be reviewed by the full Commission within thirty (30) days of receipt of the complete application. The applicant shall be notified, in writing, of the date, time and place of the meeting at which a review of the proposed work shall take place. The applicant may be requested to submit plans, drawings, photographs or other information to enable the Commission to conduct a more complete review. The Commission may, at that meeting, make recommendations concerning revisions to the proposed work which will bring the work into conformity with review criteria set forth in Section 7-9-11 of this Article. These recommendations will be forwarded, in writing, to the applicant as soon as possible after this meeting, but no later than ten (10) days after the meeting, and the application for permit will be marked as “approved” for historic review. At this point, the applicant is free to either revise the plans in accordance with the suggested changes and submit them to the Development Customer Services Department, or to submit them without change, and the permit will be issued if the application is otherwise in compliance with Village Code. The Commission may delay issuance of the permit by a period of no longer than thirty (30) days from time of its receipt of the complete permit application in an attempt to resolve nonconformity issues with regard to the review criteria.

**7-9-16: PREVENTION OF DEMOLITION BY NEGLECT:**

The Commission, on its own initiative, may file a petition with the Development Customer Services Department requesting that the Department require correction of defects or repairs to eligible or designated historic landmarks or buildings, structures or improvements in designated historic districts so that such landmarks, buildings, structures or improvements shall be preserved and protected in accordance with the purposes of this Article.

**7-9-17: HAZARDOUS STRUCTURES AND PUBLIC NUISANCES:**

- A. This Article shall not prohibit the demolition of any structure which poses an immediate hazard to human health and safety. When an eligible or designated historic landmark or building, structure or improvement in a designated historic district requires immediate

demolition due to its imminent threat to human health and safety and an authorized Village official, pursuant to ordinance, has made the determination that the landmark, building, structure or improvement should be demolished immediately, then nothing in this Article shall prohibit the demolition of such landmark, building, structure or improvement. The Village official ordering the demolition shall, prior to causing the demolition, attempt notification of the Commission and Commission staff liaison, of the imminent threat posed by the landmark, building, structure or improvement if such notice may be given without jeopardizing human health and safety.

- B. If the Village has, pursuant to official action, declared a building, structure or improvement that is an eligible or designated landmark or is located in a designated historic district as a public nuisance and has authorized its demolition, the Village Manager or the Village Manager's designee shall have a copy of the declaration of public nuisance delivered to the chairperson of the Commission and Commission staff liaison, who shall place the matter on the agenda of the next meeting of the Commission. The Commission shall be authorized to review the building, structure or improvement and determine if the owner or some other person can commence rehabilitation of it immediately. The Commission shall ensure that whoever will rehabilitate the building, structure or improvement shall have either public or private financing, or both, to make sure that the building, structure or improvement is promptly rehabilitated in accordance with the criteria set forth in this Article. If the Commission is unable to secure the rehabilitation of the building, structure or improvement within ninety (90) days of the date that it was declared a public nuisance by the Village or by the date the Village obtains judicial authorization to demolish it, whichever is later, then the Village may proceed with the demolition of the building, structure or improvement.
- C. An owner of a building, structure or improvement eligible or designated as a landmark or located within a historic district shall not be authorized to demolish such building, structure or improvement without filing an application for and obtaining a certificate of appropriateness or certificate of economic hardship, except when an authorized Village official, pursuant to ordinance, or has made the determination that the building, structure or improvement poses an imminent threat to human health and safety and should be demolished immediately.
- D. If the Village has declared an eligible or designated landmark or a building, structure or improvement in a designated historic district to be a public nuisance and, after such declaration, the owner of the building, structure or improvement files an application for a certificate of appropriateness so the building, structure or improvement may be rehabilitated, the Commission may exercise jurisdiction over the application and the structure until such time as the Village obtains judicial authorization to demolish the structure. Once the Village has obtained such judicial authorization, then the rehabilitation of the structure may proceed only if the Village Board consents to withholding its authority to demolish the structure in abeyance while the structure is rehabilitated.

**7-9-18: HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBILITY PROVISIONS:**

Nothing in this Article shall exempt owners from complying with applicable Federal, State or Village laws concerning handicapped accessibility. In providing for handicapped accessibility as may be required by such laws or desired by an owner, every effort shall be made to visually integrate such physical devices as may be necessary to accomplish accessibility with the architectural design of the historic landmark or building, structure or improvement in a historic district. Emphasis shall be placed on providing readily removable physical accessibility provisions such as ramps or chair lifts, with no permanent damage to the historic fabric of the building.

**7-9-19: ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION:**

- A. It shall be unlawful for any person to alter, relocate, remove or demolish any historic landmark or to do construction work on, relocate, remove or demolish any building, structure or improvement within a historic district, or attempt to take any of these actions without complying with the provisions of this Article. Persons violating any provision of this Article other than mandatory advisory review shall also be subject to the institution of proceedings by the Village to prevent, restrain, abate or correct such violations of this Article, including restoration of the building or structure and its site to its appearance prior to the violation if such appearance is integral to the significance of the site or structure as determined by the Commission. Any action to enforce this Section shall be brought by the Village Attorney, the Village Attorney's designee or by designated representatives of the Village Manager. This civil remedy shall be in addition to and not in lieu of any criminal prosecution and penalty contained in this Section.
- B. If construction, alteration, relocation, removal or demolition of an eligible or designated historic landmark or of any building, structure or improvement, located in a designated historic district occurs without a permit or without proper authorization as set forth in this Article, then the Village may seek to revoke the license of the company, individual, principal owner, or its or his/her successors' interest in performing such construction, alteration, relocation, removal or demolition for a period of one year.
- C. If demolition of a historic landmark occurs without a permit, the person causing such demolition shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a misdemeanor offense punishable by incarceration in the County jail for a term not to exceed six (6) months.
- D. Any person violating any provision of this Article shall, upon conviction, be punished by a fine not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00). Each day during which any violation hereof is committed shall constitute a separate offense.

**7-9-20: JUDICIAL REVIEW OF FINAL DECISION:**

Any final decisions rendered by the Village Board under this Article shall be subject to judicial review pursuant to the provisions of the Administrative Review Law, 735 Illinois Compiled Statutes 5/3-101 et seq., as amended, and rules adopted pursuant thereto.

**Section 3. Severability and Repeal of Inconsistent Ordinances.** If any section, paragraph, clause or provision of this Ordinance shall be held invalid, the invalidity thereof shall not affect any of the other provisions of this Ordinance. All ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.



# Village of Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission

## DEFINITIONS

**ADVERSELY AFFECT:** Negatively changing the quality of the historical, architectural, or cultural significance of a historic resource, or the characteristics that qualify the historic resource as historically important.

**ADVISORY REVIEW:** The process of examining the documents prepared by an owner of property and/or an improvement within an historic district that is not an historic landmark which describe proposed construction on such property and/or improvement, which will lead to a certificate of advisory review.

**ALTERATION:** Any act or process that changes one or more of the exterior architectural features of property which has been designated as an historic landmark, or any interior architectural feature of any structure when such interior has been specifically designated as an interior historic landmark.

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:** Importance of a property based on physical aspects of its design, materials, form, style, or workmanship.

**ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE:** A Committee of no less than three (3) members of the Commission appointed by the chairperson. Subsection 7-9-13C of the Village Code authorizes the Commission to recommend and the Village Board to adopt amended rules and regulations which would expand Committee and/or Commission staff authority to minimal types of construction and alteration work requiring a certificate of appropriateness.

**BEST PRACTICES:** A method or technique that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means, and that is used as a benchmark.

**BUILDING PERMIT:** Any permit required by the Permit Processing Division of the Development Customer Services Department of the Village of Oak Park.

**BULK:** The qualitative visual perception of the composition and shape of a building or structure's massing. Bulk is affected by variations in height, setbacks, and step-backs of second stories.

**CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CLG):** A local government officially certified to carry out some of the purposes of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, including to enforce appropriate historic

preservation ordinances, certain delegated SHPO responsibilities, receive federal matching funds for development of their local preservation program, and participate in the National Register of Historic Places nomination process.

**CERTIFICATE OF ADVISORY REVIEW:** A certificate issued by the Commission after advisory review of plans for construction on, or relocation of, property and/or improvements located within an historic district which have not been designated as historic landmarks, indicating that the Commission has conducted a review of the plans and has made recommendations to the owner with regard to same.

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS:** A certificate issued by the Commission indicating its approval of plans for the alteration, or construction, or relocation of an historic landmark, or the removal or demolition of an historic landmark or a building, structure or improvement within an historic district.

**CERTIFICATE OF ECONOMIC HARDSHIP:** A certificate issued by the Commission, after denying a certificate of appropriateness, which authorizes the performance of alterations, construction, or relocation with regard to historic landmarks, or the removal or demolition of an

historic landmark or a building, structure or improvement within an historic district when such historic landmarks, or properties within an historic district, cannot be put to a reasonably beneficial use or the owner will suffer a substantial economic loss thereon without the proposed alteration, construction, relocation, removal or demolition; and the owner is not responsible in any way for the hardship from which he or she is seeking relief.

**COMMISSION:** The Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission.

**COMMISSION STAFF:** An employee of the Village assigned by the Village Manager as staff liaison to the Commission.

**COMPATIBLE:** Able to exist together harmoniously.

**CONSTRUCTION:** Any act or process which requires a building permit, including the act of adding to a structure by an addition, or the erection of a new principal or accessory structure on a lot or property.

**CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE:** A property and/or improvement located within an historic district that represents, in part, the significant historical and/or aesthetic characteristics which qualified that district as an historic district.

**DAY:** A calendar day, except where otherwise specified herein.

**DECORATIVE FEATURE:** Architectural element on a building, structure, or object which is decorative in nature.

**DECORATIVE WINDOWS:** Historic windows that possess special architectural value, or contribute to the building's historic, cultural, or aesthetic character. Decorative windows include those with leaded glass, art glass, stained glass, beveled glass, prismatic glass, Luxfer prisms, or specially shaped windows such as lancet, round-arched, oriel, or Palladian windows.

**DEMOLITION:** The razing or destruction, whether entirely or in significant part of a building, structure, site or object. Demolition includes the removal of a building, structure or object from its site or the removal or destruction of its facade or surface.

**DESIGN:** Quality of integrity applying to the elements that create the physical form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.

**DIFFERENTIATE / VISUAL DISTINCTION:** Specific design elements that separate an addition from an existing building, structure, or object through a change in massing, scale, setbacks, or materials, while still remaining compatible.

**DOCUMENTATION:** Information that describes, locates, and explains a historic property, resource, or improvement. In some cases, specific documentation requests are detailed in the Guidelines.

**ELEVATION:** A "head-on" drawing of a building façade or object, without any allowance for perspective. An elevation drawing will be in a fixed proportion to the measurement on the actual building.

**ELIGIBLE HISTORIC LANDMARK:** Any property and/or improvement nominated for designation as a historic landmark which has been determined by the Commission, after notice and an opportunity to be heard for the owner(s), nominators, and other interested parties in accordance with Section 7-9-6 of the Village Code, to be eligible for designation by resolution and recommendation of the Commission to the Village Board, but which has not yet been so designated by the Village Board.

**EXTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES:** The architectural character and general composition of the exterior of a structure or improvement, including the kind

and texture of all the building materials and the type, design and character of all architectural details, including, but not limited to, windows, walls, roofs, doors, light fixtures, fences, signs, and appurtenant elements.

**FAÇADE:** The face or exterior surface of a building.

**FALSE SENSE OF HISTORY:** New architectural or design elements which strive to mimic historic elements in situations where they never originally existed.

**FEELING:** Aspect of integrity through which a historic property evokes the aesthetic or historic sense of past time and place.

**FUNCTION (or USE):** Purpose for which a site, building, structure, object, or district is used.

**HISTORIC:** Of or created in the past, in particular, something built within the period of significance for the historic district in which the given building, structure, site, object, or improvement is located.

**HISTORICAL:** Of, pertaining to, treating, or characteristic of history or past events.

**HISTORIC CHARACTER:** Used in planning parlance to describe structures and features of architectural and historic interest. The term might be extended to a whole street, block, or area.

**HISTORIC CONTEXT:** Conditions that exist at a certain time in history. An organizing structure for interpreting history that groups information about historic properties which share a common theme, common geographical location, and common time period.

**HISTORIC DISTRICT:** An historic district is an area with geographically definable boundaries, possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of properties and/or improvements united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development that has been designated as an Oak Park historic district pursuant to Village ordinance. A district may include properties and/or improvements which are individually designated as historic landmarks under the Village Code and may also contain other properties and/or improvements which, while not of such individual historical and/or architectural value to be designated historic landmarks, nevertheless contribute to the overall special character or value of the landmark or landmarks located within the district.

**HISTORIC MATERIAL (OR OBJECT):** Material (or object) used in the construction or typical of buildings, structures, sites, or objects greater than 50 years in age or within the period of significance for a designated historic district.

**HISTORIC RESOURCE:** A building, structure, object, or site that is important to history or culture as an example of important architecture, engineering, connections to past people or events, and retains sufficient integrity to convey its story.

**LANDMARK:** Any property and/or improvement which has special character or significant historical, cultural, architectural, archeological, community, or aesthetic value as part of the heritage of the Village of Oak Park, the State of Illinois, or the United States which has been designated as an Oak Park Landmark pursuant to the Ordinance and shall include all designated interior Landmarks.

**GLAZING:** Part of a wall or window made of glass.

**INFILL CONSTRUCTION:** Construction designed to occupy a vacant parcel of land within a developed area.

**IMPORTANT PERSON:** An individual who has made significant contributions to history; specifically, an individual whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context.

**IMPROVEMENT:** Any visible built feature constituting a physical addition or any part of such addition to a property, including any building, structure, fixture, bridge, work of art, place, parking facility, fence, gate, wall, landscaping or paving.

**INTEGRITY:** Authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by physical characteristics that existed during the property's historic or prehistoric period. Integrity is often recognized through seven aspects or qualities: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

**INTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES:** The architectural character and general composition and design of the interior of a building or structure, including the layout, the materials, and the type, pattern and character of all architectural details and elements, including, but not limited to, staircases, doors, hardware, moldings, trim, plaster work, light fixtures, and wall coverings.

**INTERIOR HISTORIC LANDMARK:** An interior, or part thereof, which is normally open or accessible to the public and which has a significant historical or aesthetic interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the Village, State of Illinois or United States and which has been designated as an interior landmark by the Village of Oak Park.

**MAINTAIN:** To keep a building and grounds in an acceptable state of good repair and function in accordance with applicable Oak Park Codes.

**MASONRY:** Brick, concrete block, or natural stone.

**MASS:** The general shape and size of a building.

**MATERIAL IN KIND:** Material that matches existing materials, as much as possible, in material, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities.

**MULLION:** A horizontal or vertical element that connects two adjacent glass panes, sash units, or sections of a curtain wall.

**MUNTIN:** A strip of material, generally wood, separating pieces of glass in a window.

**MOLDING:** A strip of material with various profiles used to cover transitions between surfaces or for decoration.

**NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK (NHL):** A historic property evaluated and found to have significance at the national level and designated as such by the Secretary of the Interior.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES:** Official list of buildings, districts, sites, structures, and objects deemed worthy of preservation due to their importance in United States history. This list is managed by the National Park Service. Properties listed in the National Register that are not otherwise recognized as an Oak Park Landmark or part of a locally recognized historic district generally do not require review by the Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission. However, Commission review may be required for projects involving alteration, demolition, or removal of a site, building, structure, or improvement listed in the National Register that wholly or partially funded by Federal, State, or Village funding sources which are administered by the Village.

**NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE:** Importance of a property to the history of the United States as a nation.

**NOMINATED HISTORIC LANDMARK:** A property and/or improvement nominated by an interested party for consideration by the Commission for designation as an historic landmark prior to determination by the Commission that it is eligible for historic landmark designation.

**NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE:** A property and/or improvement located within an historic district that does not represent significant historical and/or aesthetic characteristics which qualified that district as an historic district under the Village Code.

**OBJECT:** A construction primarily artistic in nature or relatively small in scale and simply constructed, such as a statue or fence.

**ORDINARY MAINTENANCE OR REPAIR:** Any work for which a building permit or Certificate of Appropriateness is not required and where the purpose of such work is stabilization, and further, where such work will not adversely affect the exterior appearance of the historic resource. Any work not satisfying the above requirements



shall not be considered ordinary maintenance and repair.

**OWNER:** Owner of record as determined by the tax rolls except where otherwise specified herein.

**PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE:** The time period in which the building was first built or during which it has derived its historical significance, as stated in the Landmark or historic district nomination. The term may be applied individual historic resources as well as to historic districts.

**PRESERVATION:** To apply measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of a historic property. Work may include preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, as well as ongoing maintenance of the historic building materials.

**PRESERVATION PLANNING:** Series of activities through which goals, priorities, and strategies for identification, evaluation, registration, and protection of historic properties are developed.

**PROPERTY:** Land and improvements identified as a separate lot for purposes of the zoning regulations of the Village of Oak Park.

**PROTECT AND MAINTAIN:** To remove deteriorating corrosion, reapply protective coatings, and install protective measures such as temporary guards; to provide the least degree of intervention.

**PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT:** Work carried out by the Village of Oak Park for public use or service, including, but not limited to, the installation, major repair or improvements to streets, curbs and gutters, alleys, sidewalks, public utilities, streetlights, signs, banners and traffic signals.

**RECONSTRUCTION:** To reproduce in the exact form and detail a building, structure, or artifact as it appeared at a specific period in time.

**REHABILITATION:** To make possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

**RELOCATION:** Any repositioning of an improvement on the same property upon which it is located.

**REMOVAL:** Any moving of an improvement from the property upon which it was originally located.

**RENOVATION:** The act or process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration that makes possible a contemporary use.

**REPAIR:** 1) To maintain a building or portion of a building in place using existing materials and features while employing as little new material as possible. Repair includes patching, piecing-in, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing or upgrading materials. Within

restoration, repair also includes limited replacement in-kind, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, with compatible substitute materials for deteriorated or missing parts of features when there are surviving prototypes. 2) Minor work that does not require a building permit and which does not affect the architectural features of an improvement.

**REPLACE:** To duplicate and replace entire features with new material in kind. Replacement includes the following conditions:

1. Duplication: Replacing elements damaged beyond repair or missing. Original material is indicated as the pattern for creating new duplicated elements.
2. Replacement with New Materials: Replacement with new material when original material is not available as patterns for creating new duplicated elements.
3. Replacement with Substitute Materials: Replacement with compatible substitute materials. Substitute materials are not allowed, unless otherwise indicated.

**RESTORATION:** To accurately depict the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and the reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period.

**REVERSIBLE:** New construction work that can be removed in the future without requiring demolition of historic materials.

**REVIEW:** The process of examining the plans and documents prepared by an owner of property and/or an improvement designated as an Landmark which describes proposed work on the landmark, which will lead to the decision to grant or deny a certificate of appropriateness or a certificate of economic hardship.

**RHYTHM:** A regular pattern of shapes including, but not limited to, windows, doors, projects, and heights, within a building or structure, or a group of same.

**SASH WINDOW:** One or more movable panels or “sashes” that form a frame to hold panes of glass, which are often separated from other panes (or “lights”) by narrow muntins.

**SCALE:** Building elements and details as they proportionally relate to each other and to the human figure. The terms Size, Bulk, and Mass are used when referring to scale and form.

**SETTING:** Quality of integrity applying to the surrounding physical environment of a historic property, including other buildings, structures, site features, landscaping and streets, which contributes to the aesthetic quality of the

historic or architectural resource.

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Importance of a historic property as defined by the Oak Park Historic Preservation Ordinance criteria or the National Register of Historic Places criteria in one or more areas of significance.

**SITE:** The location of an event, activity, building, structure or improvement.

**SIZE:** Two-dimensional measurement of the length and width combined (i.e., square feet).

**STABILIZE:** To apply measures designed to re-establish a weather-resistant enclosure and the structural reinforcement of an item or portion of the building while maintaining the essential form as it exists at present.

**STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER (SHPO):** The official designated by the Governor to administer the State's historic preservation program. SHPOs also advise and assist Federal, State, and local governments in matters of historic preservation such as identifying eligible properties to the National Register and providing consultation for Federal undertakings under the Section 106 provision of the National Historic Preservation Act.

**STOP WORK ORDER:** A written notice from the Village that work on any building, structure or site must stop because it has been or is being implemented contrary to provisions of the Village Code, contrary to the conditions of an approved Certificate of Appropriateness, or in an unsafe and dangerous manner.

**STRUCTURE:** Anything constructed or erected, the use of which requires permanent or semi-permanent location on or in the ground.

**"THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS":**  
*The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, revised U.S. 1990, Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Preservation Assistance Division, Washington, D.C.

**STREET ACCESSORIES:** Those sidewalk or street fixtures which provide cleanliness, comforts, direction, or safety, and are compatible in design to their surroundings, and include,

but are not limited to, trash receptacles, benches, signs, lights, hydrants, and landscaping, including but not limited to trees, shrubbery and planters.

**STREETSCAPE:** A road and its associated elements which together form a view of the street. Elements may include adjoining buildings, street furniture, trees and open spaces.

**SYNTHETIC SIDING or SOFFITS:** Aluminum, vinyl, cement-asbestos shingles, thin pressed wood (Masonite), plywood sheathing, or similar materials which are used to imitate other materials on buildings for siding or soffits, and which are non-historic. Synthetic siding or soffits were normally used, but not always, to cover original historic siding and soffit material.

**TUCKPOINTING:** Repointing masonry by removing existing mortar from joints and filling with new mortar.

**UNUSUAL AND COMPELLING CIRCUMSTANCES:** Those uncommon and extremely rare instances, factually detailed, which would warrant a Commission recommendation for relief to the evidence presented.

**VISIBLE FROM THE STREET:** Able to be seen by a person walking on the public street or sidewalks along the street on which a building is located. In the case of a building located on a corner lot, the street means both streets on which the building is located. "Street" does not mean the alley behind the building.

**VISUAL DISTINCTION / DIFFERENTIATE:** Specific design elements that separate an addition from an existing building, structure or object through a change in massing, scale, setbacks, or materials, while still remaining compatible.

**VISUAL FAÇADE CHANGES:** Any modification to the appearance of a façade caused by alteration, construction or demolition.

**WORK:** Any construction, alteration, repair, relocation, removal, or demolition of an improvement. (Ord. 1999-0-7, 3-15-99)

**WORKMANSHIP:** Quality of integrity applying to the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture, people, or artisan.

## GUIDELINES FOR EXTERIOR MAINTENANCE



*In this photo, the wood base is in contact with the concrete step. Regular wood dampness can eventually lead to rot and deterioration. The spigot should be checked for leaking and the downspout checked to make sure there is appropriate drainage away from the building foundation.*

### BUILDING MAINTENANCE

The historic architecture of the Village of Oak Park includes a large quantity of well-constructed housing stock from the late-19th through the mid-20th centuries. Regular maintenance allows them to continue to serve Village residents, now and in the future.

A home is typically a family's largest single investment. One of the best ways to retain your property's value is to adopt a regular maintenance schedule. However, unlike the buyer of a car, a new homeowner does not receive an operator's manual or warranty book outlining recommended maintenance. As a result, some homeowners may not do regular maintenance or repair until a serious problem appears. When the problem is finally noticed, repairs can be much more difficult and costly to address.

The Guidelines were developed in conjunction with the Village of Oak Park's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). For more information regarding application and review procedures, please consult the *Guidelines Introduction* or contact Village Historic Preservation staff at [historicpreservation@oak-park.us](mailto:historicpreservation@oak-park.us) or by visiting Village Hall.

### BUILDING ENVELOPE DETERIORATION

The exterior of a building typically consists of a roof, walls, windows and doors. Each of these elements can be constructed from various materials, for instance wood siding on wall surfaces or asphalt shingles on the roof. Overall, these building elements work together to create a system that protects the interior of the building from moisture and the weather. Some of the environmental conditions that can affect the exterior building components include:

- Moisture, rain, snow, ice, humidity, and groundwater
- Wind
- Sunlight
- Temperature variations
- Atmospheric chemicals and acid rain
- Insects, birds and rodents
- Vegetation, molds, algae, and fungi

All building materials, new or old, will deteriorate over time. Environmental factors have the potential to damage a building's exterior and cause deterioration. The potential reactions are further complicated by the way the materials are installed, joined together, and are located. But if you adopt a regular maintenance and repair program for your building, the rate of deterioration can be dramatically slowed, allowing your historic building to last for centuries.

## MAINTENANCE IS PRESERVATION

Regular maintenance helps preserve buildings and property, protects real estate values and investments, and keeps the Village of Oak Park an attractive place to live, work, and visit. Lack of regular upkeep can result in accelerated deterioration of buildings and sites. For example, small openings or unpainted surfaces let moisture inside the exterior and can eventually lead to rot and other forms of damage. Long-term lack of maintenance can also affect a building's structure, which will require much more significant and expensive repairs.

It is important for property owners to inspect their properties regularly to identify potential problems as soon as possible. If problems are detected early, a small amount of money can improve a property's overall appearance and value, but also can prevent or postpone extensive and costly future repairs. Regular maintenance items typically include painting, cleaning gutters and downspouts, and removing vines, moss, and other plants from the surface of the walls and roof. It is also prudent to inspect the roof and any signs of water infiltration, and to identify any open joints in masonry as well as cracks or bulges in the walls.

## REPAIRS & REPLACEMENT

When it is no longer possible to maintain a historic feature such as a bracket, porch railing, or trim detail, repairs or replacement may be necessary. In the case of historic buildings, these features are often important to the overall character of the building and great care should be taken in their repair or replacement. By concentrating specifically on areas of deterioration, repairs can maintain the condition of buildings and ensure they are weather-resistant and structurally sound.

For example, you can repair portions of an existing wood window rather than replacing it in full. When a feature is too damaged or deteriorated to repair, the HPC encourages replacement "in-kind." This means replacing the damaged historic feature with a new version that matches the original as closely as possible in style, shape, size, and material. Although it is tempting to install newer materials such as vinyl siding or windows, many of these materials are not compatible with historic building systems and can lead to costly future repairs or a frequent, ongoing replacement schedule.

## DEMOLITION BY NEGLECT

The Village of Oak Park has provisions within its Codes to prevent demolition by neglect, which is the destruction of a building or structure caused by the failure to perform maintenance over a long period of time.

## INSULATION & AIR INFILTRATION

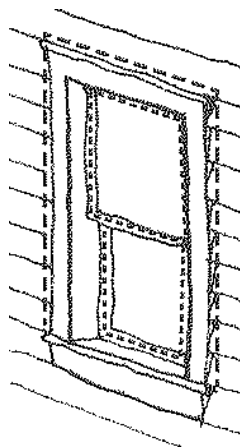
Insulation can be a very efficient and cost-effective means of reducing heat loss in a building and associated heating and cooling bills.

There are three general types of insulation:

- Rigid board insulation
- Fiberglass batt insulation
- Blow-in insulation, which includes fiberglass, rock wool, cellulose, and expanding foam insulation

When combined with a vapor barrier, which is integral to most batt insulations, insulation can reduce the amount of moisture that enters through a building's exterior. It is important to check the recommendations for your climate as well as your attic design, including whether your attic is vented. In climates like Oak Park, it is generally recommended that the vapor barrier be installed between the interior living space and the insulation. When installing batt insulation at an attic floor, the vapor barrier should be facing down and the fiberglass batts exposed within the attic. In addition to the attic and walls, it is also important to insulate the perimeter of the basement or crawlspace and the underside of the first floor framing.

Before installing insulation, make sure to seal or caulk all cracks and openings. If the basement or crawlspace is not heated, insulate the water heater and exposed piping and ducts. Typical areas of concern are adequate attic, kitchen, bathroom and laundry area ventilation as well as any areas of leaks or condensation. A door blower air test can locate exterior wall openings.



*Recommended weather stripping locations:*

- Behind window sash track
- Between window meeting rails
- At perimeters of doors and windows

*Recommended caulk locations:*

- Between door/window frame and adjacent wall
- Between abutting materials such as corner boards and siding, porch and wall surface
- Between dissimilar materials such as masonry and wood or flashing and a wall surface.

## WINDOWS

Properly maintained wood windows generally account for only 10% of overall heat loss in a home. To minimize the heat loss through your windows, verify that windows operate and sit properly in their frames, the sashes are locked in place, the frame perimeters are caulked and weather stripping is installed around each sash. Storm windows can increase the thermal efficiency of windows; wood exterior or interior storm windows are generally most appropriate for historic houses. Interior storm windows can substantially reduce condensation and are typically easily removed during warm weather.

## BUILDING CODES

For construction projects on existing buildings, Oak Park uses the International Existing Building Code, which works in conjunction with the International Residential Code (IRC), for residential work and the International Building Code (IBC) for commercial buildings, each with local amendments. The Codes are intended to protect the public health, safety and welfare of citizens from the hazards of inadequate, defective, or unsafe conditions. The Codes address the interior and exterior conditions of buildings, building systems, and the surrounding property. Oak Park has also adopted the State of Illinois Energy Conservation Code. All codes may be amended from time to time at the local or state level. For specific information regarding the applicable codes for your project, please contact the Permit Processing Division at (708) 358-5430 or at [www.oak-park.us](http://www.oak-park.us).

## SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Repair and maintenance of a building can be potentially dangerous. Please follow all manufacturers' recommendations and take all appropriate safety precautions with ladders, tools, materials and processes. You should consult a professional for work that is unfamiliar or potentially unsafe. Older buildings can also have dangerous materials such as asbestos, lead, radon, and mold that might be uncovered during work. Familiarize yourself with these materials and your building's conditions prior to starting any work.

## PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

To help you document the current condition of your building and keep track of the maintenance tasks you perform; the following pages include preventive maintenance checklists. The checklists refer to typical problems associated with various materials and provide you with recommended actions. The checklist should be modified to address the specific materials at your property. If a building has serious problems, you should contact a qualified architect or engineer with experience addressing similar historic properties who can recommend an appropriate treatment approach.

Homeowners should conduct property reviews at a minimum each spring and fall. The spring review will help you identify work that should be completed during the warm weather months, while the fall review will assist in weatherization before winter and the identification of projects that should be scheduled for the following year.

Areas of deterioration or problems such as leaking after a storm should be photographed during each inspection. Dating the photographs can help you document the problem's progression and assist you in planning for repairs.

## RECOMMENDED BEST MAINTENANCE PRACTICES FOR ANY BUILDING OR STRUCTURE

### Maintenance

#### *Recommended:*

- Conduct semi-annual reviews of buildings and structures to identify maintenance and repair needs - typically in the spring and fall
- Prolong the life of original materials on historic structures with regular maintenance
- Avoid replacing original materials with newer materials

### Repair & Replacement

#### *Recommended:*

- Non-intrusive repairs, focused on deteriorated areas and stabilizing and protecting the building's important materials and features
- When repair is not possible, replace in-kind to the greatest extent possible - reproduce the original feature exactly using similar techniques to match the original material, size, scale, finish, detailing and texture
- When replacement in-kind is not possible, use compatible materials and techniques that convey an appearance similar to the original feature, similar in design, color, texture, finish and visual quality to the historic elements

- Install recycled and sustainable materials for repair and replacement work whenever possible

#### *Not Recommended:*

- Modern materials that can accelerate and cover up deterioration
- Modern materials that are not compatible with historic materials or are stylistically incompatible with the building
- Removal or covering of decorative building features and elements

### Insulation & Air Infiltration

#### *Recommended:*

- Install insulation after addressing all existing moisture problems
- Ensure adequate air flow in attics, bathrooms, kitchens, and laundry areas
- Make sure windows are operable and sit properly in frames
- Install weather stripping at windows and doors
- Caulk open joints around windows, doors, and where dissimilar materials adjoin
- Install properly-sized exterior or interior storm windows

## ROOFING & ROOFING ELEMENTS CHECKLIST

As a general rule, roofing and its associated components should be reviewed every spring and fall, when cleaning leaves and debris from gutters and downspouts. Also check gutters, downspouts, and attics during rainstorms to determine whether they are functioning properly. Flat roofs are best viewed immediately after rain to determine if there is any standing water or ponding. Be careful when maintaining roofs as they are potentially dangerous, particularly when wet.

If you question whether the severity of deterioration warrants replacement of an element, consult a professional. It is usually less costly to fix a small problem than to delay action and cause more extensive deterioration and repair. For more, refer to *Guidelines for Roofing*.



*In the above photo, slates are cracked, dislodged, and missing. Some of the surfaces are flaking and approximately 25- 30% of the slates on this roof are either missing or damaged. Given the extent of the problems, roof replacement would be appropriate.*

MATERIAL / LIFE SPAN	INSPECTION REVIEW	RECOMMENDED ACTION
<b>Roofing - General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sagging or bowing of roof ridge, surface or rafters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Can indicate significant structural problems. Consult an architect or structural engineer, particularly if condition worsens.</li> </ul>
<b>Slate, Clay Tile, Concrete Tile</b> Typical life span 50+ years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laid on open sheathing or batten strips (verify from attic)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Confirm proper ventilation in attic.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broken or missing slates or tiles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Re-attach, re-secure, or replace loose or missing units in kind.</li> </ul>
<b>Asbestos Shingles</b> Typical life span 30+ years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shingles delaminating or flaking apart</li> <li>• Slate or tile particles visible in valleys, gutters and downspouts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Replace deteriorated or missing individual units in-kind.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consider roof replacement when substantial number of units are split, cracked, missing, or deteriorated.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nails popping up or deteriorated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Re-fasten or replace affected nails.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moss, mold, algae growing on roof surface</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Clean and treat surface to inhibit future growth.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Trim back overhanging tree limbs to allow direct sunlight onto roof surface.</li> </ul>
<b>Asphalt Shingles</b> Typical life span 20+ years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual shingles are cracked or uniformly thin from erosion</li> <li>• Missing shingles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Replace deteriorated shingles with visually similar, non-asbestos roof shingles.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consider roof replacement if deterioration is substantial or prevalent.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mineral granules in gutters and at the base of downspouts</li> <li>• Mineral granules almost totally worn off shingle surface</li> <li>• Edges of shingles look worn</li> <li>• Missing shingles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Replace deteriorated or missing individual shingles in-kind.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consider roof replacement when substantial number of units are split, cracked, missing, or deteriorated.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nails popping up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Re-fasten or replace affected nails.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moss or mold forming on roof surface</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Clean and treat surface to prevent future growth.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Trim back overhanging tree limbs to allow sunlight to hit roof surface.</li> </ul>

MATERIAL / LIFE SPAN	INSPECTION REVIEW	RECOMMENDED ACTION
<b>Flat Roofs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bubbles, separation, or cracking of the asphalt or roofing felt</li> <li>• Roof feels loose or spongy underfoot</li> <li>• Water ponding on roof</li> <li>• Mineral granules or gravel worn away</li> <li>• Roofing felt alligatored or cracked</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Consider patching seams with compatible materials if area is isolated.</li> <li>□ Consider roof replacement if deterioration is substantial or leaking is observed. Verify condition of roof substrate.</li> </ul>
<b>Metal Roofs</b> Typical life span 60+ years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substantial number of rust or corrosion spots</li> <li>• Signs of previous tar patch jobs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Tin, terne-coated steel, and terne-coated stainless all need regular repair and painting every 5-10 years and can last for decades if properly maintained.</li> <li>□ Consider patching with compatible materials if area of deterioration is isolated.</li> <li>□ Consider roof replacement if deterioration is substantial or prevalent.</li> </ul>
<b>Wood Shingles or Shakes</b> Typical life span 15+ years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Punctures in the metal</li> <li>• Broken joints or seams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Consider patching or re-soldering with compatible materials if area is isolated.</li> <li>□ Consider roof replacement if deterioration is substantial or prevalent. Verify condition of roof substrate.</li> </ul>
<b>Flashing</b> (Formed sheet metal at joint intersections to prevent moisture penetration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bounce in surface of fat metal roof</li> <li>• Ponding or standing water on surface</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Consider roof replacement if deterioration is substantial or prevalent.</li> </ul>
<b>Roof Projections</b> (TV dish, antenna, dormer, skylight, vent, pipe, solar or mechanical equipment, lightning rod, cupola, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laid on open sheathing or batten strips (verify from attic)</li> <li>• Moss or mold forming on roof surface</li> <li>• Cupping or warping of wood</li> <li>• Individual shingles or shakes are split</li> <li>• Individual shingles or shakes are uniformly thin from erosion</li> <li>• Missing shingles or shakes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Provide proper ventilation in attic.</li> <li>□ Clean and treat surface to inhibit future growth.</li> <li>□ Trim back overhanging tree limbs to allow direct sunlight onto roof surface.</li> <li>□ Replace deteriorated shingles or shakes in-kind.</li> <li>□ Consider roof replacement if deterioration is substantial or prevalent.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loose, corroded, broken or missing flashing</li> <li>• Roofing cement or tar on flashing</li> <li>• Un-caulked openings or gaps at the tops of flashing</li> <li>• Vertical joint does not have both base and counter flashing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Consider patching or replacement with compatible materials if area of deterioration is isolated, such as around a chimney.</li> <li>□ Consider roof replacement if deterioration is substantial.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connections around roof projections are not properly flashed and watertight</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Consider patching with compatible materials if area of deterioration is isolated.</li> <li>□ Consider flashing replacement if deterioration is substantial.</li> </ul>

MATERIAL / LIFE SPAN	INSPECTION REVIEW	RECOMMENDED ACTION
Chimneys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flashing around chimney is not watertight</li> <li>Mortar joints in chimney are open or badly weathered</li> <li>Masonry or stucco coating is cracked or crumbling</li> <li>Chimney is leaning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider patching with compatible materials if area of deterioration is isolated.</li> <li>Re-point deteriorated or open mortar joints.</li> <li>Consider replacement if deterioration is substantial. Replacement might necessitate chimney rebuilding from the roof surface up. Decorative details should be reused or replicated where possible.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chimney is not properly capped</li> <li>Chimney is not properly lined</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install an appropriate chimney cap for the building style.</li> <li>Install a chimney liner if wood-burning fireplaces are used or if masonry inside of flue is crumbling.</li> </ul>
Gutters & Downspouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clogged gutters or downspouts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review roof drainage during a rainstorm. Water should collect in gutters and flow through downspouts without “spilling over” roof edge.</li> <li>Clean out debris at least twice each year, in the spring and fall, or more frequently based on debris accumulation.</li> <li>Install screens over length of gutters and/or strainers over downspout locations.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rusty, loose, askew or tilting gutters or downspouts</li> <li>Open or missing seams in hanging gutters</li> <li>Missing sections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider repair or patching with compatible materials if area of deterioration is isolated.</li> <li>Consider gutter or downspout replacement if deterioration is substantial or sections are missing.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broken seams in metal lining of built-in box gutter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-solder open joints.</li> <li>Consider replacement if deterioration is substantial.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water ponding adjacent to foundation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-grade area at foundation to direct water away from building.</li> <li>Verify water exiting from downspouts is directed away from building foundation. Install splash blocks or downspout extensions at the base of downspouts.</li> </ul>



*This chimney is leaning and has visible open joints. The chimney should be dismantled and rebuilt to match the existing form and details.*



*The “alligatored” roof surface shown here indicates deterioration and possible need for replacement.*



## EXTERIOR WOODWORK CHECKLIST

Exterior woodwork should be examined every spring and fall. This will alert a property owner to damage that occurred over the winter and allow for immediate repair. An examination in the fall allows you to prepare for winter and plan for spring repairs and painting.

If you question whether the severity of deterioration warrants the replacement of a component or an element, consult with a professional. For further information, refer to the *Guidelines for Exterior Wood Siding & Trim* and *Guidelines for Windows & Doors*.



*Gaps or openings in wood siding should be repaired to prevent moisture and pests from entering the wall cavity.*

MATERIAL	INSPECTION REVIEW	RECOMMENDED ACTION
<b>Exterior Walls - General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exterior walls not plumb or vertically straight</li> <li>• Bulges visible at exterior walls</li> <li>• Door and window frames out-of-square</li> <li>• Siding has wavy surface</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Can indicate differential or uneven foundation settlement or significant structural problems. Consult with an architect or structural engineer, particularly if the condition worsens.</li> </ul>
<b>Wood Siding, Wall Shingles &amp; Decorative Woodwork</b> <b>Asbestos Siding</b> (Care should be taken in the handling, removal and disposal of asbestos. Refer to Safety Precautions section for more information.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loose, cracked, missing, or open joints at wood siding, shingles, or decorative woodwork</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Could lead to water infiltration and rot. Repair or replace in-kind as appropriate.</li> <li>□ Apply caulk to open joints. Verify compatibility with adjacent materials.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loose, cracked, missing or open joints at asbestos siding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Fill hole or split with grout of Portland cement mixed with water.</li> <li>□ Replace damaged shingles with non-asbestos shingles to match original.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thin or worn shingles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Attempt patching with compatible materials if area of deterioration is isolated.</li> <li>□ Consider replacement in-kind if deterioration is substantial or prevalent.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open joints around window and door frames</li> <li>• Open joints between dissimilar materials (such as wood siding and porch roof)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Re-caulk, repair or replace deteriorated flashing as appropriate. Verify compatibility of caulk with adjacent materials.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mold, algae or mildew on siding or trim, especially on north side or shady areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Indication of potential moisture problem. Verify whether a vapor barrier is present in wall.</li> <li>□ Clean and treat surface to inhibit future growth. Do not use high pressure water since this could result in more significant problems.</li> <li>□ Trim back shrubs and overhanging tree limbs to allow air circulation and sunlight to hit surface.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Original siding or trim has been covered with vinyl or aluminum siding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Vinyl and aluminum siding and capping can trap moisture and hide rot and damage. It possible, vinyl or aluminum siding and capping should be removed and woodwork inspected for damage and repaired.</li> </ul>	

MATERIAL	INSPECTION REVIEW	RECOMMENDED ACTION
<b>Water &amp; Insect Damage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vegetation, such as shrubs, are located immediately adjacent to foundation</li> <li>• Vines climbing on building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Vegetation can trap moisture in woodwork by blocking sunlight and air circulation. Remove vegetation close to building or conduct regular inspections for rot behind vegetation.</li> <li>□ Climbing vines can trap moisture and dislodge plaster and mortar. Remove climbing vines.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wood is located on masonry foundation or pier or within 6 inches of ground</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Wood on masonry foundation or piers or close to the ground can be a target for rot and insects. Conduct regular inspections and review alternatives.</li> <li>□ Retain a pest management company to provide regular inspections.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signs of dirt veins on exterior walls, particularly near foundation, steps, under porches, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Possible indication of insect damage; contact extermination company to determine if infestation is active and extent of damage.</li> </ul>
<b>Windows &amp; Doors</b> (Refer to <i>Guidelines for Windows &amp; Doors</i> for more information.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Windows and doors do not it or operate properly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Verify whether frame is racked or out-of-square – possibly an indication of differential or uneven foundation settlement or deteriorated wall framing.</li> <li>□ Verify whether windows are painted shut and hardware (including sash cord or chain) is functional.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wood rot, particularly at sills and lower rails</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Repair or selectively replace deteriorated components in-kind.</li> <li>□ Following repairs, verify deteriorated areas are well painted and joints caulked.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Window is not operational</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Verify whether window has been painted shut.</li> <li>□ Verify whether sash cords are attached to weights.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glass is cracked</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Replace glazing to match existing.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glazing putty is missing, cracked or deteriorated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Replace glazing putty. Verify compatibility with adjacent materials. Older putty can contain asbestos. See Safety Precautions .</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Screen windows or doors are missing, deteriorated or non-operational</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Repair or replace deteriorated units as appropriate.</li> <li>□ Consider installing interior storm windows and doors. Interior installation can minimize potential condensation between the storm and window, reduce drafts, and are virtually invisible thus maintaining the exterior appearance of the building.</li> </ul>
<b>Painting</b> (Refer to <i>Guidelines for Exterior Wood Siding &amp; Doors</i> for painting information.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chalky or dull finish</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Surface cleaning might be all that is needed.</li> <li>□ If repainting, additional preparation might be required.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paint surface worn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Wood generally needs repainting every 8 to 10 years.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peeling, curling, crazing and blistering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Possible indication of a moisture problem. Review drainage, potential leaks and vapor barrier in wall.</li> <li>□ Paint failures near roofs, downspouts and porch and ceilings are often the result of drainage problems.</li> </ul>

## EXTERIOR MASONRY & STUCCO CHECKLIST

Almost all buildings include some masonry - in some cases as a wall material, but typically as a foundation, pier, or chimney. Since masonry is often used as part of the structural system for older buildings, it is critical that it is maintained to prevent serious problems. For the best results, all masonry repair, stucco repair, and cleaning should be done when the temperature is consistently between 45 and 90 degrees Fahrenheit. This will minimize potential cracking and problems associated with colder temperatures and shrinkage that occurs during warmer temperatures.

If you question whether the severity of deterioration warrants replacement of an element, consult with a professional. It is usually less costly to fix a small problem than to delay action and cause more extensive deterioration and repair.



*A previous vertical crack has been improperly repaired with hard grout smeared onto the wall surface. The second diagonal crack suggests a settlement or foundation problem.*

MATERIAL	INSPECTION REVIEW	RECOMMENDED ACTION
<b>Exterior Walls &amp; Piers - General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cracks in masonry wall</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Can indicate differential or uneven foundation settlement or significant structural problems. Consult with an architect or structural engineer, particularly if the condition worsens.</li> <li>□ Vertical or diagonal cracks or the cracks that split individual bricks or stones tend to represent a more significant problem, such as differential settlement.</li> <li>□ Horizontal cracks or hairline cracks limited to mortar joints or individual stones or bricks tend to be less severe.</li> <li>□ Monitor and photograph conditions after repair during each inspection to see if the cracks return.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bows or bulges in wall plane</li> <li>• Leaning walls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Can indicate differential or uneven foundation settlement or significant structural problems. Consult with an architect or structural engineer, particularly if the condition worsens.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water ponding adjacent to foundation</li> <li>• Vegetation, such as shrubs, are located immediately next to foundation</li> <li>• Vines are growing on walls</li> <li>• Damp walls</li> <li>• Moss or algae on masonry surface</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Verify water from downspout is directed away from building foundation. Install splash blocks or downspout extensions at base of downspouts.</li> <li>□ Vegetation can trap moisture in masonry by blocking sunlight and air circulation. Remove or thin the vegetation close to a building or conduct regular inspections for algae and mold behind vegetation; remove vines.</li> <li>□ Re-grade area adjacent to foundation to direct ground water away from building.</li> <li>□ Clean moss or algae from wall surface with low pressure water, with the possible use of detergent and brushing.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efflorescence, i.e. water-soluble salts leached out of masonry and deposited on a surface by evaporation, usually as a white, powdery surface</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Clean efflorescence from wall surface with low pressure water. Use a gentle detergent and a natural bristle brush, if necessary.</li> <li>□ Review area for any additional sources of moisture.</li> </ul>

MATERIAL	INSPECTION REVIEW	RECOMMENDED ACTION
Mortar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soft and crumbling</li> <li>• Open joints or broken joint bonds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Consider patching with compatible mortar if area of deterioration is isolated. New should match the original in appearance, profile, hardness, and composition.</li> <li>□ Consider replacement if deterioration is substantial.</li> </ul>
Stones & Bricks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spalling, chipping, faking, cracking or crumbling of surface</li> <li>• Loose or missing stones or bricks</li> <li>• Pitted surface from sandblasting or pressure wash</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Consider patching with compatible materials if area of deterioration is isolated.</li> <li>□ Consider replacement if deterioration is substantial.</li> <li>□ Masonry with a damaged surface is more likely to absorb moisture leading to accelerated deterioration. Consult a professional.</li> <li>□ Monitor and photograph condition to see if it continues to deteriorate.</li> <li>□ Review adjacent materials and interior finishes for signs of moisture infiltration and rot.</li> </ul>
Stucco	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cracks in surface</li> <li>• Bulges in wall</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Consider patching with compatible stucco if area of deterioration is isolated.</li> <li>□ Consider replacement if deterioration is substantial.</li> <li>□ Substantial cracks might indicate differential or uneven foundation settlement or severe structural problems. Consult an architect or structural engineer, particularly if condition worsens.</li> <li>□ Verify keying of stucco to lath or underlying substrate. If wall area moves when pushed, stucco is not bonded and should be replaced with compatible material to avoid potential surface collapse.</li> </ul>
Painted Masonry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chalky or dull finish</li> <li>• Peeling, faking, curling and blistering</li> <li>• Paint surface worn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Additional preparation might be required prior to repainting depending on the surface.</li> <li>□ Possible indication of a moisture problem. Review drainage, potential leaks and whether there is a vapor barrier in the wall.</li> <li>□ Paint failures near the roof edge, downspouts and porch ceilings and foundations are often the result of drainage problems.</li> <li>□ Painted masonry needs repainting every 5 to 8 years with compatible paint.</li> </ul>



*The stucco has not been maintained and the bricks under the porch post are falling out of position. The dislodged bricks can lead to structural problems at the porch if not repaired.*

## PROPERTY CHECKLIST

Exterior maintenance extends beyond buildings to include the surrounding property. Seasonal property maintenance includes cutting grass, shoveling snow, and raking leaves. Larger maintenance issues include water management on the site, trimming trees, and regular repairs to fences, walls, walkways and paved surfaces. For further information, please refer to *Guidelines for Site Elements*.

*Without proper upkeep, tripping hazards can develop at steps and walkways. There are significant cracks and openings in these steps, exposing the reinforcing bars to storm water and de-icing salts. This can accelerate the rusting of the reinforcing bars and the deterioration of the concrete.*



MATERIAL	INSPECTION REVIEW	RECOMMENDED ACTION
Water Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groundwater directed towards building foundation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Re-grade area at foundation to direct ground water away from building.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water ponding adjacent to foundation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Verify water from exiting downspouts is directed away from building foundation. Install splash blocks or downspout extensions at base of downspouts.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vegetation, such as shrubs, are located immediately next to foundation or vines are climbing on buildings</li> <li>• Tree limbs extend over roof</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Vegetation can trap moisture in wall surfaces by blocking sunlight and reducing air circulation. Remove or thin vegetation close to a building or conduct regular inspections for rot, algae, fungus and mold behind vegetation. Remove climbing vines.</li> <li>□ Trim limbs within 5 feet of house. They provide shade from the sun that can lead to the formation of moss, fungus, mold or algae; leaves and debris collect and clog gutters and downspouts. Tree limbs have the potential to cause severe damage if they fall during a storm.</li> </ul>
Metal & Wood Fences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metal fences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Check for rust spots or bare metal. Remove rust, prepare and re-paint.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wood fences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Check for deterioration, and follow recommendations in the <i>Exterior Wood Siding &amp;</i></li> </ul>
Walkways, Patios & Pavers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brick, flagstone, or concrete pavers cracked or missing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Verify the condition of the sub-base and replace deteriorated or missing units in-kind.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water ponding on paved surface</li> <li>• Subsidence of paved surface</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Verify the condition of the sub-base and reset individual units to allow appropriate drainage.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vegetation growing between individual units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Some vegetation has a substantial root structure that can dislodge individual paving units. Remove vegetation if appropriate.</li> </ul>
Asphalt Paving & Driveways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cracked asphalt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Seal cracks to minimize potential water infiltration.</li> <li>□ Consider sealing or repaving entire surface if cracks are substantial or prevalent.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water ponding on paved surface</li> <li>• Subsidence of paved surface</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Verify the condition of the sub-base and patch to allow appropriate drainage.</li> </ul>

## INTERIOR CHECKLIST

Although the HPC does not review interior work except on designated Interior Landmarks, exterior maintenance problems can be most obvious on the interior of a building. The locations most likely to reveal exterior problems tend to be the least-visited parts of a house, such as the attic and basement. It is important to remember that attics and basements tend to be unique spaces with distinct conditions. Attics usually sit directly under roofs which can be highly susceptible to water infiltration. Similarly, basements are also susceptible to moisture and pest infestation and damage. These spaces tend to be unconditioned, without the same heat, air conditioning and moisture control as the rest of the building. As a result, problems can fester and become severe before being noticed.



*The dark areas at the top and side of the diagonal wood brace indicate moisture. The end of the diagonal wood frame is rotting. The cause of the moisture infiltration should be addressed, and the wood framing repaired or replaced.*

MATERIAL	INSPECTION REVIEW	RECOMMENDED ACTION
Attic Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water stains on rafters or roof boards, probably indicated by a dark patch on the wood or plaster or a white bloom representing salt crystallization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Review during or after a rainstorm to understand whether staining is an active or past problem. Pay attention to flashing locations around roof penetrations such as vent pipes, chimneys and dormer windows, as well as at valleys and eaves.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mildew on underside of roof structure</li> <li>• Dampness in attic space</li> <li>• Overheated attic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Verify if the attic is sufficiently ventilated.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broken or missing collar beams</li> <li>• Cracked or sagging rafters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Potential structural problem. Consult with an architect or structural engineer, particularly if the condition worsens.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate insulation at attic floor or between rafters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Install appropriate insulation as per the Energy Code.</li> </ul>
Basement & Crawlspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mortar of walls or piers is soft and crumbling</li> <li>• Damp or moldy smell</li> <li>• Evidence of dampness under first floor framing or around pipes</li> <li>• Evidence of wood rot or insect infestation at wood sills on top of foundation walls or first floor joists</li> <li>• Periodic flooding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Review for potential moisture infiltration.</li> <li>□ Verify water exiting from downspouts is directed away from building foundation. Install splash blocks or downspout extensions at base of downspouts.</li> <li>□ Re-grade area at foundation to direct ground water away from building.</li> <li>□ Verify that foundation vents are clear of debris.</li> <li>□ Check underground water supply and drainage systems for cracked or clogged pipes.</li> <li>□ Re-point areas of deteriorated mortar.</li> <li>□ Apply stucco plaster to brick piers.</li> <li>□ Hire a pest management company to provide regular inspections and contact immediately for potential infestation.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate insulation around pipes, heating and air conditioning ducts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Install appropriate insulation as per the Energy Code. Condensation can form on unheated equipment and pipes.</li> </ul>



## REQUIREMENTS FOR MASONRY & STUCCO



Many of Oak Park's apartment buildings are brick with limestone trim. This is a less-common, single-family residential example.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MASONRY

Exterior masonry materials include stone, brick, terra cotta, and stucco. These exterior surfaces serve both visual and functional purposes. Visually, they are an important design feature that establishes the rhythm and scale of a building. They also establish a building's mass and proportion and can add pattern, texture, and artistic details. Exterior masonry types can be characteristic of certain architectural styles.

Functionally, historic exterior masonry can act as the principal load bearing system for the building, as well as its "skin," shedding water and deflecting sunlight and wind. It acts as a weather-tight enclosure, providing protection from rain, wind, and sun.

- Retain and preserve masonry features that are important in defining the over character of a building, such as walls, brackets, railings, cornices, window architraves, door pediments, steps, columns, and details such as tooling and bonding patterns, coatings, and color.
- Repair masonry walls and other masonry features by repointing the mortar joints where there is evidence of deterioration such as disintegrating mortar, cracks in mortar joints, loose bricks, damp walls, or damaged plaster work.
- Retain and preserve non-deteriorated mortar in sound joints. It is not necessary to repoint an entire building to achieve a uniform appearance. Only repoint deteriorated joints to match existing.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT STUCCO

Stucco is an exterior coating that provides a more finished appearance to a building. It acts as a weather repellent, protecting the building from the elements. Stucco can also provide an insulating layer to a wall and can improve a building's fire resistance.

The components of stucco are similar to mortar. They include sand, lime, Portland cement, water, and possible binders like animal hair or straw. In some cases, pigments are added to alter the finished color.

### WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN DOING A MASONRY OR STUCCO PROJECT

- Is the work visible from the street?
- Does the work meet the definition of Demolition as defined by the Village of Oak Park? (see *Guidelines Definitions*) If yes, it will require a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- Is the building or structure a Contributing Resource within a local historic district?
- When repointing (tuck-pointing), match the historic mortar color and materials, as well as the joint type, size, and texture.
- New brick should match historic brick in size, texture, color, and composition.
- Maintain existing patterns found on the exterior.
- Clean masonry and stucco with appropriate methods.
- Prevent water infiltration.

## RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES FOR ANY MASONRY OR STUCCO PROJECT

### Masonry

- Repair, stabilize, and conserve fragile masonry by using well-tested consolidants when appropriate. Repairs should be physically and visually compatible and identifiable upon close inspection for future research.
- Protect and maintain masonry by providing proper drainage so that water does not stand on flat, horizontal surfaces or accumulate in curved decorative features.

### Cleaning

- Clean masonry only when necessary to halt deterioration or remove heavy soiling.
- Do not use a cleaning method that uses water or liquid cleaners when there is a possibility of freezing temperatures.
- Clean masonry surfaces with the gentlest method possible, such as low pressure water and mild detergents, using natural bristle brushes.
- Carry out masonry surface cleaning tests after it has been determined that such cleaning is appropriate. Tests should be observed over a period of time so both the immediate and the long-range effects are known.

### Mortar & Repointing

- Remove deteriorated mortar by carefully hand-raking the joints to avoid damaging the masonry. Using hand tools to remove deteriorated joints is preferred over electric saws and hammers, because overcut mortar joints can alter a building's appearance and electric tools can damage historic brick.

### Surface Treatments

- Inspect painted masonry surfaces to determine whether repainting is necessary.
- It is not recommended to paint masonry surfaces if they have historically not been painted.
- When painting masonry, it is important to properly prepare the surface prior to applying the paint.
- It is not recommended to apply new or non-historic surface treatments such as water-repellent coatings to masonry.
- Remove damaged or deteriorated paint only to the next sound layer using the gentlest method possible prior to repainting (Refer to *Guidelines for Exterior Wood Siding & Trim*).

## REQUIREMENTS FOR MASONRY OR STUCCO PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC

### Property Owners Shall:

- Stabilize deteriorated or damaged masonry as a preliminary measure prior to undertaking appropriate preservation work.
- Retain historic masonry, trim and ornament.
- Repair stucco by removing the damaged material and patching with new stucco that duplicates the old in strength, composition, color and texture. Do not remove sound stucco or repair with new stucco that is stronger than the historic material or does not convey the same visual appearance.
- Selectively replace damaged or missing materials with new materials that match the original in size, shape, texture, color and overall appearance.
- Replace damaged or deteriorated original materials with the same size, shape, texture, color, pattern, material and overall appearance.
- Replace damaged or missing materials with new materials that are similar to the original in size, shape, texture, color, pattern and overall appearance if repair of the original is not possible.
- Repair masonry features by patching, piecing-in, or otherwise reinforcing the masonry using recognized preservation methods. Use proven mortar mixtures for historic buildings.
- Duplicate mortar joints in width and profile.

### Property Owners Shall NOT:

- Remove or encapsulate masonry, trim or decorative features that characterize a property.
- Install artificial siding or stucco over masonry.
- Install alternatives to masonry and trim unless they match in exposure, thickness and detailing.
- Add detail or ornament not appropriate to the building type or style without historic documentation.
- Remove or replace masonry that could be stabilized, repaired and conserved; or use untested consolidants and untrained personnel, thus causing further damage to fragile materials.
- Sandblast masonry using abrasives.
- Use high-pressure water to blast masonry.
- Clean masonry with chemical products that will damage masonry.
- Repoint with mortar with a high cement content that is stronger than the historic material, causing damage due to expansion.
- Use electric saws and hammers to remove deteriorated mortar from joints, as the joints can become overcut and brick may be damaged.
- Repoint with synthetic caulk or sealant.
- Paint, stucco or apply other coatings over masonry materials that have not historically been painted.





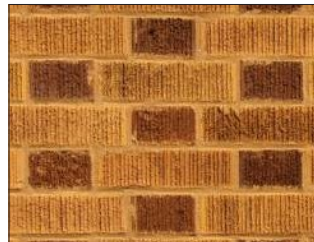
## GUIDELINES FOR MASONRY & STUCCO



*19th Century Brick - A soft, fired-clay, fairly regularly shaped building component, often with color and surface variations.*



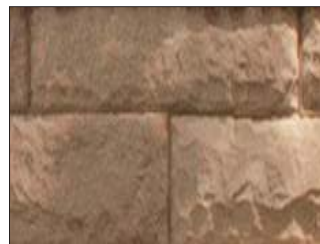
*Chicago Common Bond Brick- A hard, dense, fired-clay, regularly shaped building component, sometimes with a glazed surface.*



*Wire Cut Brick - A hard, dense, fired-clay, regularly shaped building component, with a ridged surface.*



*Roman Brick - A hard, dense, fired-clay, regularly shaped building component, with elongated proportions*



*Rusticated Limestone Foundation - A sedimentary rock, used for building walls and foundations.*



*Limestone Decorative Trim - A sedimentary rock, often found at window sills and lintels, ornamental stone, sculpture and for producing lime.*



*Lannon Stone - A high grade limestone, used as a masonry wall as well as a veneer.*



*Half-Timbering - An exposed timber framework filled with brick, stone or plastered laths.*



*Terra Cotta - A fired-clay, non-structural building component, often with colored glaze, used for decorative, ornate details and wall finishes.*



*Textured Concrete Block - A structural building material made by mixing water, cement, sand and aggregate, placing it in forms and hardening.*



*Pebble Dash Stucco - Textured finish with pronounced aggregate at the surface, used for exterior building surfaces.*

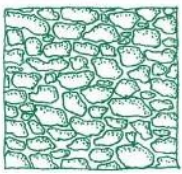


*Smooth Finish Stucco - Relatively smooth and flat finish with a plaster appearance.*

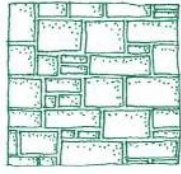
The Guidelines were developed in conjunction with the Village of Oak Park’s Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). For more information regarding application and review procedures, please consult the *Guidelines Introduction*, visit Village Hall or [www.oak-park.us](http://www.oak-park.us), or contact Village staff at (708) 358-5440 or [historicpreservation@oak-park.us](mailto:historicpreservation@oak-park.us). For more information regarding HPC recommendations and requirements, refer to *Requirements for Masonry & Stucco*.

### COMPONENTS OF MASONRY WALLS

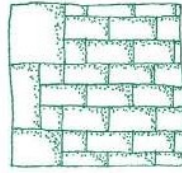
Masonry walls, foundations, and piers were historically constructed of stones, bricks, hollow clay tiles, or concrete blocks stacked on top of one another. The individual units were bonded by mortar, which served to hold the masonry units together and fill the gaps between them. Historically the masonry was load bearing, meaning it carried its own weight to the ground as well as the load of other building elements such as walls, floors and roofs. Stone veneer wall cladding was popularized in the 20th century.



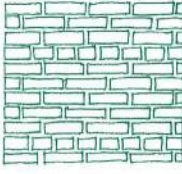
**Uncoursed Fieldstone**



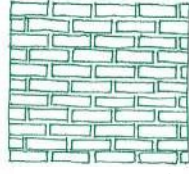
**Coursed Fieldstone**



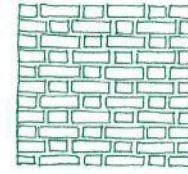
**Coursed Cut Stone with Quoins**



**Common Bond**



**Running Bond**



**Flemish Bond**

## BRICK

Brick is the most common masonry material in Oak Park. Bricks are made by inserting clay into a mold and then firing or baking the brick at very high heat. The result is a standardized unit, generally 8” by 4” by 2-1/4” in size. Roman Brick, which has an elongated form, is typically 12” by 4” by 2” in size. The color of brick can vary, but red is by far the most common. Other colors include yellow, orange, and brown. The color is determined by the chemical and mineral content of the clay, and the temperature and conditions of the kiln or oven. Similar to the color, the strength or hardness of brick is determined by the clay ingredients and the firing method, but it is also affected by the way the brick is manufactured.



*Limestone is often used as a decorative accent element in brick walls and at window and door openings.*

## STONE

Stone is often found as an exterior wall material in Oak Park on institutional buildings and was also a common foundation material for 19th and early 20th century houses. The most common type of stone in Oak Park is limestone, with some granite and marble. Limestone detailing is often found on brick buildings. In the mid-20th century, stone veneers became popular, particularly on storefronts. Stone veneers are thin slabs of masonry (typically marble or granite), “hung” on an underlying structural support system or applied to a wall surface with mortar in various patterns.



*The highly detailed, deep decorative relief in the panels and the capitals of the porch piers are made from terra cotta. A variety of terra cotta patterns and shapes were available at the beginning of the 20th century, providing a relatively inexpensive means of “decorating” building surfaces.*

## TERRA COTTA

Similar to brick, terra cotta is made of fired clay, often used for decorative ornamental details and wall finishes. It can have the color of red or yellow brick, or be fired with a clear or colored glaze. Terra cotta became popular in Oak Park at the beginning of the 20th century, and was often installed as decorative door and window surrounds as well as building cornices.

## CONCRETE MASONRY UNITS

Concrete masonry units (CMUs), also known as concrete blocks, are similar to bricks in that they are formed structural elements. They are made by mixing water, cement, sand, and aggregate, which is placed in forms to harden. The blocks are typically 8” by 8” by 16” in size and generally include voids. Similar to brick, they are typically stacked and bonded with mortar. They are most often laid in a running-bond pattern. Concrete blocks can also be formed in decorative molds that create varied textures and patterns when used in construction. In some cases these building elements are structural, weight-bearing elements, and in others they are purely ornamental.

## MORTAR

Historically, mortar was composed of ingredients such as sand, lime, and water, and possibly additives such as shells, animal hair, and clay particles. Starting in the mid-19th century, a small amount of Portland cement was added to the mix to improve its workability and hasten its setting time. In the early 20th century, the amount of Portland cement in mortar was increased, resulting in harder mortar corresponding with the manufacturing of harder bricks and concrete block.

**Sand** is the largest component of mortar and defines its color, character, and texture. Since masons would use products that were readily available, sand from historic mortars tends to have weathered, rounded edges and was available in a variety of grain sizes and shades of white, gray, and yellow. Most sand available today has sharper edges and is sieved into standard sizes. As a result, mixing sand colors and sizes might be needed to match historic mortar.

**Lime and Portland Cement** act as binders for the mortar. High lime mortar is soft, porous, and varies little in volume with temperature fluctuations. Because lime is slightly water soluble, high-lime mortars can be self-healing and reseal hairline cracks. By contrast, Portland cement can be extremely hard, is resistant to water movement, shrinks significantly upon setting, and undergoes relatively large thermal movements. The proportion of Portland cement can generally be increased when repointing 20th century buildings.

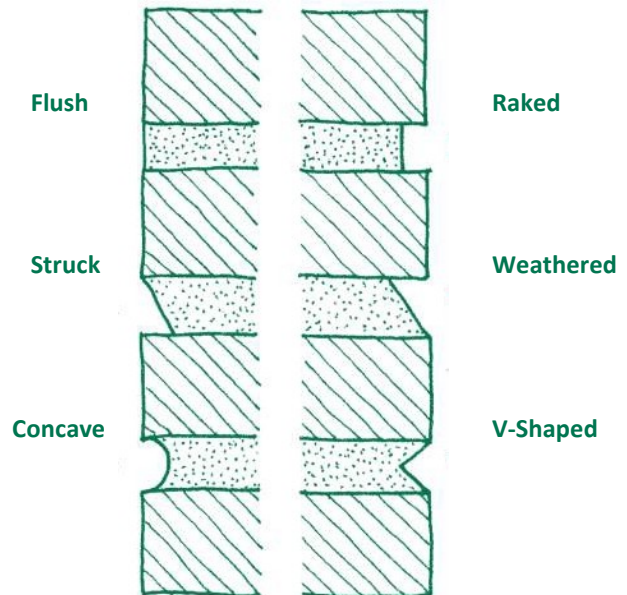
**Water** used in mortar needs to be clean and free of salts, harmful minerals, and acid. If not, it can break down the mortar and masonry and discolor finished surfaces.

## REFERENCES

For additional information about mortar and repointing historic masonry, refer to the following resources:

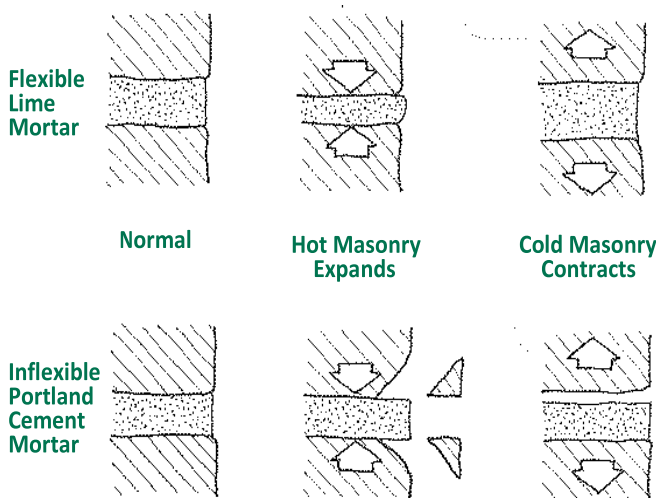
- *National Park Service Preservation Brief No. 2;* [www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm)
- *Illinois Preservation Brief No. 10*

## JOINT PROFILES



There are numerous joint profile types, each with different shadow lines and highlights. When repointing masonry, it is important to tool mortar to match the existing joint profile for a consistent appearance.

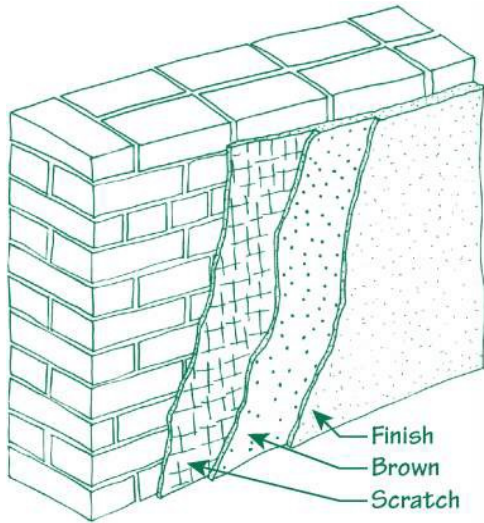
## MORTAR HARDNESS & MASONRY



Temperature changes cause masonry units to expand when heated and contract when cold. The expansion and contraction of the masonry units results in compression and flexing of the adjacent mortar joints.

Lime-based mortar is pliable and is more likely to compress and flex through temperature cycles. If properly installed, it should also be softer than the adjacent masonry.

Portland cement-based mortars are significantly harder than lime-based mortars and far less elastic. In addition, cement mortars tend to be substantially harder than historic masonry. When masonry units expand in warm temperatures and when heated by the sun, they press against the harder cement mortar and tend to spall at the edges. During colder temperatures, masonry units tend to pull away from harder mortar, resulting in open cracks that can allow moisture penetration.



Stucco was traditionally approximately 1" thick and applied in three layers:

1. The **Scratch Coat** is approximately 3/8" thick and applied directly to the wall surface. It is forced into the raked joints or pushed into the lath to provide a strong bond. The surface of the scratch coat is deeply scored to allow bonding of the brown coat.
2. The **Brown Coat** is also approximately 3/8" thick and finished with a wood float from a smoother surface.
3. The **Finish Coat** is generally about 1/4" thick with the overall thickness being determined by the finish style.

## STUCCO

Stucco is a relatively inexpensive material that can provide a more finished appearance to brick, stone, or wood-framed buildings. In some cases, the surface is scored to look like stone. It acts as a weather-repellent coating, protecting the building from rain, sun, and wind. Stucco can also provide an insulating layer to a wall, reducing the passage of air and improving a building's fire resistance.

Stucco was traditionally applied at the time of construction over concrete and concrete block as a decorative protective coating. Beginning in the 20th century, it was also applied on wood-framed buildings in revival styles of architecture. It is a common exterior finish on buildings in the Prairie, Craftsman, Art Deco, and Modern styles. Depending on the style, the texture of the stucco varies widely, from a smooth finish to textured, troweled, and Spanish-finish stuccoes.

Stucco was also applied on some buildings and structures years after the original construction, as a remodeling material to vary the original appearance or to conceal deterioration.

The components of stucco are similar to pointing mortar and include sand, lime, Portland cement, water, and possible binders. In some cases, pigments were added to the mix to alter the finished color.

## STUCCO APPLICATION

Stucco is essentially a layer of mortar held in position by the bond formed with the underlying material. Historically, one of the best ways to achieve a bond was to "rake-out" the mortar joints about 1/2" to form a groove that holds the stucco in place. When installed on masonry, stucco becomes an integral part of the wall when it sets. When stucco was installed historically on wood framed walls, the stucco was generally "hung" on strips of wood called lath that were nailed to wall studs. By the mid-20th century, metal lath replaced wood lath for stucco application.

## SYNTHETIC STUCCO

The Exterior Insulation and Finish System, or EIFS, is a synthetic stucco system that was popularized in the United States in the late-20th century. It generally consists of 3 layers:

- An inner foam insulation board secured to the exterior wall surface, often with adhesive
- A middle polymer and cement base coat that is reinforced with glass fiber mesh
- An exterior textured finish coat

One of the significant problems with EIFS is that it does not "breathe" and can trap moisture within the wall. This can lead to powdering or melting of softer masonry and rotting of wood sills and framing. If the problem persists, mold and mildew can develop in the building, providing a desirable home for termites.

Although the surface of EIFS can be finished to match many types of stucco, there are some differences. In larger areas of wall surface, EIFS is typically installed with control joints or grooves to allow the surface to expand and contract with temperature changes. These joints are typically not needed with lime based stucco and can result in odd wall patterns. Also, if properly installed, EIFS should not come in contact with roofing, wood trim, or porch and gallery floors to reduce the possibility of moisture infiltration. Instead, these joints are often filled with sealant that can crack and eventually allow moisture to penetrate.

Because of the differences in the visual characteristics of EIFS from stucco and the potential to harm historic building fabric, the application of synthetic stucco or EIFS on historic buildings or structures is not recommended.

## TYPICAL CAUSES OF MASONRY PROBLEMS

The principal components of most unit masonry walls in Oak Park are brick and stone with some concrete block and terra cotta. Mortar, which is located between the bricks, stones, blocks, or terra cotta, bonds the individual units together, transfers the load through the masonry, and provides a weather-tight seal at the exterior surface. Many problems associated with historic masonry result from the failure to keep mortar joints in good repair. Deteriorated mortar joints can allow water to penetrate the masonry and cause severe interior and exterior damage. There are five principal causes of mortar joint failures:

**Weathering** of mortar occurs when rain, wind, and pollution eat away at softer historic mortar over time. Historic mortar was purposely softer to allow the masonry wall to expand and contract with seasonal temperature changes.

**Uneven Settling** of masonry walls and seismic events may result in cracks along masonry joints or within masonry units.

**Poor Original Design and Materials** can cause ongoing problems if the masonry and mortar are incompatible or inappropriate for their installation location, or if the masonry does not properly shed water.

**Temperature Cycles** can cause deterioration of masonry in Oak Park, which has extreme heat in the summer and cold temperatures in the winter. Temperature cycles can cause masonry and mortar to expand and contract at different rates, breaking the masonry's bond with the mortar. This situation can be much worse if moisture enters an open joint, potentially popping out the surface of the mortar and the masonry, resulting in spalling.

**Insufficient Exterior Maintenance** may cause water to enter a masonry wall and contribute to its accelerated deterioration. Potential areas of concern are: poorly functioning gutters, downspouts and flashing; rising damp and standing water at foundations; water splashing back off paving and hard surfaces onto walls; or water-entrapping vegetation such as ivy or shrubs on or near masonry walls.

### DEFINITIONS

**Efflorescence:** Water-soluble salts leached out of masonry or concrete by capillary action and deposited on a surface by evaporation, usually as a white, powdery surface

**Spalling:** Chipping or flaking of masonry

## REPAIRING HISTORIC MASONRY

Due to the durability of historic masonry, repairs are typically limited to repointing. Repointing work can be time consuming and expensive; however, it can last more than 50 years when completed properly. Repointing requires a great deal of hand labor by skilled craftsmen to remove the existing mortar without damaging adjacent masonry, achieve the appropriate mortar mix and hardness, apply the mortar, and tool it to match the historic joint style and appearance. As a result, it is generally recommended that repointing projects be limited to areas of deterioration rather than an entire building.

To achieve the best results, repointing work should be completed when the temperature range is between 45 °F and 90 °F for at least two days after the installation of the mortar to help the mortar bond to the masonry. Mortar should be of a similar composition to the historic mortar, including hardness, color, and texture. It should be placed in joints in layers of no more than 3/8" thick and allowed to harden before additional layers are added. The final layer should be tooled to match the historic joint profile.

If more extensive repairs require the replacement of masonry units such as bricks or stones, new work can be unobtrusively dated to guide future research and treatment, such as inserting a newspaper with a date into the construction.



*The mortar, particularly in the vertical joints, is deteriorated, increasing the potential for water infiltration. The area in the lower right of the photograph was repointed and mortar was smeared over the surface of the brick rather than tooled. Replacement mortar should match the historic in appearance, color, texture, hardness, and joint profile.*

## MATCHING HISTORIC MORTAR & STUCCO

Most pre-mixed mortar is generally inappropriate for historic masonry, as it contains too much Portland cement and is too hard. The most exact method of matching historic mortar and stucco is to have it analyzed by a professional lab. Village staff is also available to provide guidance based upon the type, location, and condition of the masonry.



The crack from the window sill shown here might be a sign of building settlement. Review wall for other signs of movement. Repair crack and apply a lime-based paint for a uniform appearance.

## PATCHING STUCCO

Similar to repointing mortar, stucco should be applied in moderate weather conditions, avoiding extreme heat, sun, and freezing temperatures. The final appearance should duplicate the existing as closely as possible in strength, composition, color, and texture. Successful patching of stucco surfaces generally requires a skilled craftsman. Similar to stucco application, stucco repairs are applied in three coats. If stucco patches are too hard, they may cause additional damage to adjacent historic stucco surfaces or lead to the formation of cracks that can allow water migration into the wall.

When repairing stucco, hairline cracks can generally be filled with a thin slurry coat of the finish coat ingredients, while larger cracks need to be cut out and prepared for a more extensive repair. Similarly, bulging wall surfaces need to be cut out to a sound substrate. For the best appearance, the area to be patched should be squared off and terminated at a building joint or change in materials such as a window or door frame.

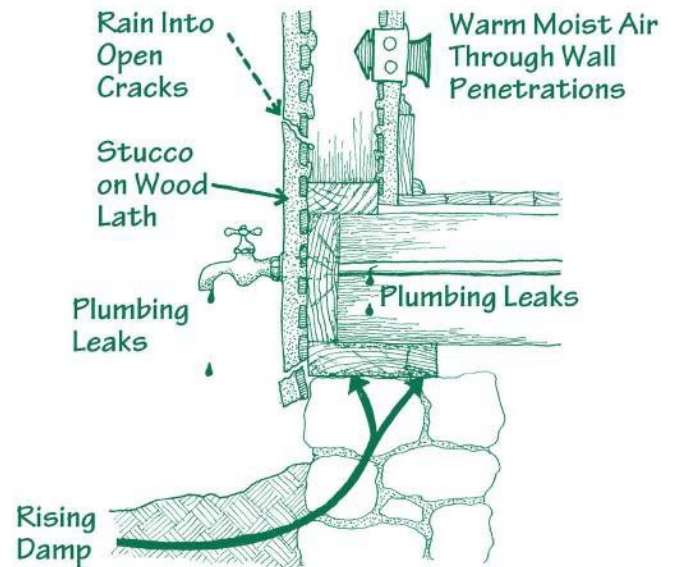
Repaired stucco often needs to be repainted for a uniform appearance. It is important that the new paint is compatible with earlier coats of paint and the stucco materials are applied following the manufacturer's recommendations.



When painting stucco, it is recommended that breathable masonry paint be used and that loose or flaking paint be removed prior to repainting.



Stucco is often used in addition to other materials as a wall material. In this example, it is combined with limestone and half-timbering.



**Rain and Precipitation** can enter the exterior envelope through damaged or cracked surfaces and crevices with adjacent materials, including window and door frames.

**Rising Damp** is the migration of moisture from the soil into the building structure through capillary action. Soil adjacent to the foundation can become saturated through improper drainage from gutters and downspouts and from vegetation planted adjacent to the foundation.

**Plumbing Leaks** may come from bathroom fixtures, kitchen and laundry appliances, and both interior and underground piping.

**Condensation** occurs when warm moist air from kitchens, bathrooms and laundry facilities comes in contact with cold surfaces and becomes water droplets.



*The rough texture and uneven surface of this brick suggest that an aggressive cleaning method was used. Stucco patches replace bricks and efflorescence, a powdery white substance, can be seen on the surface.*

## MASONRY & STUCCO CLEANING

Appropriate masonry and stucco cleaning can enhance the character and overall appearance of a building. However, improper cleaning of historic masonry can cause damage to the historic surfaces and do more harm than good.

There are three principal reasons for cleaning historic masonry:

- Improve the appearance by removing dirt, pollen, stains, graffiti, or paint
- Slow deterioration by removing deposits, salts, efflorescence, acids, ivy, algae, moss, mildew, and pollutants that can cause damage
- Clean select areas to match historic masonry or mortar or to assess surface condition

Masonry cleaning methods fall within three general categories:

- Low pressure water, with the possible use of gentle detergent and brushing
- Mechanical cleaning including sand blasting, power washing, grinding, sanding, and wire brushing
- Chemical cleaning

Because of the potential damage to historic surfaces, **cleaning should be completed using the gentlest means possible.** In many cases, soaking the masonry, stucco and concrete with low pressure water can remove much of the surface dirt and deposits. If the soaking method is not successful, it might be necessary to add a non-ionic detergent or brush the wall surface with a natural bristle brush.

The use of mechanical methods, like abrasive blasting, power washing, sanding or grinding, can

remove decorative details and the protective surface of the masonry, stucco or concrete, resulting in an eroded surface and permanent damage. Abrasively cleaned masonry, stucco, and concrete usually has a rougher surface that can hold additional dirt and be more difficult to clean in the future.

Chemical-based cleaners can etch, stain, bleach or erode masonry, stucco and concrete surfaces. Both mechanical and chemical cleaning methods can also make the masonry, stucco and concrete surface more porous and deteriorate mortar joints, allowing for increased moisture penetration.

In instances where a severe stain or graffiti is present, it might be necessary to use a chemical-based cleaner in specific areas. Caution should be taken to test the effects of the proposed cleaner on a discrete area of the building before using it on a principal elevation. It is recommended that the most diluted possible concentration be used to minimize potential damage of the masonry surface.

It should be noted that many chemical cleaners are hazardous and require special protection, handling, and collecting, as well as appropriate disposal of the chemicals and rinse water.



*The surface of the brick has been damaged by inappropriate cleaning methods. A power tool was likely used to cut-out joints prior to repointing, resulting in the over-cut vertical joints.*



*The paint here is likely peeling because it is incompatible with the brick and moisture was trapped in the wall. The paint should be removed and moisture problems addressed.*

## REMOVING PAINT FROM MASONRY & STUCCO

When considering whether to remove paint from a masonry or stucco surface, it is important to assess whether removal is appropriate. In some instances:

- The building might have always been painted; less attractive, softer or more porous bricks, stones or concrete might have been painted to provide a water repellent protective layer
- Paint can mask later changes or additions

Reason to consider stripping paint:

- To reduce long term maintenance requirements associated with repainting
- Paint might have been originally applied to mask other problems such as a dirty building
- If existing paint has failed, it might be necessary to strip it before repainting

Signs of failed paint include:

- Chalking, flaking, or peeling, possibly due to moisture penetration. It is important to find the cause of moisture and repair it before repainting.
- If masonry or concrete has been “sealed” by layers of paint or waterproof coatings, the masonry might not be able to “breathe” and dispel internal moisture. Eventually, pressure can build up under paint layers and cause the paint to peel and masonry to spall.

If paint is stable, complete paint stripping may not be necessary. However, new paint should be compatible with previous paint layers for best adhesion.

### PAINT REMOVAL SAFETY

Caution should be used when removing paint as some paints include lead, requiring proper collection and disposal techniques. Please review *Guidelines for Exterior Wood Siding & Trim* for additional information.

## MASONRY & STUCCO COATING

Water repellent and waterproof coatings are generally applied to prevent water from entering a masonry, stucco, or concrete wall, but tend to be unnecessary on weather-tight historic buildings. Water infiltration through masonry and concrete buildings is generally caused by other moisture-related problems including open mortar joints, surface cracks or spalls, and poor or deferred maintenance. In instances where masonry has been severely compromised, such as previously sandblasted bricks, the use of water repellent coatings may be appropriate.

**Water Repellent Coatings**, also referred to as “breathable” coatings, keep liquid from penetrating a surface but allow water vapor to escape. Many water repellent coatings are transparent or clear when applied, but may darken or discolor over time.

**Waterproof Coatings** seal surfaces and prevent liquid water and water vapor from permeating the surface. Generally, waterproof coatings are opaque or pigmented and include bituminous coatings and some elastomeric coatings and paint. Waterproof coatings can trap moisture inside of a wall and can intensify damage. Trapped moisture can freeze, expand and spall masonry and concrete surfaces.

## MASONRY & STUCCO PAINTING

If the exterior of the masonry or stucco surface has been compromised through previous sandblasting, moisture infiltration, or the use of harsh chemicals, appropriate painting can provide a degree of protection. Proper application of a water-repellent paint can prevent water from penetrating while allowing water vapor to escape. Waterproof or inappropriate paint can trap moisture within a wall. Proper preparation is critical to a successful masonry or stucco painting project.

- Remove loose or flaking paint, mortar, masonry, or stucco, as well as ivy, algae, moss and mildew.
- Repair deteriorated gutters and downspouts.
- Complete repointing, re-caulking, and patching as needed.
- Select a paint color appropriate for the building style. Apply undercoat and paint appropriate for masonry application type. Follow the manufacturer’s recommendations for application.





# Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission

## Village of Oak Park

### REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTERIOR WOOD SIDING & TRIM



*Many of Oak Park's historic homes feature decorative exterior woodwork. This example includes wood siding, ornate window surrounds, deep roof eaves and decorative trim such as the corner pilasters. Decorative woodwork can also be found at the porch, including the corner columns and railings.*

#### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EXTERIOR WOOD SIDING & TRIM

Wood siding, shingles, trim, and ornament on a building's wall surface is often both functional and decorative. Functionally, exterior woodwork acts as the skin of the building, protecting it from weather. As a decorative element, its design greatly affects the overall appearance of a building. When planning any exterior woodwork project, consider the following functional and aesthetic issues:

- Weather-tight woodwork preserves a building and protects its wall structure and interior finishes from rain, wind, sun, and snow.
- Temperature changes and building movement affect exterior woodwork.
- Exterior woodwork is an important element of the building's character, and the types and detailing associated with siding, shingles, trim, and ornament can define its architectural style.
- The details and texture of the exterior siding, shingles, and trim affect the scale and massing of the building.
- Variations in exterior woodwork materials and styles add visual interest to the streetscape and neighborhood.
- Regular maintenance, particularly repainting, can greatly extend the life of exterior wood elements.

#### WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN DOING AN EXTERIOR WOOD SIDING & TRIM PROJECT

When preparing an exterior woodwork project, here are the key issues you need to consider:

- Are the existing exterior woodwork and features historic (siding, shingles, window and door trim, cornices, corner boards, porches)? You should make every effort to preserve, reuse, and repair historic materials and features where they exist.
- Are you repairing or replacing your exterior woodwork or decorative features? If so, limit your repairs and replacement to the damaged areas only.
- What materials do you plan to use in your repairs or replacement? If the historic materials are too damaged to be saved, replacement materials should match the original as closely as possible.
- Are you making any major changes to the type of exterior woodwork or siding? Make sure those changes are compatible with the character of the historic building.
- Are you adding any new features to your building? Are they visible from the street?
- Address moisture problems, including leaking roofs and downspouts, and condensation through walls, before repainting.

## RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES FOR ANY EXTERIOR WOOD SIDING & TRIM PROJECT

### Exterior Wood Siding & Trim Repair & Replacement

- Don't rely on brochure photographs. Visit a similar completed project to see the materials.
- Confirm that the proposed material is appropriate for your exterior woodwork project location.
- Understand the total wall system, including insulation and vapor barriers, that is appropriate for each material.
- Know that some pre-finished artificial materials may fade or change in appearance over time.
- Understand that material placed over exterior woodwork, including synthetic siding or capping and encapsulating paints, often referred to as "liquid siding," "liquid stucco" and "liquid ceramic coatings," can trap moisture in woodwork and promote rot in the woodwork and wall framing.
- Reuse original window frames and trim when replacing windows, or exactly replicate the dimensions and profiles of the original frames.
- Installing caulk at joints between woodwork elements such as siding and window trim or woodwork and roofing can reduce the outside air entering a wall and drafts within a building. However, caulk should not be installed between layers of siding.

### Maintenance & Repainting of Wood Siding & Trim

- Prior to repainting, hand scrape and sand to minimize damage to woodwork and siding while meeting lead safety requirements.
- Prior to repainting, hand wash woodwork or siding with mild detergent and a soft bristle brush.
- Avoid rotary tools. The disks can leave circular marks and wires can tear into the wood surface.
- Avoid heat guns and heat plates. They can ignite paint or the underlying surface if left in one location too long.
- Avoid chemical paint removers. They can raise grains and can be expensive and potentially volatile. Runoff can be hazardous and should be collected to reduce harm to children, pets, vegetation, and ground water.
- Avoid flame tools such as blowtorches to soften paint. The smoldering sparks can start a fire and lead components in paint can vaporize and create toxic fumes.
- Avoid sandblasting. It is abrasive and can wear away protective exterior coatings and raise the wood grain.
- Avoid high-pressure water wash. It forces water into open joints, affecting interior finishes and structural framing. It can be abrasive to exterior surface and raise the grain.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTERIOR WOOD SIDING & TRIM PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC

### Exterior Wood Siding & Trim Repair & Replacement

#### *Property Owners Shall:*

- Retain historic wood siding, trim, and ornament.
- Selectively replace damaged or missing materials with new materials to match the original material in size, shape, texture, color, and overall appearance.
- If the damage or deterioration of the original material is beyond repair, completely replace damaged or missing materials with new materials to match the original in size, shape, texture, pattern, color, and overall appearance.
- If replacement matching original material is not possible, replace the damaged or missing materials with new materials that are similar in size, shape, texture, pattern, color, and overall appearance with a paintable finish.

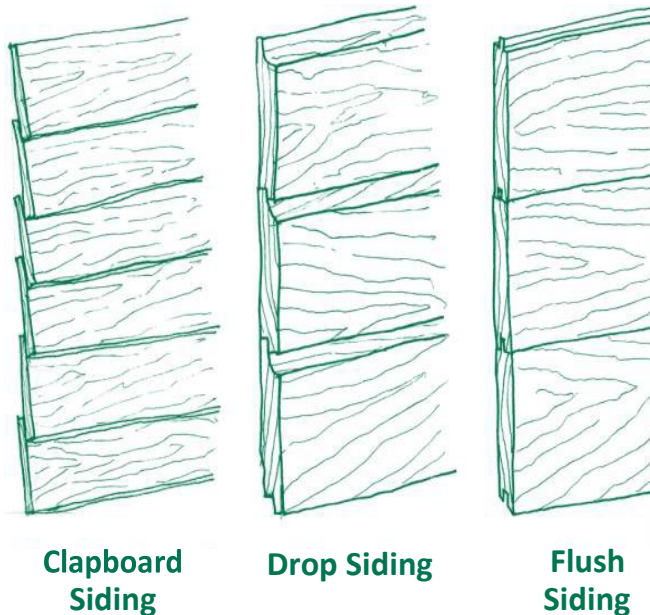
### Substitute Exterior Wood Siding & Trim Materials

#### *Property Owners Shall NOT:*

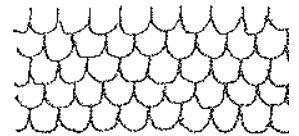
- Remove or encapsulate siding, trim, or decorative trim features that characterize a property including siding, shingles, window and door trim, brackets, cornices, eaves, rafters, spindles, corner boards, columns, posts, etc.
- Install artificial siding or stucco over existing exterior wood siding or trim.
- Install alternatives to wood siding and trim unless they match in exposure, thickness, detailing, and have a paintable smooth finish and not a wood-grained finish.
- Add detail or ornament not appropriate to the building type or style without historic documentation.



## GUIDELINES FOR EXTERIOR WOOD SIDING & TRIM



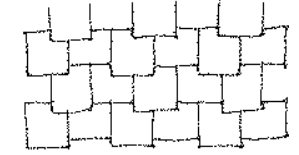
**Chisel or Bevel**



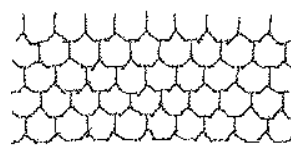
**Fishscale**



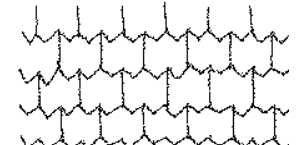
**Diamond**



**Staggered**



**Octagonal**



**Sawtooth**

### WOOD SIDING TYPES

The most common type of wood siding in Oak Park is clapboard siding. Drop and flush siding are less common.

- **Clapboard siding**, also known as weatherboard or beveled siding, is made from long boards, tapered across the width.
- **Drop siding**, also known as drop-lap or German siding, is a flat-faced board with a concave top and notched bottom.
- **Flush siding** has tongue-and-groove boards of uniform width.

The Guidelines were developed in conjunction with the Village of Oak Park’s Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). For more information regarding application and review procedures, please consult the *Guidelines Introduction*, visit Village Hall or [www.oak-park.us](http://www.oak-park.us), or contact Village staff at (708) 358-5440 or [historicpreservation@oak-park.us](mailto:historicpreservation@oak-park.us). For more information regarding HPC recommendations and requirements, refer to *Requirements for Exterior Wood Siding & Trim*.

### SHINGLE TYPES

Wood shingles provide a highly textured wall finish and were often used as a cladding material for houses in the Queen Anne, Shingle, and Craftsman styles. Similar to clapboard siding, wood shingles are tapered and installed in an overlapping pattern with staggered joints to minimize potential moisture infiltration.

### WOOD TRIM & ORNAMENT

Visually, exterior wood trim frames areas of siding or shingles and serves as the transition to decorative elements such as doors, windows, cornices, and porches. Functionally, it seals siding and shingles at joints, corners, and openings, providing a weather-tight building exterior.

Wood trim includes window and door frames, cornices, corner boards, rake boards, and wood sills. In addition to trim, there are numerous types of wood ornament applied to buildings, including brackets, balustrades, newel posts, and spindles. Historically, trim and ornament profiles, details, and sizes varied with building styles and whether a building was high style or vernacular. As a result, trim and ornament are considered architecturally significant features.



*Porches, steps, and other areas where the woodwork is laid horizontally or located close to the ground are often first to deteriorate. Ongoing exposure to moisture can lead to rot of the column bases, porch deck, and apron.*

## EXTERIOR WOOD SIDING & TRIM CHECKLIST

Property owners generally do not notice their exterior woodwork unless a problem occurs, or there is a desire to improve its appearance or reduce maintenance. Typical exterior woodwork problems include peeling paint, rot, deterioration, insect infestation, and loose, cracked, or missing elements. Property owners often hide these problems by covering them with materials such as vinyl without addressing the root cause of the problem. This only results in further deterioration.

Even when exterior wood is poorly maintained and appears severely deteriorated, it is often not beyond repair. A deteriorated feature or area typically does not necessitate the replacement or covering of all exterior woodwork. In most instances, selective repair or replacement of the damaged parts and implementation of a regular maintenance program is all that is required. Full exterior woodwork replacement or encapsulation with artificial siding or other materials should be avoided.

The HPC encourages in order of preference:

- 1. Conduct semi-annual inspections** of all exterior wood elements to verify their condition and determine maintenance needs. Look for signs of deterioration, such as excessive paint peeling, that might indicate moisture problems. Look for veins of dirt on the exterior walls that may be termite mud tunnels. Clean exterior surfaces annually in warm weather with a garden hose, household detergent, and a bristle scrub brush. Avoid using power washers that can force water into wall cavities through crevices and damage decorative details.

- 2. Maintain and repaint exterior woodwork** on a regular basis. A high-quality paint job can last 8 to 10 years. For best results, address any moisture or deterioration problems prior to painting. Hand scrape and sand where possible to avoid removing or damaging decorative details with power tools or burning. Apply high quality and compatible primer and paint to clean and dry surfaces. Paint color and luster are not reviewed by the HPC, but should be appropriate to the building style.
- 3. Repair smaller areas of deterioration** by reinforcing or patching as needed. Small cracks can be repaired with an exterior wood filler, glue, or epoxy. Loose elements can be refastened with careful nailing or drilling and screwing.
- 4. Selectively replace deteriorated wood elements** when they are beyond repair. The replacement wood pieces should be the same size, profile, and character as the historic wood elements. It may be helpful to take a sample of the historic wood to the lumber yard or millwork shop for the best match. Wood filler in the joints between the new and old wood will help provide a smooth finish.
- 5. Large scale or significant replacement** of exterior wood might be necessary if deterioration of exterior woodwork is severe and extensive. Decorative woodwork should be retained whenever possible as it is likely a character defining element that can be difficult and costly to replace. Replacement elements should have the same characteristics as the historic woodwork, including the same size and profile. Replacement wood siding materials should be installed in the original pattern, being as careful as possible to match the original exposures and alignments relative to historic building elements such as door and window frames. Select a replacement wood species appropriate for the location and for exterior use.



*In some cases, removing non-historic siding like the aluminum pictured above may reveal historic wood siding underneath that is in good condition.*



*Due to frequent exposure to moisture, woodwork that is near the ground is more likely to rot than woodwork that is higher on a wall surface or protected by an overhang such as a porch.*

*Woodwork that is near the ground can also be accessible food for insects and pests.*

## WOOD ROT

Almost all wood rot is caused by fungi that break down dead wood. Spores of decaying fungi are continuously produced and airborne in the interior and outside of these buildings. Rot-causing fungi need four basic elements to thrive: oxygen, moisture, a food source and moderate temperatures. If one of these elements is missing, rot can be controlled.

Since oxygen and moderate temperatures are prevalent in the environment and most historic buildings are full of wood, the best hope to minimize rot is to control moisture. Moisture that leads to wood rot generally comes from one of four sources: ground water, precipitation, plumbing leaks, and condensation.

**Ground water** can migrate from the soil into a building by direct contact between wood and soil; improper drainage away from the foundation; shrubs or plants that are too close to the foundation or growing on the building; and capillary action or rising damp in masonry foundation walls or piers that can carry water several feet up the walls to wood sills.

**Precipitation** in all of its forms, from rain and mist to snow, can find its way into a building through small openings and crevices. Painted surfaces and caulked joints can reduce the potential for moisture infiltration. Blocked or undersized gutters and downspouts can overflow and direct water towards building surfaces. Rainwater splashing on hard ground surfaces can rebound, saturating exterior woodwork. In cold weather, ice buildup along roof eaves without appropriate flashing could back up under shingles and melt as can snow along foundations.

**Leaky plumbing** can be sudden, such as a cracked pipe; or slow, like a gradual, unnoticed leak, which can slowly soak a wood structure until significant damage

occurs. Cracks in grout and tiles on floors and around bathtubs, sinks, and washing machines can discharge enough water to rot wood framing. Periodic inspections for signs of leaking behind bathtub access panels, within sink vanities, and around washing machines and dishwashers can help catch a problem before it becomes serious.

**Condensation** comes from air vapor rather than an obvious source such as rain or a cracked pipe. If warm, moist air comes in contact with a cold surface that is below the dew point temperature, the excess moisture changes to water droplets on the cold surface.

Common areas for condensation and possible solutions include:

- Kitchens, bathrooms, and laundry areas with high humidity. Install exhaust fans directing humid air to the outside and exterior clothes dryer vents. If renovating a bathroom or kitchen, an exhaust vent may be required by the Building Code.
- Crawl spaces or unheated basements beneath a building where water can condense on framing members such as sills and joists, especially in corners with poor air circulation or if occupied spaces above are air conditioned. Put plastic sheathing over the exposed ground.
- Cold water pipes in humid weather. Make sure to insulate pipes.
- Exterior wood framed walls on top of foundation walls or pier. Install exterior wall insulation with no vapor barrier or an exterior-facing vapor barrier, paint interior wall surfaces with latex paint, and install interior humidity control.

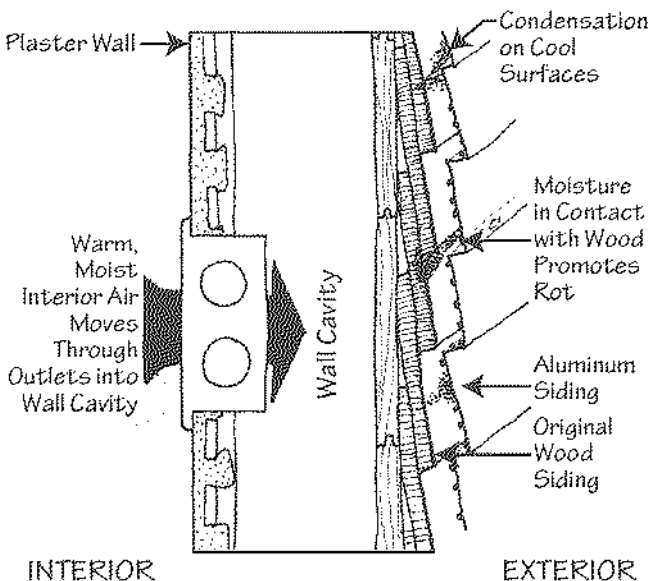
## CONDENSATION

As a result of changes in our living standards, condensation has become a significant problem in historic buildings. Today's buildings include central heating and air conditioning to stabilize temperatures and relative humidity, as well as insulation that can trap moisture. Buildings also include moisture-intensive conveniences such as plumbing, bathrooms, laundry, and cooking facilities.

While interior conditions have stabilized and moisture-laden activities have increased, exterior temperatures and relative humidity are continuously changing throughout the year. The differences in temperature and relative humidity between the interior and exterior of our buildings are "bridged" through the thicknesses of exterior building walls. If the temperature is below the dew point at any location within the wall, condensation will occur, causing the moisture to change into water droplets. Installing artificial siding or impervious coatings over wood can make this problem worse and hide deterioration until it is severe.

Unlike wood, vinyl and aluminum do not "breathe" and can trap moisture within a building's wall cavity, leading to rot, mold, and insect damage on the wood structural elements. As a result, it is important to inspect and repair potential water sources to minimize moisture within the wall cavity.

Encapsulating paints, often referred to as "liquid siding," "liquid stucco," and "liquid ceramic coatings," act similarly to vinyl and aluminum siding. They can also trap moisture and promote rot in the woodwork and wall framing by essentially placing a plastic coating over exterior wood surfaces that does not "breathe."



*The surface of this roof rafter has rotted and is no longer capable of holding the nails from the plywood sheathing. This rafter is rotted and beyond its useful life. It should be replaced.*

## DECAY-RESISTANT WOOD

There are some woods that are naturally decay-resistant, while others have a higher tendency to rot. Naturally decay-resistant woods tend to be denser woods, such as California redwood. These decay-resistance woods are not suitable for all uses. For example, detailed trim work is often done with softer, more malleable woods. The wood finish will also play a role in resisting decay. To ensure the greatest longevity, it is important to understand the proposed location and final finish of exterior wood siding, trim, or other element when considering wood for a project. Available decay-resistant woods include:

- Cedar
- Mahogany
- Redwood
- Air-dried, pressure-treated, southern yellow pine
- Pressure-treated wood for framing members

For those about the environment, the use of sustainably-harvested wood should be considered as an alternative to pressure-treated wood, which can leach harmful chemicals into the environment.

## TYPES OF ARTIFICIAL SIDING

Artificial siding has been applied by Oak Park property owners for years to provide an updated appearance and minimize maintenance and repair needs. Artificial siding materials include asphalt and asbestos and more commonly, vinyl and aluminum siding and “capping” applied over trim. These materials can significantly change a building’s character and appearance and are not necessarily maintenance free. For example, most forms of artificial siding can trap moisture within a wall thickness, accelerating potential rot and decay.



*Asbestos siding is often embossed with a wood grain pattern. The removal of asbestos siding can be dangerous and should be undertaken by trained professionals.*

### ASBESTOS SIDING

Asbestos became a popular siding at the beginning of the 20th century. It is made from asbestos mineral fibers and either Portland or hydraulic cement. They provide a durable, lightweight, economical, fireproof, and rot and termite-resistant alternative to wood siding. The manufacturing of asbestos shingles ceased when asbestos was banned by the EPA in 1973. If the shingles are damaged, consultation with a professional to determine whether repair is feasible. The removal of asbestos siding and restoration of underlying wood siding is generally the most appropriate alternative.



*Repair of this puncture requires replacement. Replacement of this aluminum siding is the best way to repair this puncture. A wood-grained texture is generally inappropriate.*

### VINYL & ALUMINUM SIDING

Vinyl and aluminum siding typically simulate wood. As vinyl and aluminum are sheets of plastic and metal, they are thinner and visually lighter than wood. Additionally, in the event of a fire, the fumes from melting vinyl can be very hazardous.



*Fiber-cement siding material is an economical alternative for an addition to a historic building. I*

### FIBER-CEMENT SIDING

Fiber-cement siding is a lightweight, solid material that is durable and visually more compatible with wood than vinyl or aluminum siding. It is manufactured in similar sizes and shapes to wood products including siding, shingles, and trim, making it easier to replicate historic characteristics. The installation method is similar to wood, allowing historic alignments around window and door frames. It can be cut to shape on-site using hand tools, and painted to match any color scheme.

Manufacturers indicate that fiber-cement is resistant to rot, termites, fire, and delamination, and is dimensionally stable, allowing paint to last longer. Fiber-cement products cost more than vinyl or aluminum siding, but less than wood siding, and can have a manufacturer’s warranty as long as 50 years. While not appropriate for replacement of historic wood siding, fiber cement siding can often be used for minimally visible additions and for new construction.



*Aluminum and vinyl siding were sometimes installed to conceal an underlying problem. In some cases, removal might be necessary to repair a deteriorated condition.*

### REMOVING ARTIFICIAL SIDING

Building owners should consider removing artificial siding and restoring the underlying woodwork. Artificial siding removal allows buildings to function as they were originally designed and exposes problems that might have developed since its installation. When removing artificial siding from wood siding and trim:

- Many property owners find at least 80% of the underlying woodwork can be maintained
- You may find missing ornament and trim
- Recycle aluminum siding

## EXTERIOR WOODWORK OR ARTIFICIAL SIDING

Property owners generally install artificial siding to avoid maintenance issues associated with repainting wood and because of misinformation about the benefits and drawbacks of artificial siding. Some believe that artificial siding will provide a maintenance-free solution that will solve their exterior building problems for a lifetime. The table below contrasts common myths about artificial siding adjacent to information from preservation professionals.

ARTIFICIAL SIDING MYTHS	PRESERVATION INFORMATION
<i>“Artificial sidings like vinyl and aluminum are cost effective alternatives to wood”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vinyl and aluminum siding are usually guaranteed for 20 years and cost approximately the same as two quality paint jobs. (Guarantees over 20 years are usually prorated.) Properly maintained wood siding will last hundreds of years.</li> <li>• Vinyl or aluminum siding installed over existing woodwork can trap moisture and lead to costly hidden structural repairs. (See weatherproof section below.)</li> <li>• Artificial siding can reduce home values by covering distinctive qualities and details.</li> </ul>
<i>“Artificial siding improves the appearance of a building”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exposures, shadow lines, joint layout, texture, and the sheen of synthetic siding typically do not match wood.</li> <li>• Historic or decorative trim is often covered or removed in the installation process. Installation typically damages historic wall materials.</li> <li>• Stock vinyl and aluminum trim is generally narrower than historic wood trim.</li> <li>• Historic details and decorative elements are generally not available in vinyl or aluminum.</li> <li>• Available colors may be limited and might not be appropriate for the building style.</li> <li>• Colors may be difficult to change. If change is desired, the type of paint should be compatible in material and color to minimize peeling, warping and curling.</li> </ul>
<i>“Artificial sidings like vinyl and aluminum are weatherproof”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They can be weatherproof if properly installed, but many historic buildings have crevices and uneven surfaces that allow moisture behind the artificial siding or capping. New buildings with vinyl or aluminum siding are generally constructed with an internal vapor barrier to exhaust moisture-laden air.</li> <li>• Unlike wood, vinyl and aluminum siding do not breathe and can trap moisture. This can lead to rotting sills and structural components as well as potential mold and insect damage. To reduce trapped moisture, install continuous wall vents under eaves and add weep holes to artificial siding.</li> <li>• Installing vinyl or aluminum over deteriorated wood will not make an existing problem disappear. Often, by trapping additional moisture, the deterioration may accelerate and lead to costly hidden structural repairs.</li> </ul>
<i>“Artificial sidings like vinyl and aluminum conserves energy”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The insulation of vinyl or aluminum siding is minimal, even when it is backed by a thin layer of insulating foam or rigid board insulation. Furthermore, added insulation may trap additional moisture within the wall cavity.</li> <li>• Studies have shown as much as 75% of a building’s heat loss can be through its roof. Adding attic insulation is a more cost effective method of reducing a heating bill.</li> </ul>
<i>“Artificial sidings like vinyl and aluminum are maintenance free”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Like wood, vinyl and aluminum siding need regular cleaning.</li> <li>• Vinyl and aluminum siding are subject to denting, warping, cupping, and fading from sunlight exposure. Vinyl siding is prone to cracking in cold weather. Replacement patches usually do not match the earlier installation.</li> <li>• The painting of vinyl or aluminum siding to change or freshen its appearance often voids the manufacturer’s warranty. The type and color of paint should be compatible to minimize potential peeling, warping, and curling. Once painted, artificial siding will need to be repainted as often as or more often than wood.</li> </ul>
<i>“Artificial siding covers lead paint”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead paint can be safely removed rather than covered, retaining the building’s historic appearance.</li> </ul>





*The window frame pictured has been completely covered with vinyl siding. The articulation formerly provided by the frame has been replaced with a J-channel for the vinyl siding. Without the frame, the visual dimensions of the window are changed and character of the building is diminished.*

*Aluminum capping has been installed over the window frame. Aluminum capping usually lacks the profile and detail of wood trim. It can also trap moisture within the wall surface that can accelerate rot and deterioration.*



## ARTIFICIAL SIDING & TRIM

In Oak Park, many of the historic frame buildings were originally clad with wood clapboard, which allowed some flexibility in installation by carpenters. Most artificial siding materials, particularly vinyl and aluminum siding, must be installed at a consistent vertical spacing as defined by the manufacturer. On historic buildings, siding was typically installed with a horizontal band aligning with the top and bottom of window and door frames. Artificial sidings often do not accommodate historic alignments at existing window and door frames.

Most historic buildings have wood door and window frames, moldings, and trim that can be damaged or concealed by inappropriate artificial siding installations. Many vinyl and aluminum siding installations include the application of aluminum “capping” or a J-channel or J-bead along the edges of the siding that cover decorative trim.

The loss of wood frames, trim, and moldings can significantly alter the character of a building. Artificial siding installation over existing materials can also increase the wall thickness, causing the wood trim to appear set back from the wall rather than projecting from it, further diminishing the visual characteristics of the building.

## ARTIFICIAL TRIM & ORNAMENT

Multiple manufacturers offer artificial trim products made from PVC (Polyvinyl chloride). Unlike vinyl and aluminum siding, which are sheet materials pressed to look like wood siding, PVC trim is typically a solid material that can be cut, screwed, nailed, and painted like wood. Manufacturers typically offer a variety of profiles to match standard wood sizes and shapes.

According to manufacturers, PVC trim boards, trim, and sheets do not absorb moisture, are not prone to insect damage, and will not warp, twist, cup or bow. However, PVC will likely expand and contract along its length, opening gaps between boards in the cold winter months if they are not properly fastened and adhered. This is particularly true for longer elements. Although PVC trim may be suited for areas that are exposed to moisture, such as dormer window trim or behind gutters, it tends to be more expensive than wood, and property owners should weigh the added costs if considering installation.

If considering the installation of PVC trim instead of wood trim, the HPC recommends that the PVC:

- Have the same size and profile as the wood element being replaced
- Has a smooth, painted finish that complements the style of the building
- Match existing details and ornament



*This house features a variety of exterior wood trim, ornament, and details that are highlighted by the paint scheme and would be difficult to replicate with artificial materials.*



*Paint colors can highlight the architectural features of a building. Stick Style houses, like that above, were historically painted with contrasting colors.*

## EXTERIOR PAINT

Paint is one of the most common ways to protect exterior materials from the weather, particularly wood without natural or chemical preservatives and metals that would otherwise rust. When the painted surface has been damaged, moisture from the elements can reach the underlying material and potentially accelerate deterioration.

Exterior paint provides a layer of protection to a building by adding a barrier that limits moisture infiltration and damage caused by things like weather and pests. Exterior woodwork without natural or chemical preservatives is susceptible to moisture-related deterioration of the exterior envelope and underlying wood framing, and many metals susceptible to rust. Although paint is an important protective layer that improves the longevity of historic materials and buildings, it must be viewed as a temporary barrier that is subject to wear over time and requires re-application to maintain its shielding properties.

In general, exterior surfaces may need repainting every 8 to 10 years, with intermediate touch-ups of high traffic, worn or deteriorated areas. If a building requires more frequent repainting, it might be an indication of another problem including moisture, inadequate surface preparation and non-compatible paint.

Painting of previously unpainted masonry is strongly discouraged. Paint layers can seal the surface, trapping moisture which can lead to masonry deterioration. Refer to Guidelines for Masonry & Stucco for more information on masonry paint removal and application.

## OIL & LATEX PAINTS

There are two main types of paint for buildings, oil and latex. Both types consist of three principal components: a pigment, a binder to adhere the pigment to a surface as the paint dries, and a solvent that makes the mixture loose enough to apply with a brush. Oil paint was the dominant paint type until about 1970 and latex paint was developed in the mid-1940s. Both can be found on historic buildings.

Oil and latex paints act differently when applied to surfaces. Oil paint forms a tough barrier film as the binder reacts with oxygen in the air. The binder can be natural oil such as linseed, or oil modified with alkyds. Earlier latex paint used synthetic rubber as the binder. Latex paint today uses acrylic, vinyl-acrylic, or vinyl-acetate binders. As the water evaporates, latex paint forms a flexible film and the binder and pigment move closer together to form a protective surface.

Critical differences between oil and latex paints are that they do not cure in the same way and they adhere differently to the underlying material. As oil paint ages, it continues to cure and oxidize. It becomes more and more brittle until it can no longer expand and contract through temperature and humidity cycles with the underlying substrate. By contrast, latex cures in about two weeks and remains more pliable.

The HPC encourages the safe disposal of any unused paints, paint strippers, and solvents to minimize the potential for environmental contamination.

For property owners concerned with sustainable paint choices, the HPC encourages the use of non-toxic paints and finishes. These include natural paints, which are made from natural raw ingredients including water, plant, earth and mineral dyes; low- or no-VOC (volatile organic compound) paints (because VOCs have been found to cause health problems and be environmentally harmful), as well as non-toxic paint strippers, solvents and treatments. The use of sustainable paint choices is particularly beneficial for interior applications where fresh air might be limited.

## ENCAPSULATING PAINT

It can be problematic to use encapsulating paints that can trap moisture in woodwork and promote rot. These are often referred to as “liquid siding,” “liquid stucco” and “liquid ceramic coatings.” These paints tend to create a watertight coating on the exterior surface of the woodwork that essentially acts like vinyl siding, trapping moisture within the wood.



*The paint on this door has alligatored, and severe cracking is visible. The paint should be removed down to bare wood and the door properly repaired prior to repainting.*

## REPAINTING

When considering repainting, the HPC recommends the following five steps:

- 1. Determine whether repainting is necessary:** Prior to beginning a painting project, determine whether complete repainting is required or if cleaning and spot repainting are more appropriate. Painting more often than necessary causes paint layers to build up, increasing the potential for future paint failure. A dingy finish might only require washing with a mild detergent solution and natural bristle brushes to freshen the appearance.
- 2. Inspect existing paint for causes of failure:** To make sure the new paint will last as long as possible, property owners should inspect the existing paint for causes of failure. Some common paint problems are:
  - **Peeling** - possible causes are painting under adverse conditions (too hot or cold), inadequate surface preparation or moisture infiltration.
  - **Cracking or crazing** - typically the sign of a hard surface that does not expand and contract with its underlying material. Sand and repaint if cracking and crazing is limited to the surface. Remove paint if cracking extends down to the wood.
  - **Wrinkling** - typically the result of the top coat drying before the underlying coat. Scrape smooth and repaint.

- **Blistering** - caused by air bubbles under the paint. If wood is visible upon cutting into the air bubbles, the problem is probably moisture related. If paint is visible, the problem area was probably painted in direct hot sun.
- **Alligatoring** - severe cracking and crazing. Remove all paint down to bare wood.

- 3. Repair causes of failure:** Before repainting, the causes of paint failure should be addressed. The most common cause of paint failure is moisture. The most typical causes of moisture problems are ground water, rain or storm water, leaking plumbing, and condensation.

Portions of the building that are most susceptible to moisture and its related problems include: areas near rooflines, gutters and downspouts; areas near the ground; horizontal surfaces such as window and door sills, porches and wood steps; and areas or walls adjacent to high humidity including kitchens, bathrooms and laundry rooms.

- 4. Prepare surface:** To ensure a long-lasting painted surface, appropriate surface preparation should be undertaken before repainting.

- Begin by washing the painted surfaces with a mild detergent solution and natural bristle brushes.
- Carefully scrape and sand for a smooth finish, removing any paint that is not tightly bonded to the surface.
- Putty or caulk countersunk nails, window glazing, gaps, joints, and openings, but do not caulk between layers of siding.
- Allow substrate to dry thoroughly before applying primer or paint.
- Spot-prime bare wood and any areas of repair and wood replacement.

- 5. Repaint:** You can improve the longevity of your paint job by using high-quality paint appropriate for the substrate and applying it in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations. In general, it is best to use compatible primer and paint from the same manufacturer and apply at least two coats of paint to previously bare wood or metal. For best results, apply paint during appropriate weather conditions, generally 50 °F to 90 °F, less than 60% relative humidity, and not in direct sunlight.

## COMPLETE PAINT REMOVAL

It is important to remember that any method of paint removal can result in harm to historic building fabric. Therefore, complete paint removal from a surface should only occur under limited circumstances.

Complete paint removal might be necessary in circumstances in which the existing paint on a surface has completely failed. Examples where complete paint removal would be appropriate include:

- Wholesale blistering or peeling that reveals the underlying substrate
- Continuous patterns of deep cracks in the surface of painted wood
- Windows, doors, or shutters that have been painted shut
- To achieve a smooth transition to an existing element when a new wood element is being installed as a repair
- To prevent deterioration of historic building features
- To prevent deterioration of masonry for historically unpainted masonry surfaces

## STRIPPING PAINT

If the existing paint has failed, it may be necessary to strip all or portions of the paint from the surface. Although there are a variety of tools and chemicals available to strip paint, many are potentially hazardous and can cause significant damage to materials, buildings, and the surrounding environment. To reduce potential damage to historic woodwork, it is generally best to hand scrape and hand sand any loose paint, then hand-wash with a mild detergent and bristle brush.

Heating methods can cause sparks and toxic fumes. Mechanical methods such as sandblasting, rotary tools and high-pressure water washes can damage details, etch the surface, and raise the wood grain. High-pressure water washes can also force water into open joints and can lead to damage of structural framing and interior finishes. Finally, chemical paint removers can raise grains, be expensive, and are potentially volatile. In addition, the runoff can be hazardous to the environment and should be collected to reduce harm to children, pets, vegetation and ground water.

## PAINT REMOVAL SAFETY

Paint removal is potentially hazardous. Children and pets should be kept clear of work areas. Property owners should consult a professional for work that is unfamiliar or potentially unsafe.

- Paint removal, particularly lead-based paint removal, must comply with the requirements of the Building and Property Standards Department and the Environmental Protection Agency ([www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead)).
- Always wear safety goggles and a dust mask.
- Paint dust from older buildings can contain lead from older lead-based paint. Always wear a dust mask or respirator, avoid open food or beverage containers in the area of paint removal and exposed skin, thoroughly clean work area, and launder your work clothes.
- Protect the soil from lead chips and dust to minimize contamination of the soil and environment.



*Proper preparation before repainting, including hand scraping, sanding and washing, as well as using quality paint and primer appropriate for the material, will result in a better-quality job. The tarp in the photograph does not meet current EPA requirements for protection of the soil and environment.*

Paint colors are not subject to HPC review, but they can highlight a building's architectural features and style, visually tie the parts of a building together, and reflect a building's history. A building's style, period of construction, materials, and setting can inspire appropriate paint colors.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR WINDOWS & DOORS



*This band of three paired 18-light, wood casement windows have true divided lite muntins. The windows provide interior illumination and allow for ventilation.*

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT WINDOWS

Windows are important character-defining features of historic buildings and should be retained and repaired. Maintaining and repairing wood windows includes replacing broken glass, muntins, moldings, glazing compound, and hardware with matching materials. Wood sashes and frames should be scraped, primed, and repainted. Repairing wood sashes, frames, and weather stripping, caulking and insulating cracks at window jambs, and using storm windows can reduce drafts and increase energy efficiency.

Historic decorative windows, which include leaded glass, art glass, stained glass, beveled glass, prismatic glass, Luxfer prism glass, or specially shaped windows such as lancet, round-arched, oriel or Palladian windows, shall be retained and repaired.

Removal of doors and decorative windows which are visible from the street is considered demolition and requires a Certificate of Appropriateness.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DOORS

Entrance doors are important character-defining features of historic buildings and should be retained and repaired. The original or historic size and proportion of a front door, its design details, the door surround, and the placement of the door all contribute to the character of the entrance and the building. Maintaining and repairing historic doors includes replacing deteriorated

weather stripping, repairing wood frames, caulking and insulating cracks at door jambs, and replacing broken glass, muntins, moldings, glazing compound and hardware with matching material. Scrape, prime, and repaint or stain wood doors and frames. Repairing historic doors and using storm doors can reduce drafts and increase the energy efficiency of a door.

Removal of original or historic doors which are visible from the street is considered demolition and requires a Certificate of Appropriateness.

### WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN DOING A WINDOW OR DOOR PROJECT

- Is the work visible from the street?
- Does the work meet the definition of *Demolition* as defined by the Village of Oak Park? If yes, it will require a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- Is the building or structure a Landmark or a Contributing Resource within a historic district?
- Do proposed replacement doors or windows match the existing size, shape, pattern, and material?
- Have the following submittals prepared when proposing to replace windows or doors that are visible from the street:
  1. Photos of existing windows or doors documenting excessive deterioration
  2. Cost estimates for repair and replacement
  3. Details of replacement windows or doors showing they will match size, detail, appearance and material

## RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES FOR ANY WINDOW PROJECT

### Repair

- Avoid altering the character of a building by improper maintenance, repair, or replacement of historic windows.
- Repaint or stain windows and their frames regularly to prevent moisture infiltration and damage.

### Replacement Windows

- If a non-decorative historic window is not visible from the street or is so badly deteriorated that repair is not possible, replacement may be an option.

- If insulating glass is used in a replacement window, the spacers between layers of glass shall be dark bronze anodized aluminum to make it appear like a single-glazed window.

### Adding New Window Openings

- New windows which are similar to the proportion, size, shape, details, and materials of existing windows may be added in locations where none existed before, but only on side or rear facades of the building.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR WINDOW PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC

### Property Owners Shall:

- Retain and repair original or historic windows, including decorative windows, which are visible from the street.
- Repair historic windows using the same materials constructed in the same configuration, size, and shape as the original.
- Replace deteriorated or rusted frame or mullion sections of steel windows using the same metal to match size, configuration, and finish of original.
- Retain and repair historic storm windows that are visible from the street.
- Match the muntin configuration and profiles of existing historic windows when replacement windows are used.
- Use true-divided lights (individual panes of glass) or simulated-divided lights (muntins permanently fixed to both the interior and exterior of the glass) when replacement windows are used.
- Design and detail of replacement window should be based on an existing example or documented historic appearance, or should be appropriate to the style.
- Make new windows look like the historic windows from the street, and match critical details such as size, shape, operation, glass (muntin) configuration, profiles, material, and finish. They should operate in the same manner as the historic windows and should be the same material.
- Replace a wood window with the same material, which may be vinyl or aluminum clad on the exterior. If the window is a simple 1-over-1 sash with non-ornamental frames, the new material may not have to match the original materials.
- Replace historic metal windows with new metal windows. Sash and frame profiles and finish should appear the same as the historic window from the street.
- Match the muntin configuration and profiles of replacement windows with existing historic windows. The windows should have true-divided lights (individual panes of glass) or simulated-divided lights (muntins permanently fixed to both the interior and exterior of the glass). Snap-in or removable muntins are not appropriate.

### Property Owners Shall NOT:

- Remove or encapsulate window trim features that characterize a property.
- Remove historic decorative windows unless irreparably damaged and documented.
- Use snap-in or removable muntins, or flat muntins between panes of glass, when replacement windows are used.
- Install Plexiglas, acrylic, Lexan, or similar types of plastic glazing materials in place of historic glass that is visible from the street, unless documented that these products were used in the historic window.
- Install glass block as new or replacement windows that are visible from the street unless it is characteristic of the style of the building. If historic glass block is replaced, it shall be replaced with new glass block with similar shape, color, reflectivity and texture as the historic material.
- Close up or conceal historic windows or openings on the front façade. A side window which is visible from the street may be covered with a finished wall on the interior of the window if permitted by Code.
- Add new window openings to the front façade, unless documented that they previously existed. New windows which are similar to the proportion, size, shape, details, and materials of existing windows may be added in locations where none existed before, but only on side or rear façades of the building.
- Install skylights or roof windows that are visible from the street.
- Use muntins in a replacement window if they were not used in the original window. In absence of historic evidence, they should only be used if characteristic of the style of the building.

## RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES FOR ANY DOOR PROJECT

### Repair

- Avoid altering the character of a building by improper maintenance, repair, or replacement of doors.
- Repaint or stain doors and their frames regularly to prevent moisture infiltration and damage.

### Replacement Doors

- If a historic door is not visible from the street or is so badly deteriorated that repair is not possible, replacement may be an option.
- If insulating glass is used to replace a window within a door, the spacers between layers of glass shall be dark bronze anodized aluminum to make it appear like a single-glazed window.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR DOOR PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC

### *Property Owners Shall:*

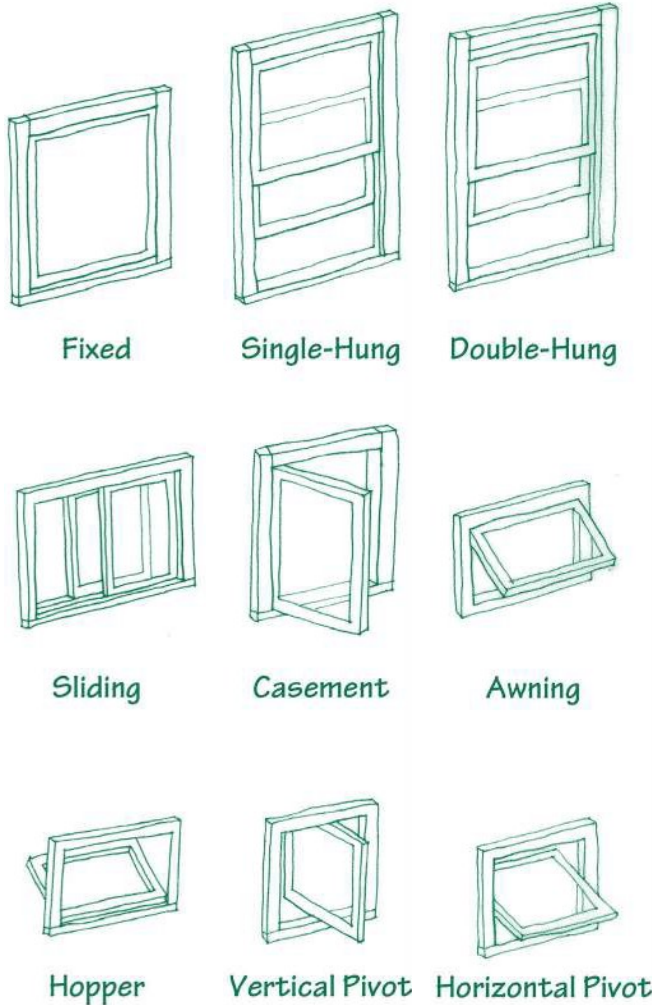
- Retain and repair original or historic doors that are visible from the street.
- Repair historic doors using the same materials constructed in the same configuration, size, and shape as the original.
- Retain and repair historic storm and screen doors that are visible from the street.
- Design and detail of replacement door should be based on an existing example or documented historic appearance, or should be appropriate to the style.
- Make new doors look like the historic doors from the street, and match critical details such as size, shape, operation, glass (muntin) configuration, profiles, material, and finish. They should operate in the same manner as the historic doors and should be the same material.

### *Property Owners Shall NOT:*

- Remove or encapsulate door surround features that characterize a property.
- Add new door openings to the front façade, unless documented that they previously existed. New doors which are similar to the proportion, size, shape, details, and materials of historic doors may be added in locations where none existed before, but only on side or rear façades of the building.



## GUIDELINES FOR WINDOWS & DOORS



### WINDOWS AND DOORS

Windows and doors typically comprise at least one quarter of the surface area of exterior walls of most historic buildings. Windows and doors, in addition to their trim and associated features, are important elements of historic buildings because they may:

- Define the character of a building
- Help define architectural style and building type
- Help date the age of construction
- Provide natural light and ventilation
- Act as a transition from the exterior to the interior

### COMMON WINDOW TYPES

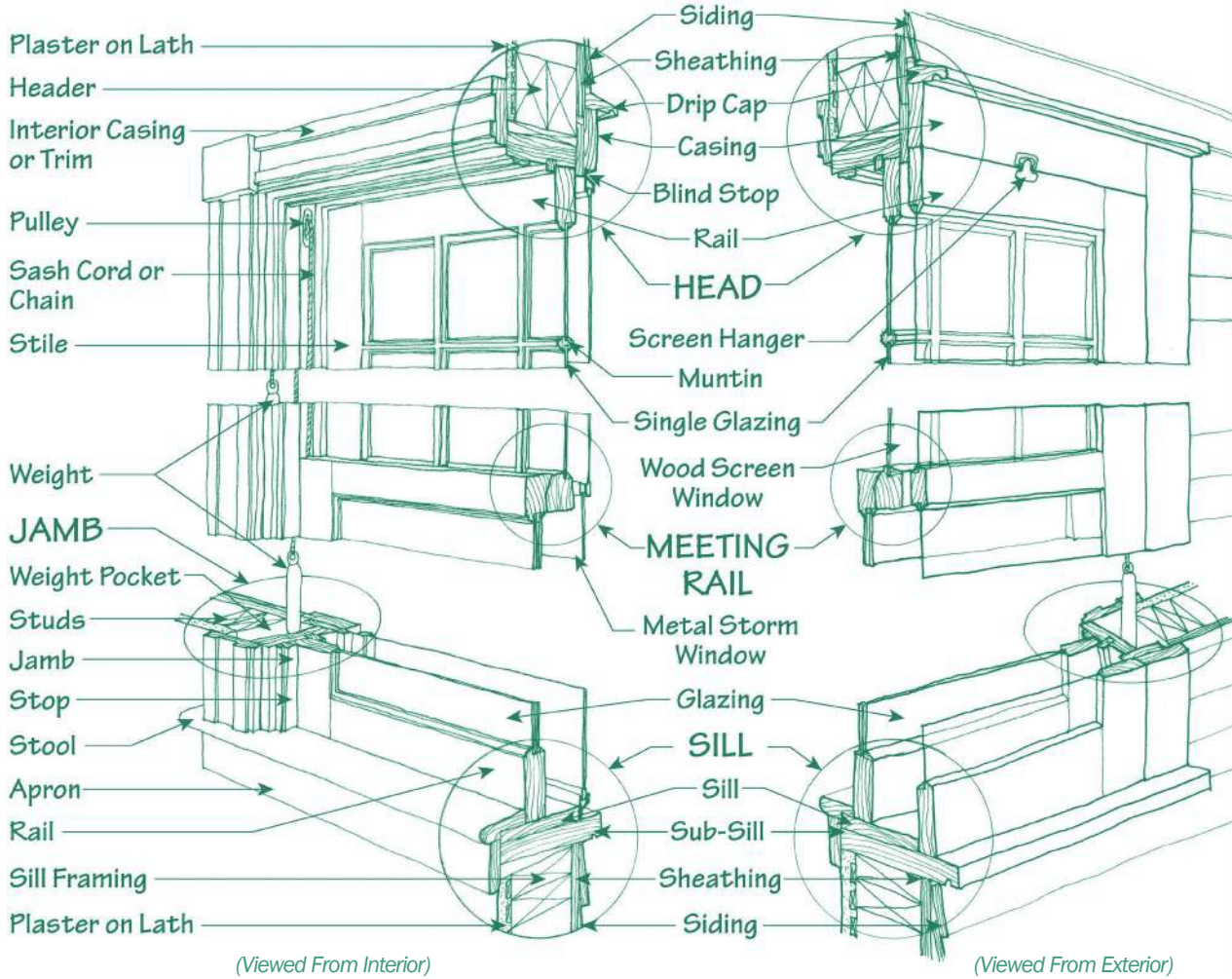
All window types can have different muntin patterns or configurations. The window type and pattern may be linked to a building's style. As such, not all types are appropriate for all buildings. For example, 3-over-1 double-hung sash windows are characteristic of the Craftsman style. Double-hung windows, in which both sashes can slide, and casement windows are the most common types of windows found in Oak Park. Double-hung windows promote cross-ventilation and are a good alternative to air conditioning in warmer months.

- **Fixed:** Non-operable framed glazing
- **Single-hung:** Fixed upper sash above a vertically rising lower sash
- **Double-hung:** Two sashes that can be raised and lowered vertically
- **Sliding:** Either a fixed panel with a horizontally sliding sash or two overlapping, horizontally sliding sashes
- **Casement:** Hinged on one side, swinging in or out
- **Awning:** Hinged at the top and projecting out at an angle
- **Hopper:** Hinged at the bottom and projecting in at an angle
- **Vertical Pivot:** Pivots vertically along its central axis
- **Horizontal Pivot:** Pivots horizontally along its central axis

The Guidelines were developed in conjunction with the Village of Oak Park's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). For more information regarding application and review procedures, please consult the *Guidelines Introduction*, visit Village Hall or [www.oak-park.us](http://www.oak-park.us), or contact Village staff at (708) 358-5440 or [historicpreservation@oak-park.us](mailto:historicpreservation@oak-park.us). For more information regarding HPC recommendations and requirements, refer to *Requirements for Windows & Doors*.



# DOUBLE-HUNG WINDOW COMPONENTS



## DEFINITIONS:

**Glazing:** The clear or translucent part of a window or door, typically made from glass.

**Mullion:** A horizontal or vertical element that connects two adjacent glass panes, sash units, or sections of a curtain wall.”

**Muntin:** A secondary framing element that holds and separates window panes within a sash.

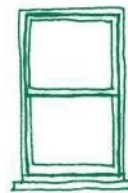
**Sash:** The part of the window frame that holds the glazing, especially when movable.

**Simulated Divided Light (SDL):** A window or door in which muntins are applied to the glass at the exterior, interior, and between layers of insulated glass.

**True Divided Light:** A window or door in which the glass is divided into several small panes.

## WINDOW CONFIGURATIONS

Different window configurations are appropriate for each architectural period or style. Altering the window type, style, shape, material, size, component dimension, muntin pattern, or location can dramatically alter the appearance of the building.



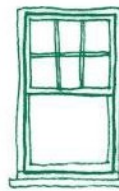
1/1 Window



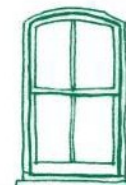
6/6 Window



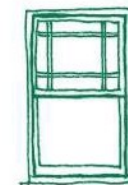
4/4 Window



6/1 Window



2/2 Arch-Top Window



Prairie Style Window

## WINDOW STYLES

Window patterns and configurations are linked to a building's period of construction and style. Pre-1850 buildings were typically constructed with small individual pieces of glass within an operable sash. As technology developed at the end of the 19th century, smaller pieces of glazing were replaced with larger pieces of glass allowing for more expansive views. This coincided with the beginning of the Victorian period, which encouraged varied shapes of windows and more elaborate frames, casings, applied ornament, and trim. When the Colonial Revival, Craftsman, and Prairie styles were popularized beginning in the 20th century, the use of multi-paned windows with simpler frames and casings was more prevalent.

Since all of the components and details of a window are essential to defining the construction period and style, the pattern and configuration of proposed replacement windows should be historically appropriate for each building.

## AWNINGS

Retractable and fixed canvas awnings were popular on residential buildings through the mid-20th century. Recent concerns over energy efficiency have created a renewed interest in using awnings to reduce heat gain, glare and cooling costs. Because awnings were so common in the past, they are visually appropriate for many historic buildings.



*Window awnings can help reduce solar heat gain in warmer months. Awnings should be sized to fit the window opening, and the color and style should be complementary to the house.*

Historic awnings should be maintained and repaired. New awnings should use materials and shapes appropriate to the style of the building. (Refer to *Guidelines for Commercial Buildings* for additional information.) Awnings are subject to the provisions of the Village Zoning Code. As awnings are considered to be temporary changes to a building, the HPC does not review awning permit applications on buildings not designated as Landmarks unless installation requires demolition of historic materials.

## HISTORIC WINDOW PROBLEM SOLVING

Property owners may not pay attention to their windows until a problem occurs. Typical concerns include operation, reducing air infiltration, maintenance, and improving appearance. Generally, the appearance of a window that has not been properly maintained can seem significantly worse than its actual condition. However, replacement of an entire wood window because of a deteriorated component, typically the sill or bottom rail, is rarely necessary. In many instances, selective repair or replacement of damaged parts and the implementation of a regular maintenance program is all that is required. It is generally possible to repair windows in fair or good condition relatively economically.

### To improve operation

- Verify that sash cords, chains, and weights are functional
- Remove built-up paint, particularly at jambs
- Repair or replace deteriorated components such as parting beads that separate window sash

### To reduce air infiltration

- Install weather-stripping snugly between moving parts. Quality metal weather-stripping can last 20 years.
- Replace broken glass (glazing)
- Re-caulk perimeter joints
- Remove and replace missing or cracked glazing putty
- Add sash locks to tighten windows
- Add an interior storm window. A storm window can achieve similar R-values to a new thermal window.
- Insulate weight pockets if no longer in use

### To reduce solar heat gain or heat loss

- Utilize operable exterior shutters or window awnings where historically and architecturally appropriate
- Install interior blinds or curtains
- Plant deciduous trees at south and west elevations to block summer sun and allow in winter sun. Plant conifer trees at the north elevation to reduce the effect of winter winds
- Install UV window shades or film

### Maintenance

- Regularly review condition and repair and repaint windows

## REPAINTING WINDOWS & DOORS

Refer to *Guidelines for Exterior Wood Siding & Trim* for more information on exterior paint, repainting and paint removal safety.



*The window sill and jamb have peeling paint and some checking or splitting. Removal of the loose paint will allow the wood to be inspected for signs of rot.*

## WOOD WINDOW REPAIR

Regular maintenance and repair of existing window elements can prolong the life of historic windows, which are a character-defining building element. In some cases it may be necessary to replace window components or an entire sash due to extensive deterioration or damage, but it is important to remember that because only a portion of the window is deteriorated, replacement of the entire component or unit might not be necessary. When evaluating window repair or replacement, consider the following:

- 1. Perform Routine Maintenance:** Replace broken or missing components such as trim, glazing, or sash cords. Verify that caulking, glazing putty, and weather-stripping are securely applied and repaint the window.
- 2. Treat or Repair Deteriorated Components:** At early stages of wood deterioration, it is possible to complete in-place treatments that do not necessitate component replacement. This includes treating wood for insects or fungus, epoxy consolidation, applying putty at holes, and cracks and painting.
- 3. Replace Deteriorated Components:** Replace either the deteriorated portion of wood with a “dutchman” or the entire component if the majority is deteriorated. A dutchman is a repair with a piece of the same material in a sharp-edged recessed cut. The replacement pieces should match the original in design, shape, profile, size, material, and texture. New sills are usually easily installed, while complete sash replacement might solve problems with broken muntins and deteriorated rails.
- 4. Replace Window:** If the majority of the window components are deteriorated, damaged, or missing and in need of replacement, installation of a new window that matches the original window might be warranted.

## SALVAGED WINDOWS

Architectural salvage stores may be a useful resource when replacing historic windows in whole or part is necessary. Due to the quality of wood used in historic windows, salvaged and repaired windows may outlast new replacement windows. These windows must meet the Guidelines and should match the size, shape, type, configuration, and profiles of historic windows.

## WINDOW MATERIALS PAST & PRESENT

Wood windows were historically manufactured from a durable, close, straight-grain hardwood, uncommon in today’s market. The quality of the historic materials and relative ease of repairs has allowed many-maintained wood windows to last for over a century or earlier.

Replacement windows and their components tend to have significantly shorter life spans. Selecting replacement windows is further complicated by manufacturers, who tend to offer different grades of windows, with varying types and qualities of materials and warranties. Today, a wide variety of materials are used in window production. Lower cost wood windows are typically made from new growth timber, which is softer and more likely to deteriorate than hardwoods. Vinyl and PVC materials, now common for replacement windows, break down in ultraviolet light, and have a life span of approximately 15 years. The great variety and combinations of other materials and finishes for replacement windows, including aluminum, continue to be tested to determine projected life spans.

Other areas of concern with replacement windows are the types and quality of the glazing, seals, fabrication, and installation. Double glazing or insulated glass, used in most new window systems, is comprised of an inner and outer pane of glass sandwiching a sealed air space. The air space is typically filled with an inert gas such as argon with a perimeter seal. In lower quality and vinyl windows, this perimeter seal can fail in as few as 10 years, resulting in condensation between the glass layers and necessitating replacement to allow for clear visibility. Many of the gaskets and seals that hold the glass in place also have a limited life span and deteriorate in ultraviolet light.

Problems with replacement windows may result from poor manufacturing or installation. This is particularly true if the existing window opening is not square or plumb. Twisted or crooked frames can make windows difficult to operate. Open joints allow air and water infiltration into the wall cavity or building interior.



One of the advantages of historic wood windows over modern prefabricated units is reparability. This photo demonstrates a dutchman repair at the corner of a historic wood window. Also note the new glazing putty.

## WINDOW OPTIONS - POSITIVES VERSUS NEGATIVES

### Repair or replacement of existing components:

Deteriorated sills, sashes, and muntins can be repaired by skilled craftsmen using wood consolidants or replacement parts, retaining original fabric and function. In-kind replacement sashes and sills can be custom-made to replace deteriorated sections if necessary.

#### *Benefits of repair and selective component replacement:*

- Original building fabric and historic character of the building are retained
- Historic profiles, dimensions and proportions match
- Repairs can be completed by skilled local carpenters
- Timber used in historic windows can last substantially longer than replacement units

**Sash replacement package:** Some manufacturers offer replacement jamb liners and sashes for installation within existing window casings. The system allows installation of a new sash with various muntin patterns within existing frames, but results in the loss of the historic sash.

#### *Sash replacement package benefits:*

- Original muntin pattern can be duplicated
- Maintains the historic opening, surround, and trim

#### *Sash replacement package negatives:*

- Historic sashes are removed and become landfill debris
- Stock replacement sashes are often inappropriate for the size and proportions of existing openings and detailing
- Replacement sashes have a limited warranty, likely needing partial or full replacement again in 10- 25 years as seals and joints open
- Modification of the jambs is necessary



Typically, the deterioration of wood windows first occurs at the sill. Peeling paint can allow moisture to enter wood and cause rot. Regular repainting is recommended to provide a protective barrier against moisture.

- The jamb liners do not always work well in existing window openings and might need more frequent replacement
- Racked openings can be hard to fit, making window sash hard to operate, and seals might not be tight

**Frame and sash replacement unit:** A complete frame with pre-installed sash of various muntin patterns for installation within an existing window frame opening. This option results in the total loss of the sash and modification of the frame.

#### *Frame and sash replacement unit benefits:*

- Manufactured as a unit to be weather tight
- Original muntin pattern can be duplicated

#### *Frame and sash replacement unit negatives:*

- Historic sash are removed and become landfill debris, and the historic character of the building is diminished
- Stock replacement sash are often inappropriate to the size and proportions of existing openings and detailing
- The surrounding frame is modified, alteration of built-in surrounds might be required and two frames and sills are typically visible at the exterior
- The size of the window sash and glass openings are reduced due to the new frame within the old frame
- In-fill might be required for non-standard sizes
- Can require modification of existing casing and sills

## REPLACEMENT WINDOW QUALITY

Reputable lumber yards and window specialists typically provide higher quality and a better selection of replacement window options. Each manufacturer also provides various grades of replacement window options. Manufacturer's information can generally be found on their websites or in catalogues.



*Historic wood windows typically have a three-dimensional quality that does not exist in newer replacement windows. These 20-light corner casement windows have decorative wood surrounds as well as single-light wood storm sash.*

## VINYL & ALUMINUM REPLACEMENT WINDOWS

One of the claims of the vinyl and aluminum window industry is that replacement windows do not require maintenance. However, considering the relatively short life span of many of the materials and components, they will need continual replacement.

- As joints or seals in replacement windows deteriorate, openings can be formed that allow air and water to enter into the window frame, wall cavity and/or building interior, causing additional damage. Repair of these openings typically requires replacement of the deteriorated parts.
- Replacement may be an issue if the manufacturer has modified their designs or is no longer in business, necessitating custom fabrication of deteriorated elements or replacement of the entire window.
- The double-glazing has similar problems over time with the deterioration of the perimeter seal. In addition, if the glazing unit is cracked or broken, it will require full replacement. This is further complicated when the double-glazing includes an applied or internal muntin grid.

By contrast, a good carpenter or handy homeowner can generally repair a historic wood window with single pane glazing and install an interior storm window to improve thermal performance. As a result, the use of a wood replacement sash with details to match other existing units on the building when the historic sashes are missing or non-reparable may be the best long-term, cost-effective option.

## REPLACEMENT WINDOW COSTS

Costs to consider in the installation of replacement windows include:

- Labor to remove old windows and disposal fee
- Purchase price and delivery of new windows
- Labor and materials to modify existing framing for new windows
- Labor to install new windows
- Life-cycle costs associated with more frequent replacement of deteriorated components and windows



*The 9/6 vinyl replacement windows in the image have applied muntins, are mounted flush against the outside wall, and lack the depth of traditional windows. They do not have trim or casings including a drip cap and sill. As a result they are inappropriate and diminish the historic character of the building.*

## MECHANICAL UNITS

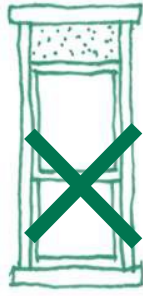
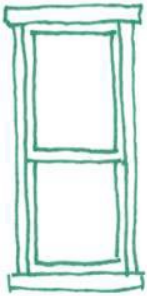
Placement of new mechanical units should not be visible from the street. Through-wall mechanical units are discouraged on surfaces of the building visible from the street. Window air conditioners are permitted where it can be shown that no historic features will be removed in their installation or removal. Refer to *Requirements for Roofing and Guidelines for Commercial Buildings* for additional information.

## INAPPROPRIATE REPLACEMENT WINDOWS

The following diagrams indicate historic windows with **inappropriate** examples of replacement windows. When considering a replacement window, every effort should be made to match the size, configuration, shape and proportions of the existing window in addition to retaining or duplicating the historic decorative wood trim.

Historic

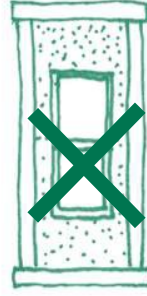
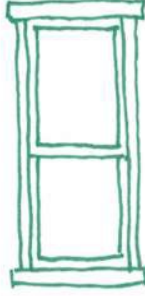
Replacement



Size: The replacement window should be sized to fit the opening - Infill panels should not be installed

Historic

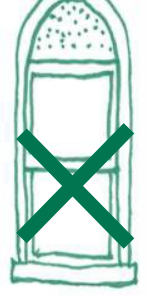
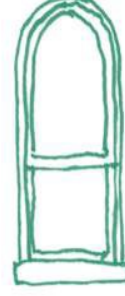
Replacement



Size: The replacement window should be sized to fit the window opening - Infill panels should not be installed

Historic

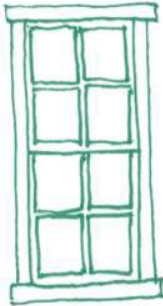
Replacement



Shape: The replacement window should be shaped and sized to fit the window opening - Infill panels should not be installed

Historic

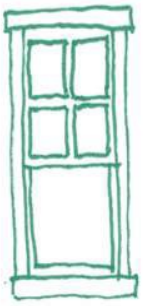
Replacement



Configuration: The replacement window should have a 4/4 light configuration to match the historic window

Historic

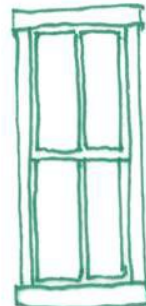
Replacement



Configuration: The replacement window should have a 4/1 light configuration to match the historic window

Historic

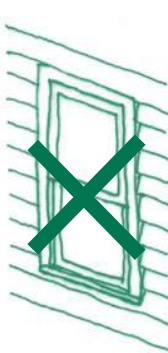
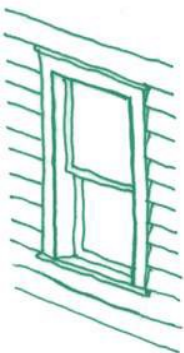
Replacement



Proportions: The proportions of window components should match the historic window including the size of the frame and muntins

Historic

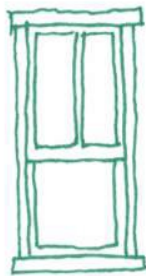
Replacement



Depth in Wall: The location of the replacement window should be set back into the wall the same distance as the historic window

Historic

Replacement



Type: The replacement window should match the type of historic window

Historic

Replacement

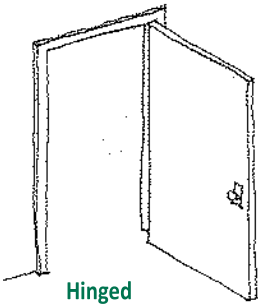


Decorative trim: Decorative trim should be retained or replaced to match

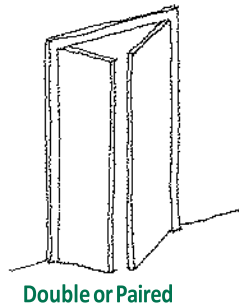
## DOORS

Exterior doors serve an important role in regulating the passage of people, light, and air into a building, as well as providing a threshold separating the exterior and interior. Historically, most doors were wood in material but can vary widely in style.

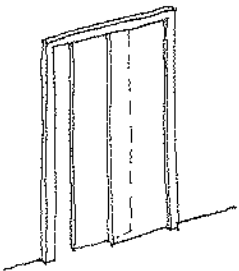
Doors are typically constructed of numerous parts. By the middle of the 18th century, elaborate paneled doors became more common, and are now the most common American residential door type. Paneled doors can be constructed in a variety of configurations that can reflect the style of the building. Later 19th century doors often included glazed panels. In the 20th century new door types, including flush doors and metal doors, had periods of popularity.



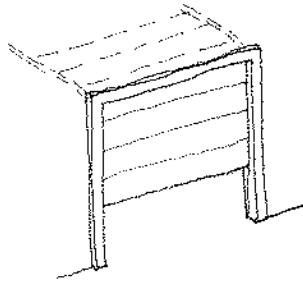
Hinged



Double or Paired



Sliding



Overhead

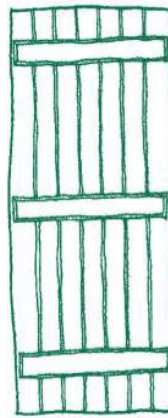
## COMMON DOOR TYPES

- **Hinged:** Swings to close at opposite jamb. Almost always mounted on the interior, swinging inward.
- **Double or Paired:** A pair of swinging doors that close an opening by meeting in the middle, e.g. French doors.
- **Sliding:** Either a fixed panel with a horizontally sliding door or overlapping horizontally sliding doors, e.g. patio doors
- **Overhead:** Horizontal sections that slide on tracks opening upward, most often found on garages

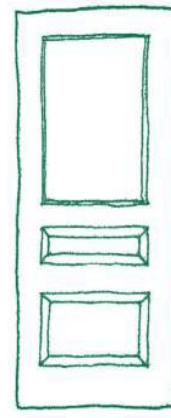
## WOOD DOOR TYPES

All door types can have glazing installed in different configurations.

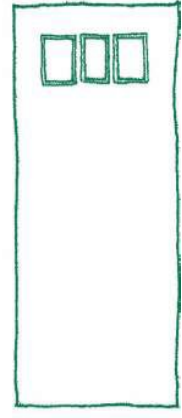
- **Batten:** Full height boards attached edge-to-edge with horizontal boards nailed to the verticals
- **Paneled:** A frame of solid wood parts with either glass or wood panels
- **Flush:** A single plain surface on its face, typically wood veneer



a. Batten



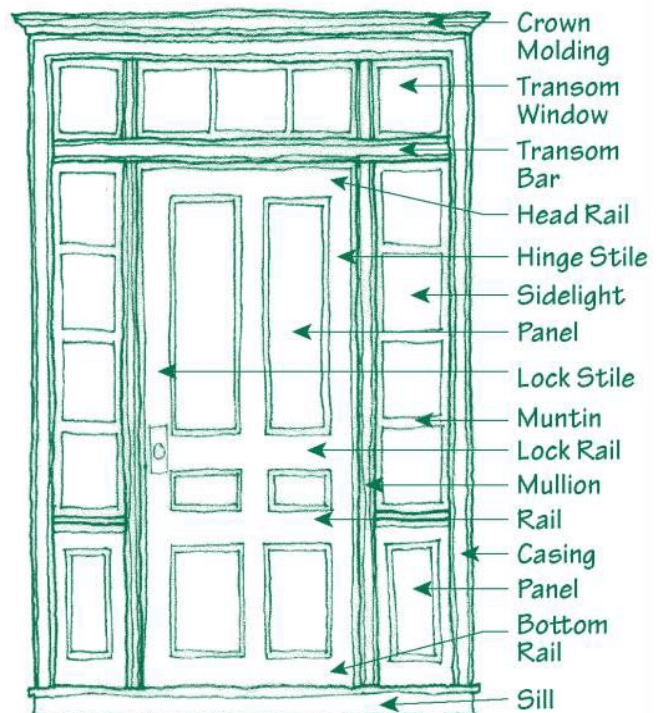
b. Paneled



c. Flush

## PANELED WOOD DOOR COMPONENTS

Paneled wood doors are most common on historic Oak Park houses. The diagram below identifies common wood paneled door components. Door configurations vary with a building's architectural style.





*High-style or grand door openings can often include masonry surrounds and decorative sidelights. In this example, the ornate masonry surround is arched and has flanking urns. The paneled, arch-headed wood door is flanked by sidelights and protected by a paneled wood storm door.*

## DOOR STYLES

Door styles vary widely in details and ornamentation, often corresponding with the architectural style of the building. As a result, doors are considered an important feature and the retention, maintenance, and repair of historic doors can help preserve the historic character of the building. If door replacement is warranted, the new door should be appropriate for the character and architectural style of the building.



*Most Oak Park houses have simple doors, often including glass. A transom window above a door provides ventilation in warmer weather. Also note the leaded glass double-hung window pictured.*

## HISTORIC DOOR PROBLEM SOLVING

Since doors tend to be one of the most operated elements on the exterior of a building, they are more likely to deteriorate from wear or damage and generally require more regular maintenance, such as painting. If deterioration occurs, selective repair or replacement of damaged parts and the implementation of a regular maintenance program is often all that is required to retain a historic door.

### To improve operation

- Verify that doors fit properly in their frames and that joints are tight
- Verify that hardware is operational, particularly that hinges are tight and that hinge pins are not worn
- Remove built-up paint on door and at jambs
- Repair or replace deteriorated components such as trim and stops

### To reduce air infiltration

- Install weather stripping between door and frame
- Replace broken glass (glazing) and remove and replace missing glazing putty
- Re-caulk perimeter joints around frame
- Install a storm door

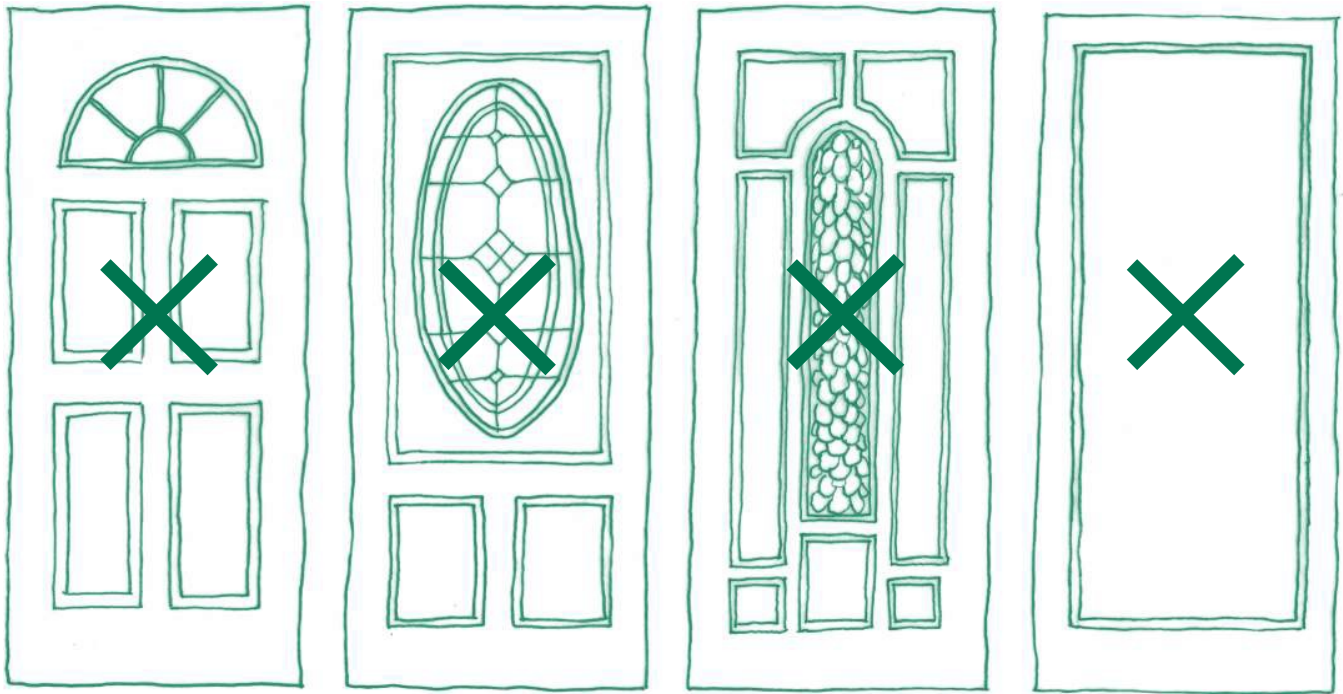
### Maintenance

- Regularly review condition and repair doors
- Re-paint wood doors



*Wood checking and peeling paint is visible. Minor repair and maintenance can prolong the serviceable life of this door. The trim at the bottom rail of the door helps prevent storm water from entering the building.*





*Half-round windows are generally not historically appropriate*

*Oval windows and modern leaded glass are generally not historically appropriate*

*Irregular panel doors with carved decorations or modern leaded glass are generally not historically appropriate*

*Flush doors with large glass windows are not generally appropriate for historic residences.*

## REPLACEMENT DOOR TYPES

Similar to windows, replacement doors should match the original materials, type, size, shape, configuration, panel pattern, glazed window type and pattern, proportions, profiles, and of historic doors.

There are numerous commercially available door styles associated with current architectural trends that are not appropriate for the styles of Oak Park's historic buildings (several examples above). Replacing with a door of the incorrect style can vastly diminish the historic character and integrity of a building.

## WINDOW TRIM AND ORNAMENT

Exterior wood trim frames windows and doors and serves as the transition to adjoining wall surfaces. Functionally, it provides protection at the perimeter and corners of openings, creating a weather-tight building enclosure. Historically, wood trim and ornament profiles, details, and sizes varied with building styles and types, which are important to the historic character. As a result, wood trim and ornament are important building features. Where a portion of wood trim or ornament has been removed, it should be replaced in-kind. If all original moldings have been removed, examples from similar buildings should be used as models.

## HARDWARE

Hardware (hinges, hooks, locks, etc.) forms an important part of the character of historic openings. Types should be carefully related to the type of window, door, or shutter that the hardware is intended to serve.

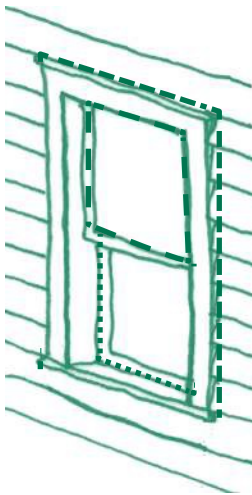
Until the mid-19th century, hardware was often made by hand and very simple in design. These simple designs included the strap hinges found on early doors and shutters. In the mid-19th century, the design of hardware became more detailed and elaborate, typically selected to complement the specific style of a building. The hardware of Arts and Crafts and Prairie Style buildings tends to return to simpler designs, made to appear handmade.

If hardware replacement is considered, it is important to keep in mind that simpler buildings would typically have simple hardware and more high-style designs would have more decorative designs. Hardware should complement the door and building style. In addition to style, the finish can dramatically alter hardware appearance. Glossy coated brass or bronze is rarely appropriate for a historic building. The design and finish of hardware should be carefully considered when replacement is necessary, and proposed hardware should match historic samples as closely as possible.

## WEATHER STRIPPING AND CAULK FOR WINDOWS AND DOORS

Proper application of weather stripping and caulk around windows and doors can greatly reduce air infiltration and drafts. When selecting weather stripping or caulk, it is important to choose the material appropriate for each location and follow the manufacturer's installation recommendations for the best results. As weather stripping is used between the moving parts of windows and doors, it can easily become damaged, loose, bent, or torn. Inspect weather stripping on a regular basis, preferably every fall, and replace as needed. For heavy use locations such as front doors, it may be beneficial to install more durable weather stripping, such as spring metal or nailed felt.

The installation of caulk or other sealants should occur throughout the exterior of the building. Locations where caulk is recommended include where two dissimilar materials meet, where expansion and contraction occur, and where materials are joined together. In some instances caulks and sealants can be sanded and/or painted to minimize their visual appearance. It is important to select the appropriate type for each location and exercise care when removing old caulk that might contain lead.



*Recommended weather stripping locations:*

- Behind window sash track
- Between window meeting rails
- At perimeter of doors and windows

*Recommended caulk locations:*

- Between window or door frame and adjacent wall
- Between abutting materials such as corner boards and siding, porch and wall surface
- Between dissimilar materials such as masonry and wood, flashing and wall surface

### DEFINITIONS:

**Weather Stripping:** A narrow compressible band used between the edge of a window or door and the jambs, sill, head, and meeting rail to seal against air and water infiltration; made of various materials including spring metal, felt, plastic foam and wood with rubber edging.

**Caulk:** A flexible sealant material used to close joints between materials; made of various materials including tar, oakum, lead, putty, and modern elastomerics such as silicone and polyurethane.



*Bare metal finished doors, such as this aluminum storm door, are not appropriate for most historic buildings. This example includes a thick horizontal division that spans across the center of the lower windows and decorative grillework that makes the door visually more prominent.*

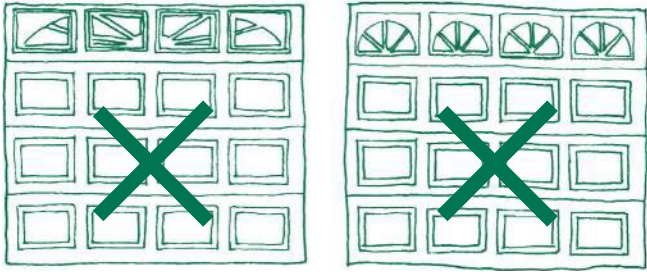
## SCREEN / STORM WINDOWS & DOORS

Screens and storm windows and doors should conceal as little of the historic window or door as possible and should be selected to complement each window or door type. This generally means selecting a screen or storm window or door that has rails that coincide with historic rails, matching the glazing pattern and overall configuration of the associated window or door. For windows, it is generally preferable to install interior storm windows which can achieve similar R-values to a new thermal window with reduced risk of condensation.

The most recommended option for a screen or storm door is a simple wood framed opening with a large screen and minimal ornament. If more elaborate detailing is desired, the style and level of detailing should complement the building style; for example, a screen or storm door with Queen Anne style woodwork would not be appropriate for a Colonial Revival or PrairieStyle house.



*The painted wood screen door pictured matches the color of the door beyond, decreasing its visual prominence. The large screen does not obstruct the details of the historic paneled wood door.*



Garage doors with arched or round window openings or patterns are generally not appropriate at historic buildings.

## NON-HISTORIC DOOR TYPES

Occasionally, modern uses require openings not found in historic architecture. These may include garage doors, doors that must swing outward to meet safety or code requirements, and the addition of louvered vents. It is often possible to integrate these types of openings into buildings in a way that maintains the historic character of the building and the neighborhood.

New required openings should replicate historic openings as possible. For example, match size and profile of trim elements. In some cases, it may be impossible to make certain changes simply because the style or type of building does not lend itself to such modification. Where existing additions or modifications do not fit the pattern of historic development in the district, every effort should be made to minimize their impact rather than making the alteration more prominent.

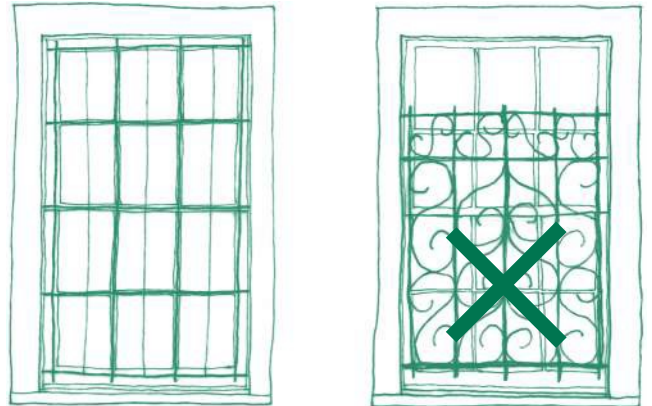


The multiple paint colors on this simple garage door complement the overall paint scheme

## WINDOW AND DOOR SECURITY

Traditionally, one of the best means of securing a property was to close shutters. More recently, re-glazing, particularly tempered glass, has been used as a deterrent, providing a barrier that is difficult for an intruder to break. Electronic security systems and warning devices with motion sensors can be installed on the interiors of doors and windows without altering the historic appearance of the building's exterior. In addition, small exterior security cameras can be installed discreetly to minimize their visibility.

If metal bars or grilles are considered the only acceptable method for securing a building, they can be installed on the interior of the window, door, or display window. If metal bars or grilles are installed on the exterior, the use of simple barrier grilles without decorative detailing can allow the historic window to remain visible. The bars or grilles should be properly sized to fit the opening and align with the frame opening and muntin configuration to the extent possible.



If metal bars or grilles are installed on the exterior, they should be sized to fit the opening and align with frames and muntins with simple barrier grilles and no decoration. Here, the left option is preferable.

## MODIFYING OR ADDING WINDOW OR DOOR OPENINGS

The arrangement, size, and proportions of window and door openings are key components of a building's style and character. As a result, the modification or addition of window or door openings, particularly on more prominent building façades, is discouraged. This includes the infill of all or part of an opening to make it smaller or to visually remove it. It also includes increasing the size of a door opening to provide a larger opening for a display window, garage, or other use.



# Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission

## Village of Oak Park

### REQUIREMENTS FOR PORCHES, BALCONIES, & DECKS



Many residences in Oak Park feature generous front porches that provide a sheltered outdoor space for residents to enjoy the outdoors, welcome visitors, and provide a transition from outdoors to indoors. This full-width porch includes convex wood columns and a simple square balustrade supported by stone piers.

#### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PORCHES, BALCONIES, & DECKS

The rich architectural character of Oak Park is distinguished by its collection of porches. Porches are typically one of the most visible elements of a building. They serve as key elements in a building's style and play a significant role in the appearance of the building and streetscape.

Historically, porches were an exterior living space where property owners could find a sheltered transition into their buildings, meet and converse with neighbors, and welcome visitors. Porch and balcony overhangs also protect windows and doors below from the elements.

Balconies project out from the face of a building, are generally supported by beams or brackets, and may be decorative. Stoops are steps that lead directly to the entrance without a landing (see photo in *Guidelines for Porches, Balconies, & Decks*). They can be wood, brick or concrete and may have side railings or walls. Decks are porches with a flat open floor area adjoining a building, which do not have a roof. Decks are typically found on rear façades not visible from the street.

#### WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN PROPOSING A PORCH, BALCONY, OR DECK PROJECT

For any project related to porches, balconies, or decks, these are some key issues to consider:

- Is the building or structure a Contributing Resource within a local historic district? To learn a building's designation status, visit the Village website or contact Village staff. Buildings that are not in historic districts and not Oak Park landmarks do not require Historic Review.
- Is the work visible from the street (generally the front or side elevations on an interior lot)? Historic porches and balconies which are visible from the street should be maintained and repaired as needed.
- Does the proposed work meet the definition of a Demolition as defined by the Village of Oak Park? (see *Guidelines Definitions*). If yes, it will require HPC review and a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- New porches and balconies should be characteristic of the style of the building. If there was no porch historically, adding one may not be appropriate.
- New decks should not be visible from the street or should be appropriate for the style of the building.

## RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES FOR ANY PORCH, BALCONY, OR DECK PROJECT

- Retain as much of the historic porch and balcony materials and elements as possible.
- Replacement elements should match historic elements in all aspects including material.
- New porches, balconies, and decks that are visible from the street are appropriate if they are characteristic of the style of the building and replacing similar porches, balconies, or decks that were previously removed.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR PORCH, BALCONY, OR DECK PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC

### *Property Owners Shall:*

- Maintain and repair historic porches and balconies which are visible from the street.
- Replace existing porches and balconies that have deteriorated or become badly damaged in the same size and shape with appropriate new materials.
- Replace deteriorated wood elements with another material, if the dimensions, appearance, size, profiles, texture, and finish match the historic elements.
- Paint new and existing wood on porches and balconies that are visible from the street, unless it can be documented that the original wood was unpainted or stained. Unpainted pressure-treated wood is not permitted in locations that are visible from the street.
- Restore historic porches which have been enclosed in the past to their appearance during the period of significance unless the enclosure, by nature of its age, architectural significance, or other special circumstance has achieved historic significance of its own.
- Install removable wood-framed seasonal storm windows or screens rather than permanent and scale-changing storm and screens.

### *Property Owners Shall (continued):*

- Construct proposed new porches to be similar to historic porches which have been removed with regard to size, style, and detail, to the extent that such historic porches can be documented. Where inadequate documentation exists for the original porch, proposed new porches shall be typical of those built in the style of the historic building.
- Enclose porches as long as the changes are readily reversible and no character-defining features or architectural elements are damaged or obscured by the enclosure.

### *Property Owners Shall NOT:*

- Alter historic porches and balconies in such a manner that the characteristics of the style of the porch are lost, obscured, or modified.
- Introduce new decorative elements that were not historically part of the porch or balcony.
- Destroy or conceal important architectural features or details.



## GUIDELINES FOR PORCHES, BALCONIES, & DECKS

### MAINTAINING PORCHES & BALCONIES

Due to the importance porches have in the character of historic buildings and streetscapes, original materials and details should be preserved. Typically, areas covered by a porch roof, including windows, doors, and wall surfaces, require less maintenance. However, horizontal porch components including steps, railings, and roofs are usually exposed to the weather and might require additional maintenance. One of the best ways to preserve wood features is regular painting. If a component is deteriorating, repair or replacement in kind is recommended as part of regular maintenance.

Similar to wood elements, ornamental metals also require regular maintenance. Both wrought iron and cast iron, often used for balustrades and railings, are highly prone to rusting. When iron elements rust, there are two significant issues. First, rust can cause iron elements to increase in thickness by 7- to 10- times their original size. When embedded in a building assembly, this rust expansion results in cracking which affects the building's structural integrity. Second, rusted metal elements can lose structural integrity leading to the failure of important features such as railings. One of the best ways to protect metals is to regularly remove surface rust and repaint using a rust inhibitive paint.

For further intonation regarding the maintenance of porch and balcony components, refer to:

- *Guidelines for Exterior Wood Siding & Trim*
- *Guidelines for Roofing*
- *Guidelines for Masonry & Stucco*

The Guidelines were developed in conjunction with the Village of Oak Park's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). For more information regarding application and review procedures, please consult the *Guidelines Introduction*, visit Village Hall or [www.oak-park.us](http://www.oak-park.us), or contact Village staff at (708) 358-5440 or [historicpreservation@oak-park.us](mailto:historicpreservation@oak-park.us). For more information regarding HPC recommendations and requirements, refer to *Requirements for Porches, Balconies, & Decks*.



*A porch is a covered exterior space adjoining a building, generally at an entrance.*



*A balcony is a platform enclosed by a railing that projects from an upper floor of a building.*



*A deck is a flat surface that extends off building, generally elevated and not covered. Decks usually lack the stylistic details of a porch, thus lacking integration with the building.*



*A stoop is an uncovered entrance to a building that can include a landing and/or a railing.*

## PORCH COMPONENTS, MATERIALS, & CHECKLISTS



**Roof:** Generally same material as main roof; can be metal if low pitch. Verify roofing material is secure, flashing is intact and there is no standing water

**Intersecting Gable End:** Typically wood; verify paint surface is intact, especially behind and below gutters

**Gutter & Downspout (not shown):** Typically metal; verify all are secure; clear leaves and other debris

**Lintel:** Typically wood; verify paint surface is intact, especially behind and below gutters

**Molding:** Typically wood; verify paint surface is intact, especially behind and below gutters

**Brackets (not pictured):** Typically ornate wood; verify paint surface is intact

**Porch Ceiling:** Typically tongue and groove wood; check for peeling paint that could indicate dampness and possible roofing or flashing problems

**Post (column if round):** Typically wood; check base for rot, proper attachment, and check that paint surface is intact

**Balustrade/Railing:** Typically wood top rail, bottom rail, and balusters; verify elements are secure and that paint surface is intact

**Porch Floor:** Typically tongue and groove wood; verify floor is sloped to drain water away from the building and paint surface is intact

**Apron/Skirt:** Typically wood; check substructure for water or insect damage and that paint surface is intact

**Porch Steps:** Wood, concrete, stone, or brick; check wood for rot, termite damage, and intact paint surface

**Support Pier (post if wood):** Brick, stone, or stucco; check for leaning, cracks, and missing mortar (for posts, check substructure for water or insect damage and if paint surface is intact)

**Lattice/Screening:** Typically wood; check substructure for water or insect damage and intact paint surface

## PORCH COMPONENTS

Porches are made up of a number of components. These components all work together to achieve an integrated and unified visual, architectural, and structural purpose that is characteristic of a building's style and type. It is important to note that all porches do not have all components.



**Roofing:** The roof of a porch shelters the area below, including windows and doors, from the elements. A roof's material is generally dependent on its slope. For a more steeply pitched roof, the roofing material would likely be a continuation of the main roofing material, such as slate. If the roof is relatively flat, or low-sloped, metal may be found. (Refer to *Guidelines for Roofing* for more information.)



**Lintels:** The lintel is the horizontal element between piers or columns. It provides structural and visual support for the roof or wall surface above.



**Ornament:** Decorative elements, such as a frieze, fretwork and detailing provide visual interest and are specific to a building's style and period of construction.



**Ceiling:** A porch ceiling is most often made of tongue and groove boards, but can be highly decorative.



**Flooring:** The traditional material for flooring is tongue and groove boards. An elaborate home may have marble or other stone flooring. The replacement of tongue and groove flooring with concrete is not appropriate.



**Brackets:** This supporting element under the eaves, a balcony, or a roof overhang projects from a building's wall surface and is a decorative feature often found on porches. Here the brackets project from the posts. Typically, brackets extend to the outside edge of the balcony or roof and can be wood or metal.



**Steps:** Steps may be made of a variety of materials including wood, brick, stone, and/or concrete. In most instances, wood steps are most appropriate. They may be flanked by plinths, feature railings matching the porch railing, or have flat stucco or wood sidewalls.



**Columns & Posts:** Posts and columns are vertical structural supporting members. Columns are round; posts are square or rectangular. The posts may feature a variety of stylistic details depending on the age and style of the porch.



*Classical Wood Column*



*Classical Stone Column*



*Turned Wood Post with Brackets*



*Wood Pier*



*Stucco Pier*

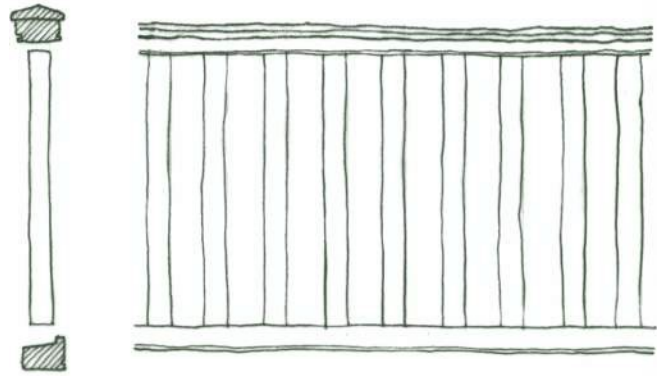


Most balusters in Oak Park are square or turned wood. This example includes a turned detail at the top of each baluster.

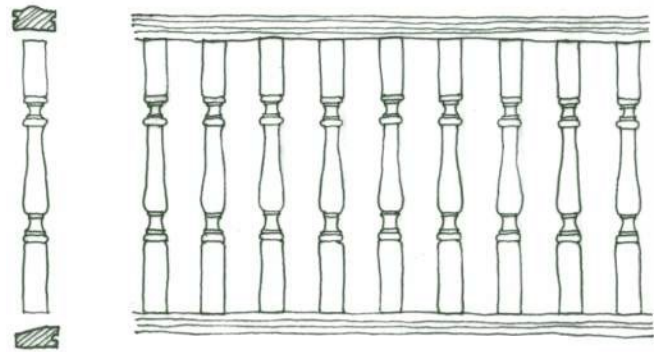
**Balustrades & Railings:** A balustrade is a railing with upper and lower horizontal members, known as rails, and vertical balusters of wood or metal. A replacement balustrade should match the overall style and character of the building.



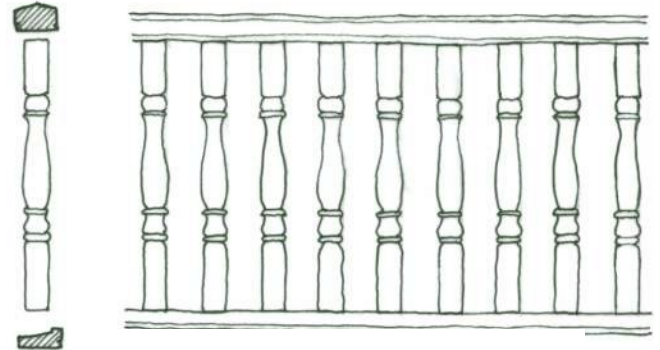
This balustrade is formed of regularly spaced, intersecting circles.



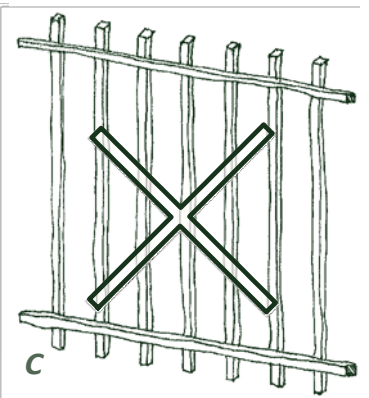
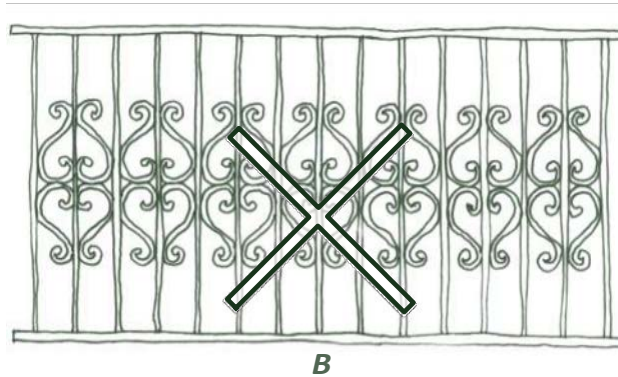
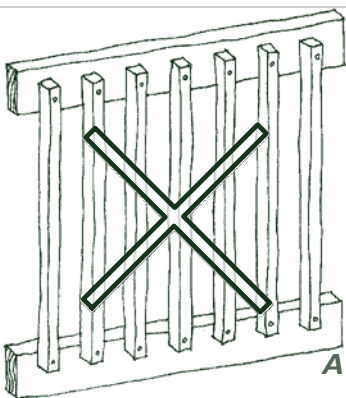
Square Post Balustrade



Victorian Turned Balustrade



Classical Turned Balustrade



The HPC does not approve Certificate of Appropriateness requests for a wood "deck" balustrades (A), applied decorative scrolled metal ornament balustrades (B) or balustrades composed of metal bars (C) for front porches as they are not historically accurate in Oak Park and would diminish the overall integrity of the building and historic district.



*This limestone balcony is supported by brackets flanking the window below and is accessed by a central door. The railing is comprised of square balusters with corner piers.*



*This balcony is located above the entrance and includes similar detailing to the porch below. The balcony is protected by the main roof of the house.*

## **BALCONIES**

Balconies project out from the face of a building, generally at an upper floor. They tend to be supported by beams or brackets. These may include decorative elements, like those pictured.

### **NEW PORCHES, BALCONIES, & DECKS**

New porches and balconies can greatly alter the appearance of a building. The HPC may approve new porches and balconies if they meet the Guidelines. The following should be considered:

- If the building historically featured a porch or balcony that was removed
- If the installation will destroy or conceal important architectural features
- If the proposed design is compatible in size, scale, material, and design to the building and surrounding streetscape.
- If the porch or balcony is visible from the street.
- Decks are generally not historically accurate or compatible in Oak Park's historic districts. As such, new decks should be installed in locations where they are not visible from the street.

## LIGHTING

The type and placement of lighting plays an important role in maintaining the authentic historic character of a building. When modifying or installing lighting, there should be a balance between providing sufficient lighting and fitting within a neighborhood and streetscape context. For residential buildings, exterior lighting is typically located at the front porch. Additional security lighting may be located on the side and rear elevations of a building. (Refer to *Guidelines for Commercial Buildings* for lighting at commercial, institutional, and large-scale residential locations.)

All lighting should be installed to illuminate the porch and walkway surfaces without lighting spillover onto adjacent properties or into the night sky. In addition, the color and quality of the proposed light should mimic the soft, warm tone of incandescent lamps. Exposed conduit, wiring, or junction boxes should not be visible from the street.

When possible, the HPC encourages the use of original light fixtures adapted for contemporary use, for example, increasing brightness with new or additional bulbs. Fluorescent tube lighting and flood lights should not be visible at street elevations. Where the building no longer has original exterior lights or never had them, the HPC encourages light fixtures that are compatible in age, style, and scale of the building, or which are unobtrusive. Lighting should be maintained and burned-out bulbs replaced.



*Lighting is generally located near doors or on porch ceilings. It is generally best to select a style of lighting that is compatible with the building style, or a light that is simple in design such as this example.*

## CEILING FANS

Ceiling fans should be as simple as possible, in a style that complements the building. They should be limited in number, evenly spaced, and centered on bays. The installation of ceiling fans with integral lighting is discouraged.



## SECURITY CAMERAS

Security cameras should be limited in number and size. They should be installed as unobtrusively as possible. Similar to lighting, exposed conduit, wiring, or junction boxes is discouraged.

## LIGHTING TYPES

**Decorative Lighting** generally draws attention to the fixture or design rather than providing significant illumination. When a decorative lamp is illuminated, it becomes highly visible and attracts attention. Therefore, it should be compatible with the building. In most instances, the number of decorative lights should be limited and located near the primary entrance. They should be installed in a way that minimizes damage to historic building fabric, and evenly spaced on porch bays, or centered on or around an element such as a door. They should be scaled appropriately for the proposed location. Faux historic materials are not appropriate.

**Ambient Lighting** provides a wash of general illumination, e.g. on a porch. Since the emphasis of ambient lighting is the illumination rather than the fixture, all ambient lights should be small, unobtrusive, and as discreetly installed as possible.

**Security Lighting** should be unobtrusive and located at rear or non-street elevations. The number of security lights should be limited, and their use should be limited, e.g. motion sensors



*This porch has been partially enclosed with operable windows allowing the space to be used in the winter months.*

### **ENCLOSING PORCHES & BALCONIES**

Porches and balconies were generally meant to be open exterior spaces. Property owners may desire to enclose these spaces to provide additional interior space. However, these transitional spaces are an essential element of a building's type and style. As a result, enclosing these spaces, particularly where visible from the street, is a significant alteration to a building and its visual perception. Proposed changes should be readily reversible and no character-defining features or architectural elements should be damaged or obscured by the enclosure. Removable wood-framed seasonal storm windows or screens are recommended over more permanent and scale-changing storm windows and screens.



*The porch column above is wood but the base has been replaced with a composite material that is visually similar to the former wood base.*

### **ALTERNATE MATERIALS**

Elements that are highly susceptible to rot, such as column bases, or where the duplication of a material will be prohibitively expensive, the HPC will consider the use of alternate materials. The proposed replacement material should match the appearance, size, profiles, texture, and finish of the historic material being duplicated.



*The right side of this porch has been enclosed with insect screens. The screens are installed behind the columns and the balustrade and the supporting structure is not visible from the public right of way.*



Oak Park

# Village of Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission

## REQUIREMENTS FOR ROOFING



*A roof and its associated features, including form, materials, chimneys, dormers, and overhanging eaves, can be key elements in a building's style.*

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ROOFS

A building's roof is one of its most important elements. Not only does it serve as the first line of defense against the weather, but its design greatly affects the overall appearance of the building. The following should be considered when planning any roofing project:

- Weather-tight roofing preserves a building and protects the building and its materials from rain, wind, sun, and snow.
- Temperature changes and building movement affect roofing materials.
- Roofing is an important element of a building's character, silhouette, and architectural style.
- The form, color, and texture of the roof and roof opening affect the scale and massing of a building.
- Variations in roofing materials and styles add visual interest to the streetscape.



*Individual missing or damaged slates can often be replaced, extending the serviceable life of the roof and postponing costly replacement.*

### WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN DOING A ROOFING PROJECT

When preparing for a roof-related project, these are some key issues to consider:

- Are the existing roofing materials and features historic (clay or cement tile, slate, wood shingles, copper gutters)? Make every effort to preserve, reuse, and repair historic materials.
- Are you repairing or replacing the roof or roof features? If so, limit your repairs and replacement to the damaged areas only.
- What materials do you plan to use in your repairs or replacement? If the historic materials are too damaged to be saved, replacement materials should match the original as closely as possible.
- Are you making any major changes to the shape or form of the roof? Changing the shape or style of a roof (for example, from a gable end to a mansard) can dramatically alter the appearance of a building.
- Are you adding dormers? If so, minimize their size and visibility to avoid impacting the historic integrity of the building. New dormers should be sympathetic to the historic building in design and should not cover more than 50% of the total roof area visible from the street.
- Are you adding openings or new features to the roof? If so, they should be compatible the building. Features like skylights and solar panels should be placed on the rear slope, if possible, to limit visual impact.

## RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES FOR ANY ROOFING PROJECT

### Substitute Roof Materials

- Don't rely on brochure photographs. Get samples and, if possible, visit a similar completed project to see the materials.
- Confirm that the proposed material is appropriate for your roof slope.
- Understand the total roofing system and attic ventilation that is appropriate for each material.
- Know that some materials may fade or change their appearance over time.
- Know that some substitute roof materials may require more frequent replacement, increasing overall costs over time.

### Roof Repair & Replacement

- Maintain, clean, and repair your roofing, roof

- Inspect attics periodically after a storm or freeze to catch small leaks early and reduce the potential for interior damage.
- Regularly repaint metal and wood elements that are vulnerable to rusting, rot, and deterioration.
- Securely install fasteners and flashings.

### Roof Accessories

- Use flashing materials and fasteners with a life span longer than the roofing material's life span.
- Regularly clean your gutters and downspouts - at a minimum each spring and fall.
- Install half-round gutters rather than "K"-gutters and use plain round or rectangular downspouts instead of corrugated downspouts.
- Minimize the overall number of openings in the roof and locate them in unobtrusive locations that are not visible from the street.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR ROOFING PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC

### Substitute Roof Materials

*Property Owners Shall:*

- Install roofing materials (not siding materials) on steep roof slopes.

### Roof Repair & Replacement

*Property Owners Shall:*

- Repair rather than replace historic roofing materials.
- Selectively replace damaged or missing historic materials with new materials that match in size, shape, texture, color, and appearance.
- Replace damaged or deteriorated materials with new materials to match the original in size, shape, texture, pattern, color, material, and appearance.
- If repair of the original material is not possible, replace damaged or missing materials with new materials that are similar in size, shape, texture, pattern, color, and appearance.

### Roof Accessories

*Property Owners Shall:*

- Retain and repair the historic drainage system and its appearance.

### Roof Features

*Property Owners Shall NOT:*

- Alter the original roof form, shape, or slope, unless reversing non-historic changes.
- Remove historic roof features such as chimneys, dormers, cupolas, weathervanes, or finials.
- Add or alter rooftop features visible from the street that change the roof configuration including roof windows, roof decks, and chimney stacks.
- Add rooftop features that create a false sense of history (weathervanes, cupolas, wood shingles to replace an original slate roof) without producing supporting evidence.
- Add new features or modern amenities that are visible from the street and do not match the roof's character, scale, materials, or detailing. This includes satellite dishes and antennas, skylights, vents, mechanical equipment, and telecommunications equipment; and renewable energy sources such as solar panels, wind turbines.
- Cover decorative elements such as cornices and brackets with vinyl or aluminum capping or siding.



## GUIDELINES FOR ROOFING



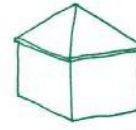
Front Gable



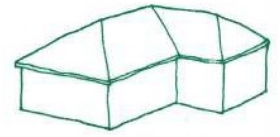
Side Gable



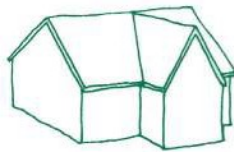
Ridged Hip



Pyramidal Hip



Cross Hipped



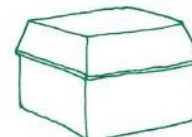
Cross Gable



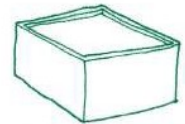
Shed



Gambrel



Mansard



Flat with Parapet

### ROOF FORMS

There are six general roof forms. These roof forms can have various slopes and be combined in different manners to provide numerous types of roofs. They can be characteristic of different building styles.

- **Gable Roofs** include front, side, and cross-gable configurations. Gable roofs generally have two equally angled slopes that meet at a central ridge. They are one of the most common roof forms because of their ability to shed water and relative ease of construction. In the front gable configuration, the main entrance is located at a gable end. In the side gable configuration, the main entrance is located below the sloping side eaves of the roof. A cross-gable roof refers to intersecting front and side gable forms.
- **Shed Roofs**, also known as a pent roofs or lean-tos, are roofs with a single slope, essentially forming a half gable, with rafters spanning between one exterior and a secondary wall. Shed roofs are typically used for additions to existing buildings.

- **Hipped Roofs** features slopes on all sides, meeting at a ridge or, as with a pyramidal roof, at a point.
- **Gambrel Roofs**, also known as Dutch roofs, include a pair of shallow pitched slopes above a pair of steeply sloped roofs on each side of a center ridge. This roof type is characteristic of the Dutch Colonial Revival style.
- **Mansard Roofs** include a steeply sloped lower section beginning at the building cornice and a nearly flat upper slope that may not be visible from the ground. The lower slope can be straight, concave or convex. This roof type is characteristic of the Second Empire style.
- **Flat Roofs** may be a true horizontal or have a low slope to allow drainage. They often have a parapet, generally an extension of the building's exterior walls. In Oak Park, they are most often found on commercial and multi-family residential buildings.

### ROOF SLOPE & MATERIALS

The roof slope may help define the appropriate materials. Low-sloped to flat roofs need a continuous or nearly continuous roof surface to keep storm water from entering a building. Although very few roofs are truly "flat", low-sloped roofs, generally defined as a pitch below 3:12 slope (3-inch rise for 12-inch run) require a watertight roofing system, generally of metal roofing, built-up hot tar roofing, and rolled roofing. By contrast, steeper-sloped roof systems generally have shingles, in materials such as slate, clay, concrete, metal, wood, and asphalt.

The Guidelines were developed in conjunction with the Village of Oak Park's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). For more information regarding application and review procedures, please consult the *Guidelines Introduction*, visit Village Hall or [www.oak-park.us](http://www.oak-park.us), or contact Village Staff at (708) 358-5440 or [historicpreservation@oak-park.us](mailto:historicpreservation@oak-park.us). For more information regarding HPC recommendations and requirements, refer to *Requirements for Roofing*.



## ROOF FEATURES

Roof features are decorative and sometimes functional elements that help to define the profile of a roof and should complement the building's style. Historic rooftop features include chimneys, dormers, cupolas, towers, turrets, finials, cresting, and weathervanes. When addressing roof features, it is important to remember they may be character-defining features and can be difficult and costly to replace.



**Chimneys** are typically designed to complement the style of a building and its period of construction. In Oak Park, many are constructed of brick and occasionally stone, some of which have been covered with stucco. Most building styles, including Colonial Revival and Classical Revival, tend to have square or rectangular chimneys, some with stone caps. Victorian period chimneys can include decorative detailing such as corbelling, varied patterns, and decorative surfaces.



**Dormers** protrude from the roof surface with a window at the downward slope, providing light and additional headroom in the interior. Dormer types, defined by their roofs, include gabled, shed, hipped, eyebrow, and arched dormers.

## ROOF ACCESSORIES

In addition to the roofing surface, roof accessories are part of the overall design. While they are primarily functional, they influence the roof's appearance. Roof accessories include flashing, gutters, downspouts and snow guards.

**Flashing** is thin sheet metal installed to prevent water from entering a building at joints and intersections. It is typically installed around chimneys, parapet walls, dormer windows, roof valleys, and vents, as well as at intersections of porches, additions, and bay windows. Flashing often deteriorates and fails before roof surfaces, particularly with more durable roofing materials such as slate, resulting in interior leaking. It is often possible to replace flashing without replacing the entire roof.

When replacing flashing or installing a new roof, it is important to select a flashing material that has an anticipated life span similar or longer than the roofing. Flashing is typically copper, terne coated (corrosion resistant alloy of lead and tin) steel, or aluminum. The longevity of is based upon its thickness, how quickly it deteriorates from weather, and whether it is galvanized, treated, or coated. Generally, copper and terne-coated steel have the longest life spans. Aluminum is more vulnerable to punctures, tears, and galvanic reaction to other metals and some roofing materials. It is important to verify that flashing materials are compatible with your roofing materials.

**Roof vents** are generally air and plumbing vents. Air vents include ridge and soffit vents. They provide an outlet for air and humidity from attics. ridge vents are installed at the peak of a sloped roof while soffit vents are located at roof eaves. Ridge vents are generally preferable. Plumbing vents typically provide ventilation for bathrooms, kitchens, and furnaces.

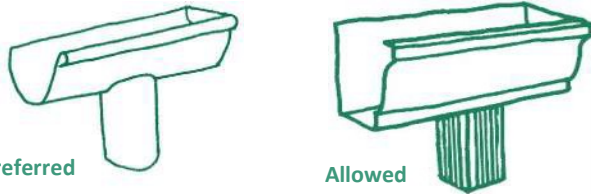
**Snow guards** are typically cast metal or bent wire devices arranged in a staggered pattern near an eave to prevent large masses of snow from sliding off a roof. Another form of snow guard is spaced brackets supporting metal rods above the roof surface. Both types of snow guards can protect eaves, cornices and gutters, and take advantage of the insulating effect of snow.

**Roof insulation** can greatly reduce heat loss during the winter and maintain a cooler environment in the summer, reducing cooling and heating costs. Installing a vapor barrier can also reduce attic moisture.

**Gutters** are typically located near or along the bottom edge of a roof slope to collect rainwater. Built-in gutters are hidden from view from the ground within or behind architectural features such as cornices or parapets. Built-in gutters are flashing materials wrapped around or within wood forms.

Hanging gutters are attached to the building just under the roof slope edge. Hanging gutters may be made of materials including wood, copper, galvanized metals, aluminum, and vinyl.

Similar to flashings, gutter materials have different life spans. Generally, copper has the longest life span, followed by terne coated steel. Aluminum is more vulnerable to punctures, tears, dents, and galvanic reaction to other metals. Vinyl or PVC can become brittle, and break in cold temperatures.



*Half-round gutters with round or rectangular downspouts are preferred over decorative gutters with corrugated downspouts. These decorative gutters often are stylistically incompatible with historic buildings.*

**Downspouts**, or rainwater conductors, are generally surface mounted to a building's exterior to bring a gutter's water down the face of the building to the ground or an underground drainage system. Downspouts can be made of copper, galvanized metal, aluminum and vinyl with similar characteristics, in a round or rectangular profile.

**Rain barrels** can collect water from downspouts for use in gardens and landscaping. As with other non-historic features, new rain barrels should be unobtrusive and placed where not visible from the street.



## INVESTIGATING HISTORIC ROOFING

Some research is usually needed to determine the historic roofing material for a building. A good place to start is in the attic. New roofs are often laid atop older roofing surfaces. Older roofs can sometimes be seen between the rafters. Another area to review is the roof framing, lath and sheathing. Lath is a wood strip used to support individual slates, tiles, and shingles, while sheathing is often a solid material such as plywood used to support asphalt and metal roofing.

Due to their weight, slate, clay, and concrete tile roofs require more substantial roof framing, and larger rafters with narrower spacing than the framing used to support wood shingles. If the original lath is visible, there are variations in lath spacing that relate to standard sizes for slate, clay and concrete tile, and wood shingles. Finally, metal roof installations may be identified by wood sheathing, which was often used in the place of lath.

If original materials have been removed or are not visible, historic photographs may be helpful. Check with staff at Village Hall and the historical society. Neighbors and similar nearby buildings may also provide clues about your original roofing materials.

## ROOFING MATERIALS

Historically, roofing materials were selected based on practical and aesthetic criteria including roof slope, weather conditions, and availability of materials and craftsmen. In Oak Park, historic roofing materials were generally slate, clay and concrete tiles, and wood shingles. Metal is also found and, later, asphalt shingles. Each material provides a specific color, texture, and pattern. For example, slate and wood shingles typically have variations in color, texture veining or graining, and thickness. Decorative slate shingles of varied colors and shapes were used in the late 19th century.

At the beginning of the 20th century new roofing materials were introduced, including asbestos and asphalt shingles, as well as varieties of rolled or built-up roofing for flat installations. The variety of metal roofing was also expanded to include copper, galvanized sheet steel, and aluminum.

Recently, a variety of roofing materials intended to simulate historic materials have been developed. These include "dimensional" or "architectural" asphalt-composition shingles and fiberglass, and metal or recycled rubber shingles intended to mimic the appearance of slate, wood, and clay shingles. The physical and aesthetic quality of these materials in comparison to the historic materials varies.



## Slate

Slate became a popular roofing material in the United States in the late 19th century as it became more available and favored architectural styles drew from early European traditions. Slate provided a durable, fire-resistant, and attractive surface. Slate is often seen on Victorian era houses including the Second Empire and Queen Anne styles, variety of shapes and colors made the roof surface a visually important building feature. Simple, square-cut slate was later used in with the Colonial Revival style.

A slate roof can last 60 to 125 years depending on the type of stone, quality of installation, and regularity of maintenance. A failing slate often slowly delaminates (splits into layers), chips, and absorbs moisture, causing the slate to deteriorate faster. Problems with slate roofs are typically the result of failure of roof accessories or fasteners, since they often do not have the same 100-year life span as the slate itself. To extend the life of a roof, property owners are encouraged to address small problems as they appear, using a qualified slate roofer.

Typical problems and possible repairs for slate:

- Loosening or corrosion of fasteners - reattach or replace fastener
- Split or cracked slate – install sheet metal under shingle, fill split or hole with roofing cement
- Missing or damaged slates or roof accessories – replace to match original

Extensive damage may mean that replacement of the roofing is needed. Property owners are strongly encouraged to match historic materials, including colors and decorative patterns. While installation of replacement slate roofing is encouraged, other materials with similar visual characteristics are available including ceramic tile, concrete/mineral fiber, and rubber. Some dimensional or architectural fiberglass asphalt shingles simulate the shapes, color, and varied color appearance of slate. If an alternative material is used, care should be taken to match the historic material as closely as possible. Additionally, synthetic materials may not be as durable.

## Clay & Concrete Tile

Clay and concrete tile roofs can last over 100 years, depending on the material's properties, manufacturing process, installation quality, and regularity of maintenance. Similar to slate, problems with tile roofs are typically the result of failure of roof accessories or fasteners, since they generally do not have the same life span as the tile itself. In addition, the tiles are relatively fragile and susceptible to damage from falling tree limbs and other impacts. To extend the life of a tile roof, property owners are encouraged to address small problems as they become apparent, using a qualified roofer.

Some benefits of tiles are that they can provide a watertight roofing system, fire resistance, and longevity at a relatively low cost over time. In addition, the tiles vary in shape, color, and texture, and can be made to resemble other materials including slate, weathered wood, and stone slabs.

Typical problems and possible repairs for tile:

- Loosening or corrosion of fasteners for tile or accessories – reattach or replace fastener
- Split or cracked tile – install sheet metal under tile; fill split or hole with roofing cement
- Missing or damaged tile or roof accessories – replace to match original

Depending on the number of tiles on a roof slope that are damaged or missing, replacement of the roofing might be warranted, although property owners are encouraged to install new clay or concrete tile and match the colors and decorative patterns with replacement materials. Other materials are used to simulate clay, concrete, or other tiles, but many do not have the same size and shape of the historic material and may not last as long. It is often possible to reuse salvaged tiles, taking care to verify availability of appropriate quantities of needed sizes, shapes, and colors. When replacing a roof, select flashing material that has a life span similar or longer than the roofing material.





### Asphalt

Asphalt and asbestos became popular roofing materials at the beginning of the 20th century because they were relatively inexpensive and easily installed. Early asphalt roofing was generally made of asphalt-saturated felts in a variety of shapes, styles, textures and colors. Today, asphalt shingles are made with fiberglass, generally as 3-tab or “architectural” or “dimensional” shingles, which include multiple layers of material with simulated shadows suggesting wood or slate. An asphalt shingle roof can be expected to last from 15 to 25 years with “architectural” or “dimensional” shingles lasting longer due to their multiple layers. Over time, asphalt shingles can curl, lose their mineral coating, be dislodged by wind or ice, or become brittle.

Typical problems and possible repairs for asphalt:

- Split or puncture – install sheet metal under shingle, fill split or hole with roofing cement
- Moss or mold on surface – trim adjacent trees allowing sun to dry out roof surface, check attic for adequate ventilation
- Missing or damaged shingles or roof accessories – replace to match original

Depending on the amount of damaged asphalt on a roof slope, replacement of the roofing might be required. Some historic styles and colors for asphalt shingles are still available. Property owners are encouraged to match historic materials as closely as possible.



### Asbestos Shingles

Great care should be taken when working with asbestos products. Work should be done by a licensed contractor. Property owners are responsible for ensuring that all asbestos removal and disposal meets all applicable regulations and procedures.

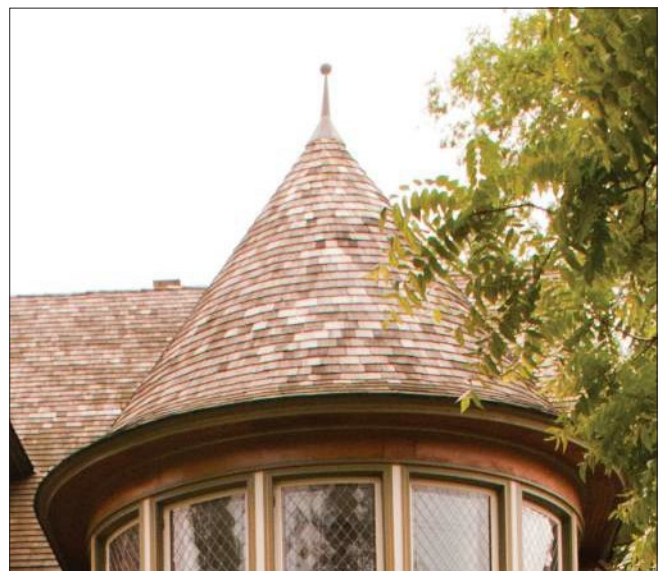
### Wood Shingles

Wood shingles are typically made from cedar, cypress, redwood, oak, elm or white pine. A wood shingle roof can last 30 to 60 years depending on the roof slope, quality of materials and installation. However, like all exposed exterior wood surfaces, a shingle roof is subject to deterioration from rot, splitting, warping and eroding. In many cases, wood shingle roofs are replaced at the first indication of a localized problem when regular maintenance or a less intensive repair would be sufficient. Common locations of problems are the roof accessories including the fasteners, flashing and gutters, which might have a shorter life span than the wood shingles. To extend the serviceable life of a roof, property owners are encouraged to address localized problems as they appear.

Typical problems and repairs for wood shingles:

- Loosening or corrosion of fasteners for shingles or accessories – reattach or replace fastener
- Split or punctured shingle – install sheet metal under shingle; fill split or hole with roofing cement
- Moss or fungi on surface – trim back adjacent trees, allowing sun to dry out roof surface; investigate fungicide application; check attic for adequate ventilation
- Missing or damaged shingles or roof accessories –
- Replace to match original

Depending on the extent of damage, replacement of the roofing might be necessary. Property owners are encouraged to install replacement wood shingles that match the historic material. Wood roofing replacement alternatives include dimensional fiberglass asphalt shingles. Alternatives should match existing as closely as possible.





## SUBSTITUTE ROOF MATERIALS

Use care when picking substitute materials as they may not have the longevity promised and they can potentially damage historic building materials.



Here, the roof rafters running down the roof slope, are relatively small and widely spaced. The darker wood lath strips located between the rafters are covered with plywood. The wide spacing of the rafters and lath suggests a lighter roofing material such as wood shingles instead of slate or tiles.

## ROOF REPLACEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

The following are a few items that should be considered for any roof replacement project:

- Roofing work is potentially dangerous and should be done by professionals.
- All roofers are not experienced in all materials. Be sure to obtain references and verify that roofers have appropriately completed similar work.
- Confirm the extent of both the material and installation warranties and company histories.
- Confirm the life-cycle cost associated with roof replacement. Traditional materials tend to last longer than newer materials.
- Confirm whether removal of existing roofing is required before installing the new roofing. Too much weight can damage structural elements.
- Look for rot or decay and make necessary repairs to the sheathing or lath and structural elements.
- Confirm that the roof framing can support the roof material and provide appropriate ventilation under roof surface.
- Use appropriate underlayment including building paper, rosin paper (slip sheet) and/or ice shield.
- Install appropriate vents for roofing materials and installation.

## Flat Roofing Systems

There are a variety of flat or low-slope roof systems including metal roofing, built-up roofing, single-ply roofing, and modified bitumen roofing.

Typical localized problems for flat roofs include:

- Splits, punctures, or cracking of surface
- Standing water or poor drainage

In selecting the most appropriate roofing material, it is important to select one that will address the building drainage and weight limitations and other functions such as maintenance and lifespan.



## Metal Roofing

Metal became popular for roofing following the Civil War and can be found on a variety of buildings and structures. Traditional sheet roofing metals include lead, copper, zinc, tin plate, terne plate (a corrosion resistant alloy of lead and tin), and galvanized iron (zinc coated). Many metal roofs require painting. Traditional colors include red, silver, green, and black. Shallow sloped roofs like porches, cupolas, or domes, feature small rectangular pieces of metal roofing soldered to form a weather-tight surface. On steeper roofs, long sheets of metal roofing are crimped together resulting in regular ridges down roof slopes.

A well-installed and maintained metal roof is very durable and can last well over a century. If not properly installed, metal roofing is subject to expansion and contraction with changes in temperature, resulting in buckling and warping. Similar to slate roofing, metal roofing work should be undertaken by a specialist.



*Ideally, the solar panels would not be visible from the street, but the above installation is appropriate as it is on a side, is removable, and does not affect any character defining features of the house.*

## **SOLAR PANELS IN HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

The Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission supports sustainable “green” building including reuse of historic buildings and use of alternative energy sources. However, solar panels should be installed in a way that is compatible with a historic district. Specifically, installation of solar panels should meet the Guidelines and the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards*. If care is taken to consider impacts of solar panel installation both on the building in question and the neighborhood, such a project may be completed in a way that requires minimal review and preserves the historic character for which Oak Park’s historic districts are known.

The section below outlines review requirements and provides recommendations to best meet the Architectural Review Guidelines. For feedback on individual projects, please contact Village staff or consider attending an Architectural Review Committee meeting.

### **Are solar panels allowed in Oak Park’s historic districts?**

Solar panels are permitted in Oak Park’s historic districts but should be installed in a sensitive way that minimally visible from the street. Ideally, solar panels are installed in locations not visible from the street and in a way that does not damage any character defining features of a historic resource. For example, appropriate installation locations may include on the roofs of garages hidden from view by the main house or on rear roof slopes. If solar panels must be installed on side-facing roof slopes, they should be placed as far back from the street as possible.

In most cases, solar panels may be mounted on the structural framework of historic buildings and structures when the following conditions are met:

#### ***Village of Oak Park – Guidelines for Roofing***

- All efforts have been made to place the panels in areas that are not readily visible from the street, such as on rear roof slopes, behind dormers, or on a garage located behind the house.
- Solar panels should stand off from the wall or roof of the building.
- Panels shall be “readily reversible.” This means that their installation allows for future removal of the panels without any damage or alteration of the original historic structure.
- No damage or removal of any historic feature of the building shall take place as part of the installation of the solar panels. Projects involving demolition of historic materials require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission.
- Solar panels are not to be placed on the slope of the roof or wall of the building’s primary facade, which faces the street on which the building is situated.

### **Do solar panel installations require Certificates of Appropriateness from the HPC?**

If the solar panel installation meets the criteria listed above, the project can likely be approved administratively without additional Historic Review. Any Oak Park Landmarks or projects involving demolition of historic materials will require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission.

If any of the conditions above are not met, then the applicant may need to get a Certificate of Appropriateness or a Certificate of Advisory Review from the Historic Preservation Commission. If you have any questions, contact Village staff at 708.358.5440 or [historicpreservation@oak-park.us](mailto:historicpreservation@oak-park.us) for more information.



*As with the photo at the top left, the ideal location of solar panels would not be visible from the street. However, this alternative is appropriate.*



### REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION & ADDITIONS IN A HISTORIC CONTEXT

#### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT NEW BUILDINGS AND ADDITIONS

New construction can be a sign of the economic health and vitality of Oak Park and can take many forms, including:

- New primary buildings, such as houses
- New secondary buildings, such as garages
- Additions to existing buildings

Prior to undertaking the construction of an addition or new building, the architectural character of the property, adjacent properties, and neighborhood should be taken into account. New construction should not mimic historic design, as this would tell a false history, but it should be compatible with surrounding properties in terms of massing, scale, height, and materials.

#### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION

Any permit to demolish or relocate a building or structure that is contributing resource within one of Oak Park’s local historic districts requires a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) must approve the COA prior to the issuance of a permit. This includes the demolition or relocation of houses, barns, garages, coach houses, and outbuildings.

Full or partial demolition or relocation of Oak Park Landmarks or of contributing resources within local historic districts may drastically alter the historic character and diminish the historic integrity of the property and the district as a whole. As a result, the HPC rarely considers the demolition or relocation of Landmarks or contributing resources within the historic districts. Alternatives should be considered such as rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, or the construction of an addition. These options may provide long-term viability while retaining the historic character of the neighborhood. In addition, these options are generally more sustainable.

Non-contributing resources within the historic districts may be relocated or demolished without

additional Historic Review. This is also true for some secondary structures that are not visible from the street, such as a garage located directly behind a house. Non-contributing resources include garages constructed outside the historic district’s period of significance.

New construction, including of new garages visible from the street, requires Advisory Review from the HPC.

#### RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION, ADDITIONS & DEMOLITION

##### Additions

- When designing a horizontal addition to a historic building, set it back in order to maintain the prominence of the main façade.
- To create a visual distinction between an addition and a historic building, consider such methods as creating a connecting link or “hyphen” between the building and addition, lowering the roof line or cornice of the addition so that it does not line up with the building,; or using compatible but different exterior materials.
- When considering compatibility of an addition, use the following general strategies: make the overall form and massing of the addition similar than the main structure; use the same general slope, form, and overhang on the addition as on the main structure (e.g., steep gable roof with deep eaves); use similar window size, orientation, and operation on the addition as the main structure; use materials that either match the original structure or are visually compatible; and use matching or similar details such as trim, porches, columns, etc.

##### New Construction

- When designing a new building to be compatible with the neighborhood and adjacent buildings, consider carefully how the new structure relates to the character of the neighborhood in terms of scale, massing, street frontage, materials, height, windows and door placement, details, and finishes.

## RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION, ADDITIONS & DEMOLITION

### Demolition and Relocation

- Make every attempt to reuse a historic resource prior to considering demolition or relocation. These should include stabilization, weatherproofing and securing the building; the sale or transfer of the property to someone who will reuse the building; and renovation or adaptive use of the building.
- Consider reusing or donating salvageable materials such as windows, doors, hardware, shutters, bricks, and siding to an architectural salvage company for use in other projects rather than disposing in landfills.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION, ADDITION, & DEMOLITION PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC

### Additions

#### *Maintaining Historic Character*

- An addition shall not change the historic character of the historic building.
- An addition shall be compatible with the historic building to which it is attached, including siting, massing, scale, materials and street rhythm.
- An addition shall not remove character-defining features, historic windows, historic siding or other historic material from the historic building that are visible from the street.
- Exterior finish materials of the addition shall be compatible with that of the historic building.
- An addition shall protect the historic character of the building by making a visual distinction between the historic building and addition.

#### *Size and Configuration - Horizontal Additions*

- The size, configuration and massing of all additions shall be such that when viewed from the street, the addition does not visually overpower the historic building.
- Additions shall be constructed only on a rear or side façade so that the historic building retains its prominence as the primary structure viewed from the street.
- The shape and slope of roofs on an addition shall be compatible with those of the historic building.

#### *Size and Configuration - Vertical Additions*

- If a new floor or floors are added to a building, they shall be set back from the front façade an appropriate distance so as not to visually overwhelm the primary façade of the historic building.
- The overall massing and scale of a vertical addition shall be compatible with the scale of the neighboring buildings.
- The entire roof of a historic building shall not be raised vertically to provide attic headroom so that the attic would appear to be an additional floor.
- The shape and slope of roofs of an addition shall be compatible with those of the historic building.

#### *Size and Configuration - Dormer Additions*

- Any individual dormer visible from the street shall not cover more than 50% of the roof plane on which it sits. If more than one dormer is added, the aggregate configuration of all dormer additions shall not appear to add another floor to the existing building when viewed from the street.
- Dormer roof design shall be compatible with the slope of the main roof or be a slope and configuration characteristic of the style of the house.
- Every dormer shall have at least one window. Dormer windows shall be compatible with those used in the historic building.
- Exterior finish materials of dormer additions shall be compatible with that of the historic building.

#### *New Construction - Including Garages*

- New construction shall be compatible with the adjacent buildings and the historic district as a whole.
- New garages shall be accessed from the alley where alleys exist at the rear of any house. Where driveways and curb cuts exist, do not widen.
- New garages shall be compatible with the style, size, material, roof profile and details of the primary historic building on the lot.
- When a demolition of a significant accessory structure occurs, the new structure should closely resemble it to the greatest extent possible.

#### *Demolition and Relocation*

- Landmarks and contributing resources in historic districts shall be retained and repaired in their original location.
- Historic accessory buildings and structures, such as garages and coach houses, which are visible from the street shall be retained and repaired in their original location.
- In cases of demonstrated economic infeasibility, demolition or relocation of contributing resources in historic districts and historic accessory buildings visible from the street can be considered at the discretion of the Commission.





# Village of Oak Park

## Historic Preservation Commission

### GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION & ADDITIONS IN A HISTORIC CONTEXT



*The Village of Oak Park encourages quality and excellence of design that relates to its historic context to allow for the creation of the Village's future landmarks.*

#### ZONING

When appropriate, the HPC will work with the applicant and the Zoning Board of Appeals or Plan Commission if a variance, special use permit, zoning amendment, subdivision, or planned development is requested within a local historic district or within 250 feet of an Oak Park Landmark.

The Guidelines were developed in conjunction with the Village of Oak Park's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). For more information regarding application and review procedures, please consult the *Guidelines Introduction*, visit Village Hall or [www.oak-park.us](http://www.oak-park.us), or contact Village staff at (708) 358-5440 or [historicpreservation@oak-park.us](mailto:historicpreservation@oak-park.us). For more information regarding HPC recommendations and requirements, refer to *Requirements for New Construction & Additions in a Historic Context*.

#### NEW CONSTRUCTION & ADDITIONS IN A HISTORIC CONTEXT

Oak Park is internationally known for its historic architecture and features a variety of building ages, styles, and types. The HPC does not impose a single building type or architectural style for new construction. Instead, it encourages a review of the area surrounding the project site to influence and direct the proposed design. In the review of new construction, the HPC encourages quality and excellence of design that relates to its historic context to allow for the creation of the Village's future landmarks.

Prior to undertaking a new construction or addition project, the Village encourages property owners to understand the unique architectural character of Oak Park and allow that understanding to inform their design. Property owners are strongly encouraged to consult the other Requirements and Guidelines sections to better understand the historic context and appropriate design and materials for new construction and additions early in the design process.

## COMPATIBLE DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The development of each of Oak Park’s neighborhoods followed its own pattern and rhythm. Building types, styles, and sizes vary depending on the location and time of development. Each of Oak Park’s neighborhoods tells part of the story of Oak Park’s history. To continue the evolution of the built environment, the HPC encourages creative solutions that reflect current design while being sensitive to the character of their historic surroundings.

Each historic district and individual landmark has its own unique characteristics and vocabulary. The specific styles and types of compatible new construction or additions vary depending on the context. What might be appropriate at one property is not necessarily appropriate at another. As such, no specific design solutions for new construction or additions are mandated. However, in making determinations regarding the appropriateness of new construction or additions, the HPC uses *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation* and general design principles when reviewing the compatibility of a proposal within the property’s specific context. When reviewing applications, the HPC will consider the following design principles:



*This new residence is compatible with the historic homes in the Village of Oak Park.*

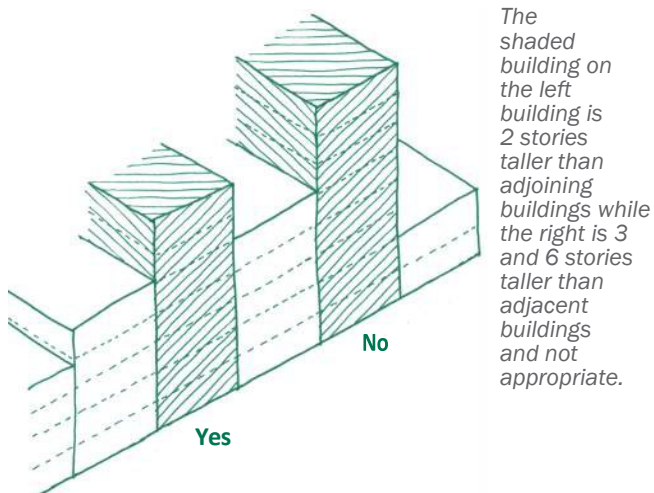
DESIGN PRINCIPLES	ADDITIONS AND NEW CONSTRUCTION
<b>Scale: Height and Width</b>	Proportions and size of the addition/new building compared to existing
<b>Building Form and Massing</b>	Three-dimensional relationship and configuration of the addition/new building footprint, walls, and roof, compared with existing
<b>Setback: Yards (Front, Side and Rear)</b>	Distance from the addition/new building to the street and property lines
<b>Site Coverage</b>	Percentage of the site that is covered by addition/new building, compared to similar nearby sites
<b>Orientation</b>	The location of the front of the addition/new building and its principal entrance relative to other buildings on the block
<b>Architectural Elements and Projections</b>	The size, shape, proportions and location of doors, porches, balconies, chimneys, dormers, parapets and elements that contribute to an overall building’s shape and silhouette relative to neighboring buildings
<b>Alignment, Rhythm and Spacing</b>	The effect the addition/new building will have on the existing street patterns
<b>Façade Proportions: Window and Door Patterns</b>	The relationship of the size, shape and location of the addition/new building façade and building elements to each other, as well as to other buildings on the block
<b>Trim and Detail</b>	The decorative elements and features of a building, such as molding and columns, and how they relate to the existing and neighboring buildings
<b>Materials</b>	The products with which an addition or building is composed or constructed and how these relate to existing buildings

## PRINCIPLES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

### Scale: Height and Width

The proportions of a new building and its relationship to neighboring buildings establish its compatibility within a neighborhood or block. The height-width ratio is a relationship between the height and width of a street façade and should be similar in proportion to neighboring buildings. New construction should be neither visually overwhelming nor underwhelming when compared to its neighbors.

While buildings of in variety of scales exist in Oak Park, buildings that differ in scale from those in their immediate surroundings can negatively impact their neighborhood. If large-scale construction is considered, particular attention will be given to the location, siting, setbacks, façade treatments (e.g. materials, windows, and doors ), and the effect of the proposed building on the streetscape and neighborhood as a whole.



*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Construct a new building that is similar in height and width to buildings on adjacent sites
- Construct a new building larger than adjacent buildings by breaking the building mass, e.g. dividing its height or width, to conform with those adjacent
- Construct taller portions of the buildings away from the street



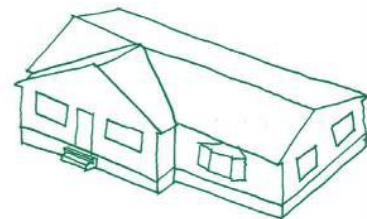
*The height and width of new construction should be visually similar to neighboring properties.*

*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Construct a new building that appears significantly larger, wider, taller, shorter, or bulkier than surrounding buildings
- Construct a new building that does not maintain or suggest the widths and/or heights of adjacent buildings
- Construct a new building that is more than 2 stories taller than adjacent buildings



**Vertical**



**Horizontal**

*Although both of the proposed houses have intersecting gable roofs, the massing and proportions of the house to the right are significantly more horizontal compared to the more traditional, vertical house on the left.*

### Building Form and Massing

Building form refers to the shape of major volumes while massing refers to the overall composition of those volumes or its overall “bulk” and how it sits on the site. Elements that are typically used to define building form and massing include the roof form, as well as projecting elements such as wings or bays. New buildings should have similar form and massing to adjacent construction in order to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

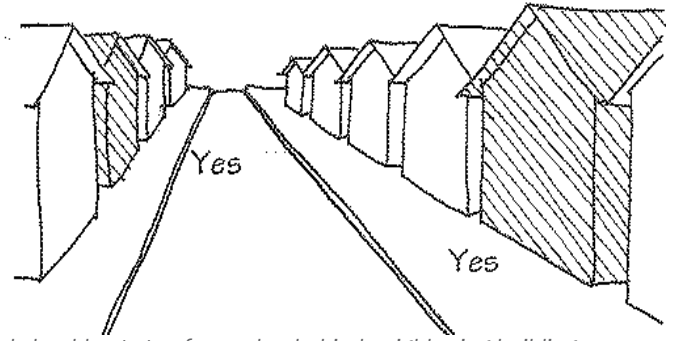
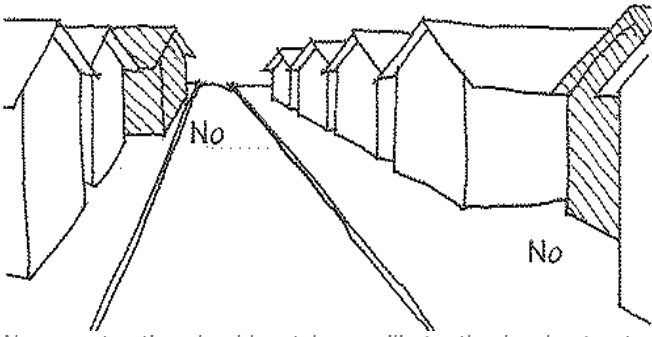
- Construct a new building with similar form and massing to buildings on adjacent sites
- Construct roof forms, wings, eaves and bays and other projecting elements that are similar to those found on the block of the proposed building
- Match adjacent cornice heights

*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Construct a new building whose form and massing are not found in the immediate vicinity of the project



*The central building is five stories tall. It abuts adjoining walls, steps up in the center, and transitions to the lower adjacent building, making it appear less massive.*



New construction should match prevailing setbacks along a streetscape and should not step forward or behind neighboring buildings.

**Setback**

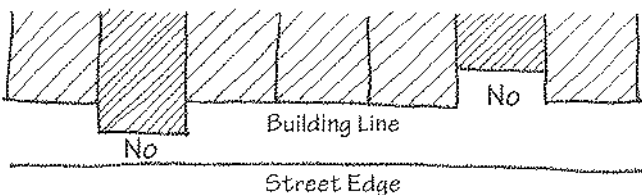
A setback is the distance between the building and the street or property lines. These are generally determined by zoning requirements. New construction should reflect prevailing setbacks to create visual continuity and cohesiveness along streetscape. These elements typically include walls, fences, building façades, porches and balconies. A consistent setback maintains the visual rhythm of the buildings and site elements in the neighborhood and makes new construction more compatible in its setting.

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Keep the visual mass of the building at or near the same setback as buildings on adjacent sites
- Keep landscape elements, such as walls and fences, and projecting elements, such as porches and balconies, at similar setbacks as adjacent buildings

*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Construct a new building in a location on a site that greatly varies from buildings on adjacent sites
- Create large front yard setbacks to allow for parking in front of a building



New construction should not step forward from or recede back from adjacent buildings on the streetscape.

**Site Coverage**

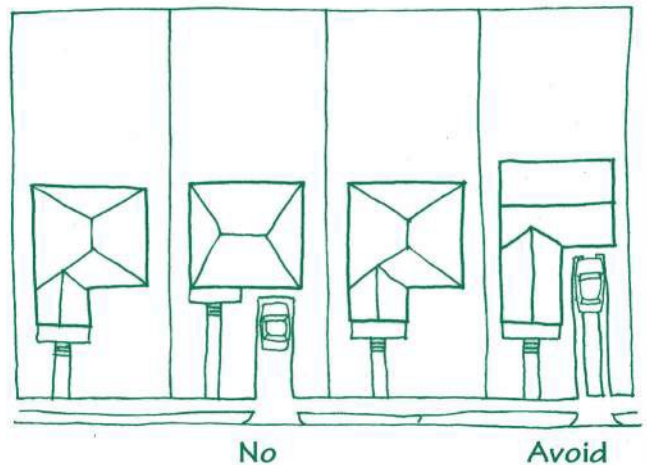
The percent of a lot that is covered by buildings should be similar to adjacent lots. Although zoning regulates the maximum allowable coverage area and minimum setbacks, the overall building-to-lot area should be consistent along a streetscape. If parcels are combined for a larger development, the site coverage proportions should be minimized by breaking large building masses into smaller elements to be more compatible with adjacent buildings.

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

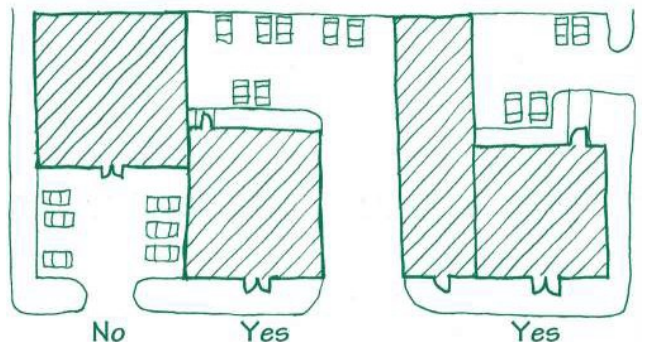
- Maintain the building-to-lot proportions found on adjacent lots
- Adjust the massing to suggest building-to-lot proportions found on adjacent sites
- Screening parking, mechanical equipment and garbage collection from public view with fencing, shrubs, or walls

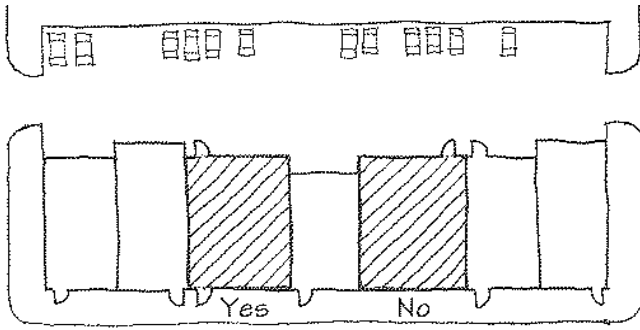
*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Construct a building that does not maintain or suggest similar building-to-lot proportions as on adjacent sites



Parking in front of a building suggests a different building-to-lot relationship and is generally not appropriate. In residential cases where the side yard is not wide enough for a driveway leading to the rear yard and there is no rear alley, minimize the paved area of the front yard and park beyond the front of the house. In commercial settings, have cars access a rear parking lot by a driveway or secondary-street.

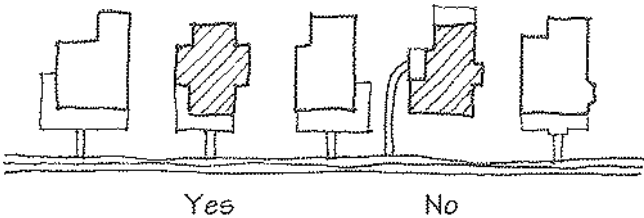




Commercial buildings should retain a street entrance. A secondary entrance facing a parking area can also be added.

### Orientation

The principal façade of new building should be oriented in the same direction as the majority of the buildings on the street, with main entrances located on the principal façade. In the case of new construction on a corner site, the front façade should generally face the same direction as the existing buildings on the street and follow the rhythm of the streetscape. Refer to the Zoning Ordinance for specific site orientation requirements.



In most cases, the primary entrance for residential buildings should face the street.

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Orient the primary façade and principal door parallel with the street

*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Orient the primary façade or principal elevation of a building on secondary street elevation



The entrance of the corner building is oriented towards the perpendicular street and is inappropriate.

### Architectural Elements and Projections

Throughout Oak Park's neighborhoods, the rhythm of the streetscapes is highlighted by the projection of porches to relieve otherwise flat façades, as well as chimneys, dormers, and parapets projecting from each roof that contribute to its overall shape and silhouette. It is generally not appropriate to add new architectural elements or projections to a historic building, unless there is evidence that it previously existed or is appropriate for the building's type or style. While it is important to avoid creating a false sense of history, new construction may take these elements into consideration when creating compatible designs.



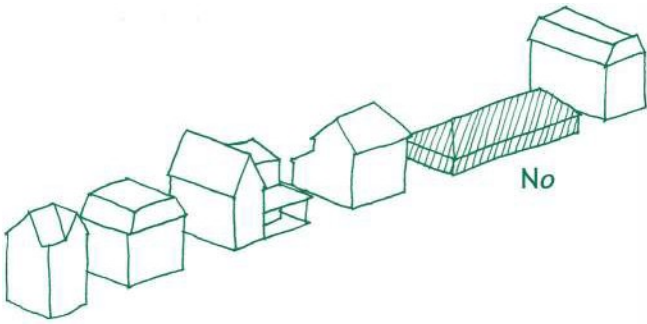
The original porch was missing and replaced with a compatible style, including scale and setback.

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Construct a building with an architectural element or projection designed and detailed similarly to those found at neighboring buildings
- Design an architectural element with simplified detailing that is similar to architectural elements at comparable buildings within the local historic district or setting
- Construct porch floor and ceiling heights at similar heights as those found on neighboring buildings where permitted by code

*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Construct a new architectural element on a historic building that is not historically accurate
- Construct a porch, balcony, parapet, or dormer on a building type or style which typically would not have included one or in a configuration or location where they are not appropriate for the building type



The existing houses along this row vary in design though they have similar heights, widths, and roof slopes. The scale of the new building is too short and wide for the context and is inappropriate.

### Alignment, Rhythm, and Spacing

Although the architecture of Oak Park is characterized by great variety of building types and styles, within each block there tends to be consistency in façade proportions and space between buildings. Consistent spacing establishes a rhythm which should be applied to new construction. This rhythm and spacing not only refers to the building, but also the porch and bay projections along the streetscape.

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Align the façade of a new building with the façades of existing adjacent buildings
- Align roof ridges, porches, balconies, cornices, eaves and parapets with those found on existing adjacent buildings
- Construct new buildings that have similar widths and side yard setbacks relative to other neighboring buildings on the street
- Construct larger new buildings than those on adjacent sites, if the larger building is visually divided to suggest smaller building masses

*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Place the primary façade of a building out of alignment with existing buildings on adjacent sites
- Add a building to a site that does not maintain or suggest the spacing of buildings on adjacent sites



No



Yes

When constructing larger-scale buildings, they should be visually divided to suggest the rhythm and spacing of other buildings on the streetscape. The projecting porches on the lower example suggest multiple residences of similar spacing as adjacent buildings.



Front-facing garages are generally not appropriate in a historic residential context.

### Façade Proportions; Window and Door Patterns

The rhythm and pattern of principal façades of new construction should reflect and maintain neighborhood patterns. Across the width of a façade, rhythm and patterns typically include the number of bays and the location and spacing between doors, windows, porches, and other features.

There are also vertical components of rhythm and pattern. These include the distance of the first floor or porch above ground level, building floor-to-floor heights, cornice heights, and the distance between rows of windows. In some instances, where the proposed use and scale of a new building prevents maintaining rhythms and patterns, the property owner is encouraged to incorporate detailing to suggest them such as pilasters, which give the impression of bays or multiple buildings.

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Construct a building whose façade height and width proportions are similar to adjacent buildings
- Use similar sizes, locations, and numbers of windows and doors to adjacent buildings
- Use windows and doors on new construction that are stylistically compatible with adjacent buildings

*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Install window or door types that are incompatible in type, proportion, or pattern with the surrounding local historic district or setting



The 6-story building to the left has a rectilinear window pattern that is compatible with its neighbors. The right building has a glass façade with a diagonal mullion pattern which is incompatible with adjacent buildings.

## Trim and Details

Trim and details include the moldings, decorative elements, and features of a building that are secondary to major surfaces such as walls and roofs. Historically, trim and details were often installed to serve functional needs. Over time, they were modified to enhance the building type and style. In addition, trim often serves to infill or provide a transition between different materials or building elements such as walls and windows.

Details can be functional and decorative and include cornices, lintels, arches, balustrades, chimneys, shutters, columns, and posts. For example, louvered shutters visually frame a window or door opening, provide security, and can regulate light and air when closed. By contrast, shutters screwed into a building wall do not serve a functional purpose.

In most cases, the exterior details and forms of new construction should provide a visual link to neighboring historic buildings. In the same way that new buildings should be compatible with but not copy historic buildings, new details should be compatible with but not copy historic trim and details. However, existing details and trim on other buildings may be used as the basis for those on new buildings.

The trim and details of new construction should be used to accomplish purposes similar to those used historically, both functionally and decoratively. When installed, trim and details should create a unifying effect on a building and should be compatible with the context of the neighborhood.

### *It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Construct a new building with details and trim that complement historic neighboring trim and details
- Install trim and details appropriately scaled to the building type and style
- Install detail that is functional with a high level of craftsmanship rather than simply applied decoration

### *It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Copy historic trim and details exactly unless duplicating a historic building
- Apply details and trim that are stylistically incompatible with the new building



*The upper two stories of this building are an addition. The fenestration pattern, materials, and details are compatible with the historic portion of the building.*

## Materials

The materials used for walls, roofs, windows, doors, trim, porches, balconies, and other visible external elements contribute to a building's character and appearance. Typically, materials for new construction should match those predominantly found on surrounding buildings. However, for new construction, new materials need not be identical to historic materials if they are complementary, particularly along streets where existing buildings are of diverse materials.

Inappropriate materials include inaccurate representations of historic materials, such as plastic "bricks" and aluminum or vinyl "clapboards." These imitations fail to produce the size, texture, proportions, and colors of the real materials. It is important to note that the characteristics of exterior materials can be as important as the material itself.

### *It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Use exterior materials that are present in adjacent neighboring historic buildings for new construction

### *It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Install a material where it is historically and stylistically incompatible
- Install building materials that do not exist in the surrounding area



Additions to historic buildings should be subordinate and read clearly as an addition.

## ADDITIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS

Most residential additions expand the footprint of an existing building by constructing more space at the rear or side. If appropriately designed, additions to existing buildings can provide increased space while maintaining the historic character of the original building and streetscape. To meet *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, an addition to a historic building should be subordinate to the historic building and read clearly as an addition. This can be achieved through its scale, form, massing, materials, and details.

Additions to existing properties should not obscure, damage, or destroy significant architectural material and should be compatible with the design of the property, as well as the neighborhood. Whenever possible, additions should be constructed in a manner that, if removed in the future, will leave the essential form and integrity of the historic building intact.

When constructing additions to existing buildings, property owners are encouraged to consider the integrity of the existing building and its historic significance. Similar to the principles for new construction, additions should not duplicate historic building details, but should be visually compatible. The character defining features of a historic building may help guide the design of a sensitive addition.

**ZONING REQUIREMENTS**  
Proposed additions must comply with all requirements of the Village of Oak Park Zoning Ordinance (as amended), including lot coverage, height, and setbacks.



Yes

No

The addition at the left example is more in keeping with the scale of the existing residence. In the right example, the addition overwhelms the existing residence.

## PRINCIPLES FOR ADDITIONS

### Scale: Height and Width

Additions to existing buildings should generally be smaller to the original building, with similar floor-to-floor and first floor heights.

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Construct an addition that is smaller or similar in scale to the existing building or those adjacent
- Construct an addition larger than adjacent buildings by breaking the building mass, dividing its height or width to conform with adjacent buildings

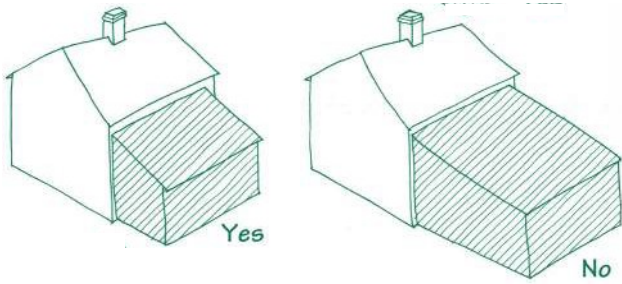
*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Construct an addition that appears larger, wider, taller, shorter, or bulkier than the existing or surrounding buildings
- Construct an addition that does not maintain or suggest the widths and/or heights of existing or adjacent buildings



This 3rd floor addition overwhelms the historic building and is inappropriate. Its scale is substantially larger, the side gable roof form has been altered to a flat roof, the footprint has been greatly expanded, the window size and proportions are dramatically different, and trim, details, and materials vary greatly from the historic building.





When adding a shed roof addition, the roof slope should be similar to the main roof slope. Long shed roof additions with shallow roof slopes are generally not appropriate.

### Building Form and Massing

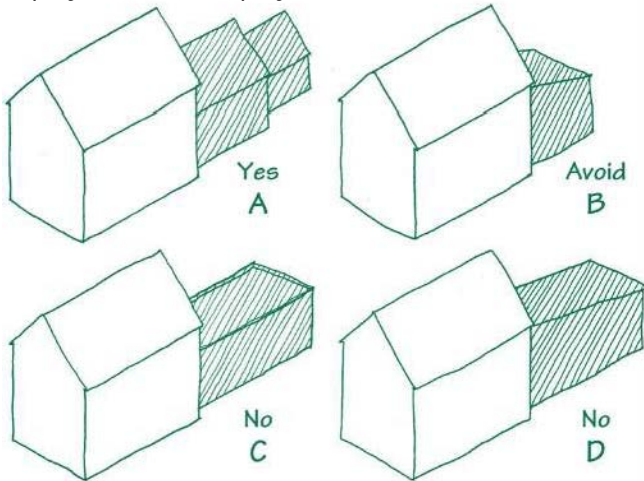
The building form is the shape of major volumes and massing refers to the overall composition of the major volumes. The form and massing of additions should complement, but not necessarily match, the original building. For example, it is often appropriate to construct a small, rear, gable-roof addition on an existing gable roof building.

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Construct an addition with similar form and massing to the existing building and buildings adjacent
- Construct roof forms, wings, bays, and other projecting elements similar to those found on the existing building and nearby buildings

*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

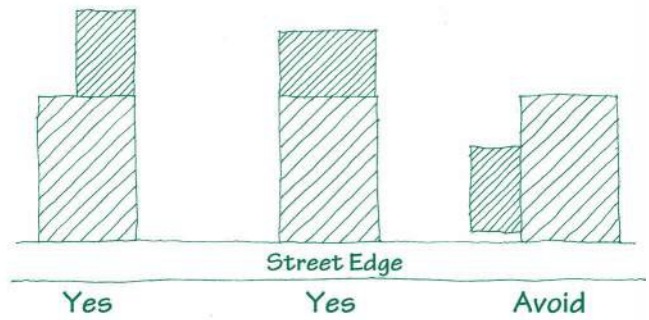
- Construct an addition whose form and massing are not found in Oak Park, the immediate vicinity of the project, or on the project site



**Example A:** Gable roof additions of decreasing size are appropriate additions to a gable roof building. Additions similar to this with decreasing geometry are typical of historic construction.

**Example B:** A small shed roof addition is appropriate in some locations.

**Examples C and D:** Long shed and flat roof additions are inappropriate form for gable roof buildings. The length of the single mass visually competes with the original building.



The visibility of the left and middle additions would be limited from the sidewalk and the street. The addition to the right is very visible from the sidewalk and street and should be avoided.

### Setback

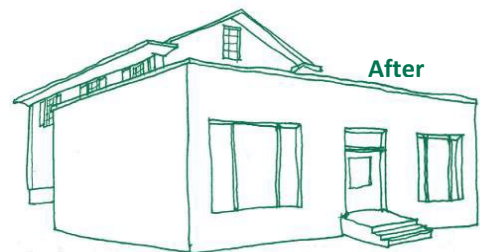
Additions should be positioned to have the least visible impact as viewed from the street. Additions at front façades generally prohibited and rear additions generally most appropriate. Additions at side elevations may be appropriate, but should be located as far back as possible from the street.

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

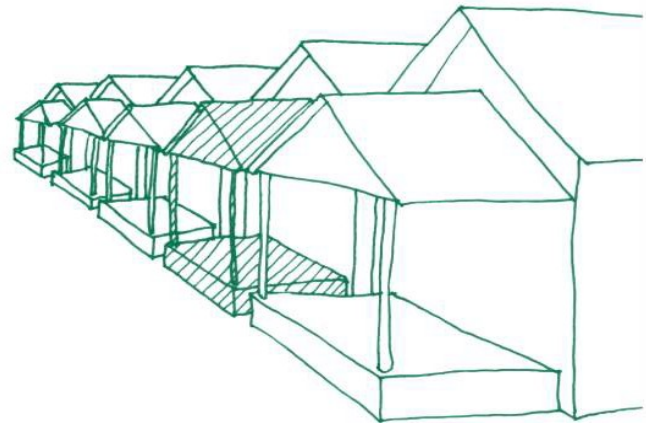
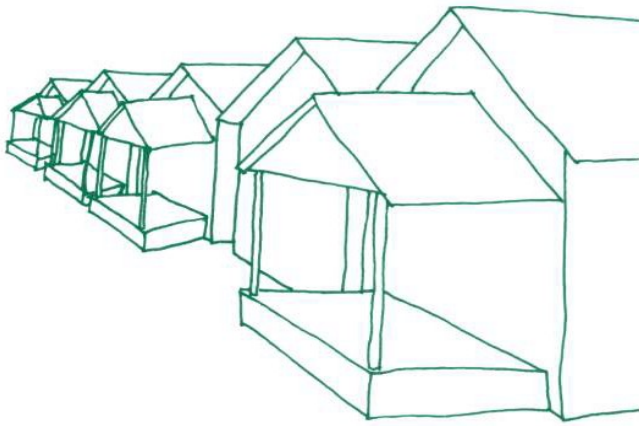
- Construct the addition at the rear of the building or on the side elevation as far back from the street as possible
- Use landscape elements, such as shrubs, fences and walls to visually screen the addition

*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Construct an addition at the front elevation of a building



**Not Appropriate:** New additions at the front elevations of existing buildings (example above) are generally inappropriate.



*It is appropriate to reconstruct removed porches in a manner which is compatible in location, size and scale of the building and streetscape. Historical and contextual evidence should be used in designing a new porch.*

### Orientation

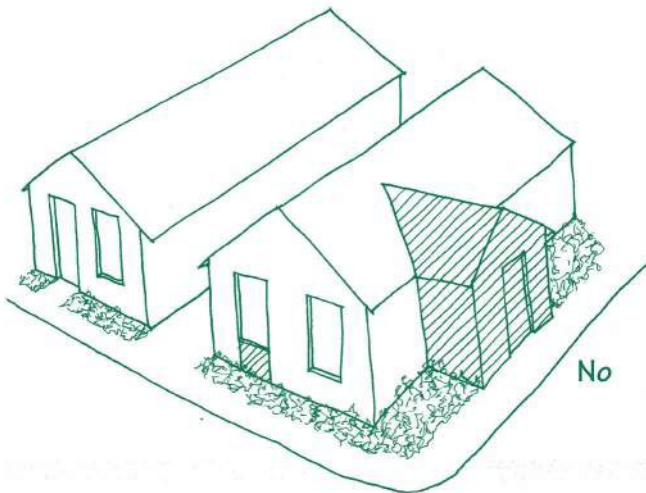
The principal façade of a building should be oriented in the same direction as the majority of the buildings in the streetscape. When adding to an existing building, the addition should be located, planned, and detailed so as to not confuse the dominant historic orientation of the building. The addition should not appear to create a new primary façade or be visually dominant. It should be screened from the public right-of-way as much as possible.

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Maintain visual prominence of the front door

*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Orient the primary façade of a building on non-street elevations (including parking lots)
- Change a building orientation



*The proposed changes to the building at the right are inappropriate since they relocate the entrance door to the side elevation and eliminate the original front door.*

### Architectural Elements and Projections

Throughout Oak Park’s neighborhoods, the rhythm of the streetscapes is highlighted by the projection of porches and balconies to relieve otherwise flat façades. Features like chimneys, dormers, and parapets also contribute to its overall building shape and silhouette. However, it is generally not appropriate to add a new architectural element or projection to a historic building’s street elevation; unless there is evidence that it previously existed or is common for the particular type or style. New architectural elements and projections may be appropriate at rear elevations or towards the rear of non-street elevations.

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Replace a missing architectural element or projection designed and detailed based on documentation or similar buildings nearby.
- Install new architectural elements or projections with compatible simplified detailing, particularly if located at a side or rear elevation

*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Construct a new architectural element on a building that historically would not have been there
- Construct a porch, balcony, parapet, or dormer on a building which typically would not have included one, or in a configuration or location where they are not appropriate for the building type

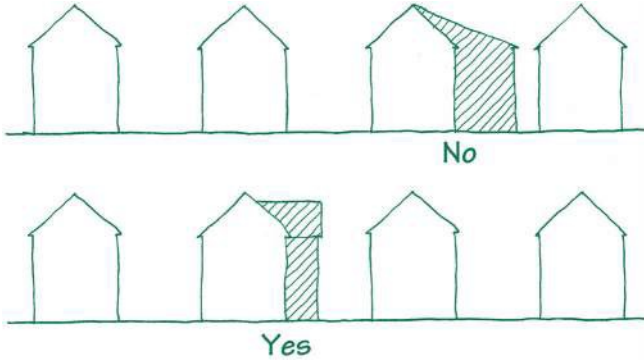
### **ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to consult the following Guidelines for additional information about architectural elements and projections:

- *Guidelines for Roofing*
- *Guidelines for Porches, Balconies, & Decks*

## Alignment, Rhythm, and Spacing

Although the architecture of Oak Park is characterized by great variety in its neighborhoods, within each block there tends to be consistency in the proportions of the façades and spacing of buildings. The consistent spacing establishes a rhythm which is historically prevalent and should apply to additions to existing buildings. The construction of an addition should not make an existing building appear substantially wider or closer to its neighbors than the patterns of existing buildings on the streetscape.



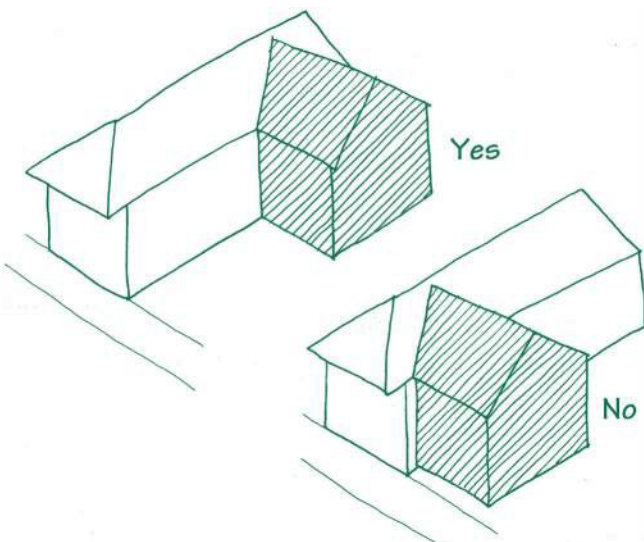
The top addition almost doubles the width of the house and is not appropriate. The lower addition is more modest and in keeping with the existing building spacing.

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Construct additions in a manner that does not significantly alter the visual alignment, rhythm and spacing of buildings along a streetscape

*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Significantly increase the apparent visual size of a building on a property from the public right-of-way
- Construct an addition to a building that alters the visual rhythm and spacing along a streetscape



Additions should be set as far back from the street as possible to minimize their impact on apparent spacing.

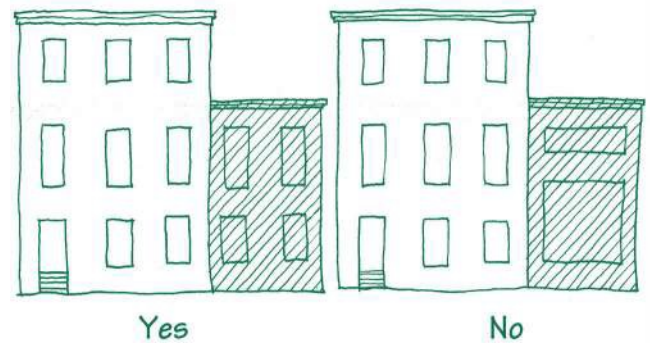
## Façade Proportions; Window, and Door Patterns

The rhythm and patterns of principal façades of an addition should reflect that of the original building. Across the width of a façade these typically include the number of bays and the location and spacing between doors and windows. Vertical considerations include floor-to-floor heights, first floor and porch heights, cornice heights, and the vertical distance between linear elements like rows of windows and cornices. In some instances, where the proposed use and scale of an addition prevents maintaining rhythms and patterns, it may be appropriate to add details such as pilasters that give the impression of bays or multiple buildings.

Windows and doors on additions should be of similar size, shape, design, proportion, spacing, and placement to those in the existing building. Windows should be proportionally and functionally similar, and have comparable muntin or grid patterns to the existing building. Doors should reflect the original type and the proportions of windows and panels should be similar.

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Construct an addition whose façade height and width are compatible to the existing building and those adjacent
- Use similar proportions, sizes, and locations of windows, doors, and shutters as found on the existing building and adjacent sites



The proportions of the windows of the left addition are consistent with those found at the original building. By contrast, the windows of the right differ greatly and are not appropriate.

*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Construct an addition that does not maintain the proportions and patterns of windows and doors found on the existing building
- Install window or door types that are incompatible with the existing building
- Install large picture windows where not appropriate to the style or type of building.



*On this example, the hipped-roof addition to the right includes a secondary entrance and shares the materials and details with the historic house.*

### Trim and Details

New trim and details should be compatible but not necessarily copy those on the historic portion of the building. Existing details and trim may be used as the basis for those on additions and be simplified to provide compatibility without requiring duplication of historic features. Using similar forms to those found on features like parapets, rooflines, windows, doors, trim, porches, balconies, and other façade elements can help establish continuity and compatibility within a building, the block, and the neighborhood as a whole.

Details and trim should be used to accomplish purposes similar to those used historically. Often these elements serve both functional and decorative purposes. Examples include cornices, lintels, arches, balustrades, chimneys, shutters, columns, posts, and pilasters. When used, details and trim should create a unifying effect on a building and should be compatible both with the building and with the neighborhood.

#### *It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Construct an addition with details and trim that complement historic trim and details on the existing building or nearby similar buildings
- Install detail that serves its historic function and is created with a high level of craftsmanship rather than simply applied decoration

#### *It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Apply details and trim that are stylistically incompatible with the existing building or addition
- Apply high style ornament where not historically accurate (e.g. on additions to vernacular houses)

### Materials

The materials used in the construction of a new building for walls, sloped roofs, windows, doors, trim, porches, balconies, and other visible external elements contribute to a building's character and appearance. Typically, materials for an addition should match or complement the materials found on the existing building. However, there are times when this is not economically feasible or practical. In these cases, it is appropriate to alter materials on additions. Generally, the new material should be a "lesser" material than the original construction. For example, a wood clapboard or stucco addition may be appropriate for a stone or brick building; however, it is not appropriate to build a brick addition on a wood clapboard building.

Inappropriate materials include those which unsuccessfully pretend to be something they are not, such as plastic "bricks," aluminum or vinyl "clapboards," or synthetic stucco and EIFS. All are imitations which fail to produce the texture, proportions and colors of the original materials. It is important to note that the size, texture, color, and other characteristics of exterior materials can be as important as their composition.



*The left wall of this wood-framed house has been covered with brick veneer. The addition to the right has been covered with vinyl siding. Both are inappropriate materials and should not be used on historic buildings.*

#### *It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Use exterior materials for an addition that are found on the existing building
- Install materials that are compatible with each other and will not chemically react with existing materials

#### *It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Install a material at an addition where it is historically and/or stylistically incompatible with the original building and streetscape
- Install synthetic materials that mimic historic materials as an alternative to using the historic material



The garage at the rear of the property is accessed by a driveway that runs along the side of the house. The garage includes a gable roof with overhanging eaves and a similar slope as the main house. The exterior of the garage has similar materials to the house, and both share the same paint colors.

## ACCESSORY BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES

Many properties in Oak Park include more than one building. Accessory buildings and structures, including coach houses, garages, sheds, and landscape features, often contribute significantly to the overall property, setting, and historic context.

As with the primary building on a lot, accessory buildings and structures contribute to our understanding of Oak Park's history and character. For example, the location and size of garages may illustrate trends and technological developments, such as the shift from horses to cars or the rise in the use of alleys. In many cases, historic structures like garages were designed to complement the associated house and may have similar detailing.

Accessory buildings and structures may need to meet the same requirements as primary buildings if:

- They are contributing resources within one of Oak Park's historic districts. All buildings and structures within Oak Park's historic districts are likely contributing if they (1) were built within the period of significance for the district and (2) retain historic integrity.
- They are associated with an Oak Park Landmark. Accessory buildings and structures are likely considered part of the Landmark if they were built at the same time as the primary building or if they otherwise contribute the significance of the Landmark.

- For the Gunderson Historic District: If they are listed as contributing within the National Register Nomination. The Nomination, which is recognized by the Historic Preservation Ordinance, lists the contributing status of all garages as well as residences within the district.

In addition, depending on their size and location, accessory buildings and structures may be considered not visible from the street. In such cases, projects involving alterations or demolition may only require administrative review.

An accessory building or structure that is contributing within a historic district should be retained and repaired. If needed, it may be possible to adapt these resources to meet modern needs while retaining the historic character of the property and surrounding neighborhood.

### *It is Generally Appropriate to...*

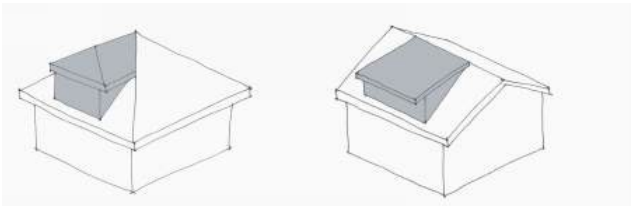
- Maintain significant accessory buildings and structures as carefully as principal buildings
- Carefully maintain significant and unique details of accessory buildings and structures including windows, doors, trim, casings, and other details.
- Sensitively adapt buildings and structures to meet modern needs or for modern uses

### *It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

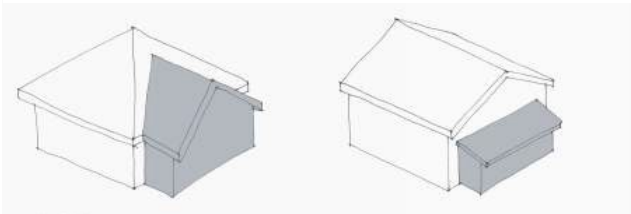
- Demolish accessory buildings and structures

## SIZE OF ACCESSORY BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES

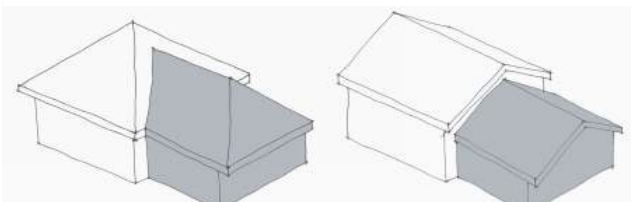
If a contributing garage within a historic district only fits one car or is not large enough to adequately store modern vehicles, an addition may be appropriate. Alterations to garages that are contributing within historic districts or part of an Oak Park landmark require the same review as those for primary buildings and should be compatible. Alterations should be done in a manner that is minimally visible from the street. In cases where not visible from the street, a project may be able to receive approval administratively.



*Dormers: To provide additional storage, dormers may be added to create attic space within an existing accessory structure. They may be located on one or all sides.*



*Shed Additions: To store small yard care and snow removal equipment, tools, and other items, a small shed addition may be appropriate and can be added to an existing accessory structure.*



*Garage addition: To create space for an additional vehicle within an existing accessory structure, a larger addition subservient to the original structure may be added. Parking may be accessed through an existing opening to a tandem space or to a new opening, depending on the site and context.*

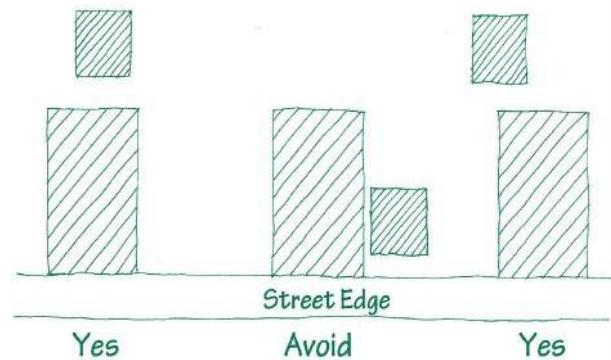
## CONDITION OF ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

While the physical condition of the structure is an important consideration, physical deterioration alone does not justify demolition. Most deterioration is repairable. If the condition of the accessory structure is so poor that it does not warrant rehabilitation for practical or economic reasons, documentation should be submitted with the Certificate of Appropriateness application. If the condition is hazardous and repairs cannot improve the condition, or the cost is too great, demolition may be justifiable.

## NEW ACCESSORY BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES

Like additions, new accessory buildings and structures should be subordinate to and visually compatible with the primary building without compromising its historic character. In general, the accessory building or structure should be located so it is not visible from the street or where visibility is limited.

The types and locations of new accessory buildings and structures must meet the Oak Park Zoning Ordinance, building codes, and other regulations. More information can be found on the Village website or by contacting Village staff.



*The visibility of the accessory buildings on the right and left is limited from the roadway due to their locations. The location of the accessory building the middle is very visible from the roadway and should be avoided.*

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Locate accessory buildings and structures, including garages, storage buildings, sheds, animal shelters, play houses, and pool houses, at the rear of the main building and away from the principal entrance or street elevation
- Design new accessory buildings and structures to complement the period and style of the principal building and other buildings on the site; this includes using similar form, materials, colors, and details (such as trim and eave types)
- Construct new accessory buildings in a manner that does not damage other resources on the site, including potential archaeological resources

*It is Generally Inappropriate to...*

- Construct new accessory buildings or structures in a location that is highly visible from public thoroughfares when less prominent locations are available
- Utilize pre-manufactured sheds and outbuildings, particularly where visible from the street



# Village of Oak Park

## Historic Preservation Commission

### REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

#### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) encourages economic development and the revitalization of Oak Park’s historic retail areas and the commercial properties within them. The HPC recognizes Oak Park’s vibrancy is linked to the viability of its businesses and makes every effort to assist commercial building owners and tenants with revitalizing older commercial buildings, which can attract new customers while promoting an appreciation of historic architecture.

#### WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN PROPOSING A COMMERCIAL BUILDING PROJECT

When proposing a commercial building alteration or construction project, the following are the key issues to consider:

- If the proposed work involves demolition (see *Guidelines Definitions*), it will require Certificate of Appropriateness from the HPC.
  - Is the work visible from the street?
- Historic commercial building elements which are visible from the street should be maintained and repaired as needed.
- Any proposed alterations, new construction, or additions should be compatible with the existing historic resources on the property and adjacent properties in terms of scale (height/width), form, massing, setbacks, pattern and placement, orientation, architectural elements, window/door opening patterns, materials, trim, and details.

#### SIGN & AWNING REGULATION

Prior to installing any permanent or temporary sign or awning, applicants must verify that the proposed sign or awning is compliant with all zoning, building, historic, and other applicable codes and requirements. In general, the HPC only reviews signs and awnings for Landmarks. Those on contributing buildings may require review depending on the scale and whether demolition is required as part of the installation process.

#### RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDING PROJECTS

##### Building Features

- Reopen previously enclosed windows.
- Replace missing features.
- Use materials that are consistent with the character of the building.

##### Signs & Awnings

- Use signage that identifies the business, complements the style of the building, and is appropriately scaled for its location.
- Use existing street light or storefront lighting in lieu of sign lighting whenever possible.
- Use lighting styles for signage that are consistent with the character of the historic building including location, orientation, and brightness.
- The shape and size of awnings should correspond with the openings they protect.
- Awnings should have a sloped configuration. In general, curved, vaulted, and semi-spherical awnings are not compatible with Oak Park’s historic commercial buildings.
- Use canvas fixed or retractable awnings.
- The color, style, and location are awnings should be compatible with the building’s historic character.
- Install sign and awning hardware in a manner that minimizes damage to historic building materials.

##### Accessibility

- New ramps, lifts, and other accessibility elements should be designed and located in a manner that is compatible with the historic building.
- Avoid demolition of historic materials in the installation of accessibility elements.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDING PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC

### Building Features

#### *The Property Owner Shall:*

- Retain historic entrance stairs and doors.
- Retain residential characteristics of residences converted into commercial buildings (or vice versa).
- Retain and repair all character-defining features and decorative elements such as cornices and trim.
- Provide parking areas to the side and rear of buildings or along secondary elevations or streets whenever possible.
- Maintain the rhythm, size and shape of window and storefront openings and associated trim and moldings.

#### *The Property Owner Shall Not:*

- Infill or alter historic window, door, or storefront openings visible from the street
- Install any material other than clear glass within a display window.
- Introduce a new storefront or element that alters or destroys historic building materials.
- Enclose or remove elements such as building cornices and storefronts.
- Install stylistic or design elements from periods that are different from the storefront or building and do not complement the overall character.
- Install HVAC systems or louvers that are visible from the street
- Remove, damage, or alter historic architectural building features for the installation of signs and awnings.
- Install exposed conduit, junction boxes, and raceways for channel letters or sign lighting.
- Remove, relocate, or modify architectural features to accommodate garage doors and openings
- Install walk-up services such as Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) that include the removal of historic building fabric or negatively impact the historic character of the building.

### Signs & Awnings

#### *The Property Owner Shall:*

- Repair historic signage and awnings with materials to match the original whenever possible.
- Align awnings within storefront bays.
- Locate signs in traditional or historic signage locations. If no documentation is available, the size, materials, and locations of new signs and awnings should be appropriate for the character of the building.

#### *The Property Owner Shall Not:*

- Remove historic signage.
- Obscure distinctive architectural elements and features with signage or awnings.
- Install billboards.
- Install internally illuminated box signs.
- Install awnings in locations where they are non-functional.
- Use contemporary or glossy awning materials not compatible with the historic building such as vinyl, plastics, or leatherette.
- Install internally illuminated awnings.
- Install awnings with a solid or closed underside.
- Use awning materials that act as wall signs.

### Accessibility

#### *The Property Owner Shall:*

- Comply with all aspects of accessibility requirements while minimizing alterations of the primary building façade and historic architectural features.
- Integrate the accessibility provision with the historic design of the building.
- Install ramp or lift styles that are compatible with the building and are reversible and readily removable.
- Use railings that are simple and visually unobtrusive.



### GUIDELINES FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS



Elements of a Commercial Building:

- A. The cornice provides a visual cap or termination for the top of the building.
- B. Operable windows appear to be “punched” through the flat, relatively solid, typically masonry wall surface in a regular pattern on upper floors.
- C. The storefront is capped by a cornice and features display windows with transom windows above.

The Guidelines were developed in conjunction with the Village of Oak Park’s Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). For more information regarding application and review procedures, please consult the *Guidelines Introduction*, visit Village Hall or [www.oak-park.us](http://www.oak-park.us), or contact Village staff at (708) 358-5440 or [historicpreservation@oak-park.us](mailto:historicpreservation@oak-park.us). For more information regarding HPC recommendations and requirements, refer to *Requirements for Commercial Buildings*.



This modern building serves as professional offices and is an Oak Park Landmark.

#### COMMERCIAL BUILDING TYPES

Commercial buildings are designed for uses providing goods and services. These include stores, restaurants, offices, and hotels. Oak Park has a variety of commercial buildings found across the Village’s twelve business districts. These include:

- Buildings designed for purely commercial use, such as retail or restaurants on the first floor with offices above, or one-story commercial buildings. Primarily found in: Downtown Oak Park, the Hemingway District (Oak Park Avenue at Lake Street), Chicago Avenue (at Harlem Avenue), and North Avenue.
- Buildings with storefronts on the ground floor and residences above. These are found in areas such as the Pleasant District (S. Marion Street at South Blvd.), Lake Street (at Austin Blvd.), the Oak Park Arts District (Harrison Street at S. Austin), and South Town (Oak Park Avenue at Harrison/Garfield).
- Residences converted to commercial use. Examples are found on S. Marion & Lake Streets, South Blvd. and elsewhere.

#### COMMERCIAL BUILDING REFERENCE GUIDE

An informative reference guide to commercial building features is *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture* by Richard W. Longstreth (National Trust for Historic Preservation. Washington, DC, 1987.)



*These buildings on N. Oak Park Avenue were constructed solely for commercial uses.*



*This former residence had been converted into a retail store.*



*Many of the buildings in Downtown Oak Park, including this one, were constructed solely for commercial uses.*



*A number of apartment buildings in commercial areas were constructed with commercial spaces on the ground floor.*



*These mid-twentieth century buildings on North Avenue were constructed solely for commercial uses.*



*Commercial buildings often used decorative ornament in brick, stone, and terra cotta on the front of the building and common brick on the sides and rear.*



*This former automotive garage was converted into a commercial space in the Oak Park Arts District.*

## **INSTITUTIONAL AND LARGE-SCALE RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS**

Institutional buildings generally provide public services and include churches, schools, museums, libraries, hospitals, and government buildings. They can be found throughout Oak Park’s residential and commercial neighborhoods.

Large-scale residential buildings include apartment or condominium buildings with more than six units. These include buildings constructed originally for multi-family use as well as buildings converted into apartment units. In some cases, large-scale residential buildings have ground floor commercial uses, such as retail or a restaurant, and possibly parking.

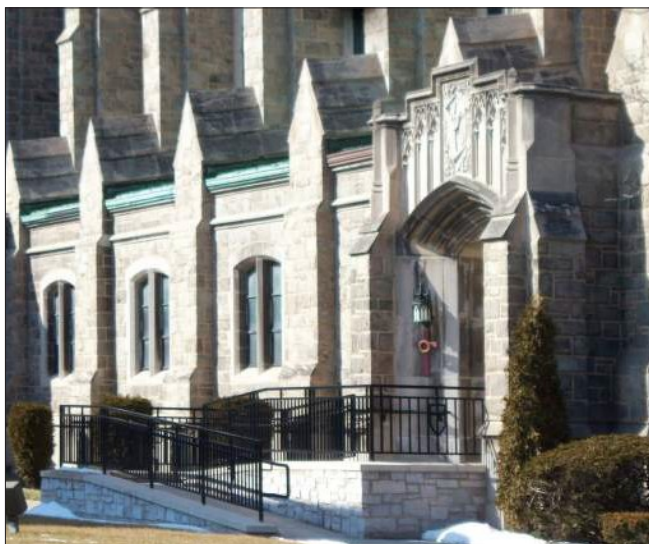
Institutional and large-scale residential buildings share many of the same concerns as commercial buildings including storefronts, signage, parking, and accessibility needs. References to commercial buildings also apply to institutional and large-scale residential buildings.



*This former apartment hotel was converted into senior housing.*



*The former First Church of Christ Scientist temporarily served as the Ernest Hemingway Museum.*



*Churches and other institutional buildings often include non-historic ramps for accessibility. This example has a limestone base that matches the building and the railings are simple.*



*Washington Boulevard has many large-scale apartment and condominium buildings.*

## STOREFRONT DEVELOPMENT

A storefront is typically a ground-level façade with a large expanse of glass to display merchandise. The development of storefronts was linked to the desire to increase commercial visibility and merchandise display possibilities. Storefront configurations have changed with changing technology and tastes. The development of cast iron allowed windows to get larger. In addition, technological advances allowed new building configurations, such as corner entrances with wrap-around storefronts, to maximize commercial visibility.

Commercial storefronts can:

- Serve a key role in a commercial building's identity
- Define a pedestrian's visual experience and create a sense of transparency at the ground floor
- Attract potential customers with eye-catching merchandise displays



*This commercial building includes the building name on the transom window above the entrance and engraved in stone on the second floor.*

## STOREFRONTS

The storefront is one of the most significant features of a retail commercial building, whether it was originally constructed for commercial purposes or converted to retail from another use. As most people experience buildings at the ground level, the design and maintenance of a storefront can greatly influence a casual observer's perception of a building and the business within. Regular maintenance and careful design can provide a good first impression and positively affect the success of a business.

Although the specific configurations of storefronts can vary greatly depending on the style, size, and location of a building, the typical storefront consists of a large expanse of glass to display merchandise and one or more entrances. Historic storefronts were typically constructed of wood, metal (cast iron, bronze, copper, tin, galvanized sheet metal, cast zinc or stainless steel), masonry (brick or stone), large display windows, and clear, translucent or pigmented glass at transoms.

## STOREFRONT COMPONENTS

Storefronts are made up of a number of different components. However, they are generally designed holistically, with all the pieces creating a unified expression. While not all are found on all storefronts, typical components include:



*The storefront cornice visually separates the storefront from the upper building levels.*

**A Storefront Cornice** is the projecting molding along the top of a storefront that provides a visual cap or termination to the storefront and creates a "drip edge" to protect the storefront below. The cornice may be made of wood, pressed metal, limestone, terra cotta, or decorative brick patterns and may feature details such as brackets, dentils, and panels.



*These transom windows are made of Luxfer prism glass, which was invented in 1896 and designed to refract and spread additional light towards the back of the store.*

**A Transom Window** is located above a display window or doorway and provides additional daylight. Transoms may be operable for ventilation or fixed. They may be single or multi-paned and are often glazed with leaded, stained, pigmented, or textured glass. A transom window can include signage, the street number, and other ornamental details.



Replacement storefronts often use anodized aluminum. This display window configuration, which includes transom windows above, is located within the original masonry openings.

**A Display Window** is used to present merchandise within a shop. Display windows often flank the entrance to a store and can include additional merchandising to further entice a potential customer.



These storefronts are flush with the outside of the building. The entrances include large glazed panels. The doors to the upper level apartments include multiple glazed panels and are topped by a decorative pediment.

**The Entrance** of a storefront may be flush with the outside wall or recessed within an alcove to provide shelter and additional display areas. In addition to a commercial entrance, there may be secondary entrances providing access to upper building levels.

**A Storefront Entrance Alcove** acts as a transitional space from the sidewalk to a commercial entrance. It provides shelter from the weather and often is designed to increase the display area of a storefront to draw in potential customers. Entrance alcoves frequently include a decorative ceiling and floor and are flanked by large display windows leading to a central door.



This alcove encompasses two storefront entrances and is capped by a Tudor Revival style cornice.

**A Decorative Ceiling** is often found in entrance alcoves and may be articulated with patterns, textures, and/or materials that reinforce the architectural style of the building and the geometry of the space. The ceiling material may be repeated on the ceilings of display windows. Historically these materials included paneled wood, beadboard, and/or pressed tin. Stucco gained in popularity in the early 20th century.



This 1933 Art Deco storefront retains its plate glass display windows, bronze frames, vaulted ceiling, pigmented glass fascia, bronze decorative trim, and entry transom.

**Decorative Flooring** within a storefront entrance alcove is often composed of small ceramic tiles in a square or hexagonal shape. In the early 20th century, terrazzo became popular. Historically, the configuration of tile or terrazzo was only limited by the creativity of the installer and included decorative borders and patterns of various colors. It was not uncommon for the tiles within the alcove flooring to include the street number and name of the business occupying the store.

## INSTALLING STOREFRONTS

Making changes to storefronts or installing new storefronts can be a costly endeavor and, if not properly planned, may negatively impact a business. When contemplating storefront work, the following approach is recommended:

- a. **Identify Key Historic Elements** Identify key elements in the existing storefront or building to determine what might be appropriate. For example, an aluminum storefront system might not be appropriate for an Italianate building constructed at the end of the 19th century; however, it might be a good option for an early 20th century building.
- b. **Locate Structural Supports** In designing or renovating a storefront, it is important to understand the building's structure. A storefront serves two primary functions: providing structural support of the loads above while maximizing the merchandise display area. Identification of the locations of the structural supports will inform where openings such as windows and doors can be installed. For buildings with granite piers or cast iron facades, the location of the structure is fairly obvious. In buildings that have been clad with another material, investigation may be necessary.
- c. **Review Other Storefronts** When beginning the design process for a new storefront, it is often helpful to look at the design of existing storefronts at similar historic buildings. Existing storefronts can provide information about the size, location, and pattern of doors and windows; the types of materials used; the design of elements including display windows, doors, bulkheads, and cornices; and the detailing and proportions of components.
- d. **Designing a New Storefront** The new storefront design should be compatible in size, pattern, scale, material, and color with the overall building. Design elements should be considered holistically and should reflect the style and type of the historic building. It may be helpful do looks at similar storefronts from the same period.

### KEEP IN MIND:

Existing storefronts which are stylistically dissimilar to a building may have gained historic importance in their own right, and as such, should be retained. For example, an Art Deco storefront may have been installed on a 19th century building.

## NON-RETAIL STOREFRONTS

Some residential uses and non-retail businesses, such as restaurants or offices, may be found in former commercial buildings with storefront windows. Although many of these uses do not require a large display window, the HPC encourages maintaining unobstructed glazing when feasible. Businesses are encouraged to use alternate means of providing privacy when using a former display area, for example:

- Installing display materials related to the business or service being offered
- Installing blinds, curtains, or other semi-transparent or translucent screening that can be opened or closed during the course of the day
- Placing plants, seasonal displays or decorations in the merchandising display area
- Additionally, businesses are encouraged to retain transom windows and maintain their operability



*This library has an accessible ramp that both maintains the original entrance steps and allows all patrons to utilize the main entrance door of the building.*

## ACCESSIBILITY

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) strives to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities. The ADA recognizes that for people with disabilities to participate in everyday activities such as going to work, eating in a restaurant, or shopping in a store, they need to have access to the goods and services provided by businesses. Many businesses in Oak Park were constructed prior to enactment of the ADA in 1992 and lack features to accommodate people with disabilities.

As existing buildings are renovated, they are often required to make accommodations for people with disabilities. One of the most visible exterior alterations often required by ADA is the installation of a wheelchair ramp or lift to provide building access. It may be possible to incorporate these at the interior of the building envelope with modification of existing door sills. When installing ramps, it is important to remember that if the ramp is too steep or railings are not secure, it can potentially be hazardous.



The historic Lake Theater sign remains a significant feature in Downtown Oak Park.

## SIGNS

Commercial and retail areas experience considerable change over time as stores and businesses appear and disappear, new technologies are introduced, and marketing techniques evolve to respond to changes in consumer interests and tastes. As the first point of contact between a business and potential customers, signs have always been an important element of commercial areas. Signage can help us understand the history of a district, and often played a major role in shaping its appearance.

A well designed and located sign can make a good impression, attract potential customers and unify a streetscape. Signs should relate to, and help define and enhance, the architectural features of the building, rather than cover or disturb design features such as rhythm, fenestration (the window pattern) and scale. A poorly designed or badly placed sign can overwhelm a building, detract from the area, give an inappropriate impression, turn customers away, and potentially damage historic materials or finishes.

Historically, signs were attached to or freestanding and placed near buildings. Attached signs included wall signs, projecting signs, and window signs. Historic signage is often an architectural feature that reflects the original owner and use of the building. Abandoned signs from recent tenants should be removed. However, the HPC encourages retaining historic signage while accommodating new signage. Retaining historic signage does not reduce the amount of allowable signage for an occupant. Signs are subject to provisions of the Village Sign Code. As signs are considered to be temporary changes to a building, the HPC does not generally review sign permit applications on buildings not designated as Landmarks.



Signs and awnings play a major role in the character of a commercial district, as seen in this 1948 photograph. (Source: Historical Society of Oak Park & River Forest.)

## AWNINGS

Fixed and retractable canvas awnings were an important design element for American storefronts beginning in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They provided shelter on the exterior and shade for the interior, served as a transition between the storefront and the upper façade, and provided an additional element of color as well as a surface for advertisement. Awnings and canopies continue to serve these vital functions today. They can even be used to disguise inappropriate storefront alterations when they are mounted over the alterations. Care should be taken to maintain the proportions of the original storefront. Awnings are subject to the provisions of the Village Sign Code. As awnings are considered to be temporary changes to a building, the HPC does not generally review awning permit applications on buildings not designated as Landmarks.



The awnings are located within each of the building's bays, providing a unifying element for the building.

## MOUNTING SIGNS & AWNINGS

Care should be taken in mounting signs and awnings to minimize damage to historic materials. When possible, reuse hardware or brackets from previous signs or awnings. If this is not an option, remove old hardware and patch holes. When installing new signage or awnings, select mounting locations that can be easily patched if the sign or awning is removed. For example, locate anchors in mortar joints rather than mounting directly into brick faces.



*Decorative lighting should be compatible in age, style, scale and materials with the building.*

## LIGHTING

The type and placement of lighting plays an important role in maintaining the historic character of a building. However, historic lighting is often considered inadequate for modern uses. Altered and new lighting should fit within a neighborhood’s historic context while providing sufficient lighting for modern needs. All lighting should be installed in a manner that only illuminates the building, walkway surfaces, and parking areas without spillover onto adjacent properties or into the night sky. In addition, the color and quality of the proposed light should mimic the soft, warm tone of incandescent lamps. Exposed conduit, wiring, or junction boxes are not permitted.

When possible, the HPC encourages the use of original lighting adapted for contemporary use, such as increasing brightness with new or additional energy efficient bulbs in historic light fixtures. Where a building no longer has original exterior lights or never had them, the HPC encourages the use of a lighting design that includes fixtures compatible in age, style, and scale to the building or which are unobtrusive and not suggestive of a style or age.

## BUILDING & MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT

Modern mechanical equipment includes HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) equipment, restaurant exhaust fans, electrical supply, generators, energy vaults, cell towers, and solar panels. Although this equipment represents necessities of modern life, their design and location can have a significant negative impact on the historic integrity of a building or streetscape.

Most commercial buildings in Oak Park are constructed to their property lines and the opportunity to locate equipment in rear or side yards is not available. In these situations, it might be necessary to locate items on roofs or at ground level. When visible from the street, the equipment should be made as unobtrusive as possible. For example, select colors that blend in with the background.



*Although these telecommunications towers are visible, the height of the building and their location helps minimize their visual impact.*

## PARKING

In Oak Park’s commercial areas, there is generally little space for surface parking. Demolishing adjacent buildings to create additional parking is strongly discouraged by the HPC. Consistent building setbacks in which buildings are adjacent to or near the sidewalk are characteristic of Oak Park’s historic commercial areas. If parking lots are desired and the configuration of the existing property allows it, they should be located to the side and rear of buildings or along secondary elevations or secondary streets whenever possible. The HPC encourages the screening of perimeter parking lots with landscaping, fencing or a low wall. Parking lots must comply with the Village Zoning Ordinance.

Alternatives to surface parking lots include constructing new parking structures, incorporating parking in a new building, or modifying an existing building to accommodate parking. The HPC discourages the removal, relocation, or modification of architectural features to accommodate garage doors and openings. Any new entrances should be located on side or rear elevations, where they are not visible from the primary street.





## REQUIREMENTS FOR SITE FEATURES



Site elements such as sidewalks, stairs, posts, urns, and walls may be key elements in defining a building's context and character.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SITE FEATURES

Like historic buildings, historic landscapes and site features embody the history and values of a person or community. Site features may be designed by architects, landscape architects, and artists or they may evolve as part of a local building tradition or practice. Therefore, it is important to maintain and preserve those landscape elements and site features that are important to the historic character of the property.

- Site features can be an important element of a building's character and architectural style
- Site features add visual interest to the streetscape and neighborhood



Historic fences are important to the character of a property.

### WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN DOING A SITE PROJECT

When preparing a landscaping or fence-related project, the following are some key issues to consider:

- Is there a historic site, fence, or wall (wrought iron, wood, brick, stucco, etc.)? If so, you should make every effort to preserve, reuse, and repair historic fences and walls.
- Are you repairing or replacing the fence or wall? If so, limit your repairs and replacement to the damaged areas only.
- What materials do you plan to use in your repairs or replacement? If the historic materials are too damaged to be saved, replacement materials should match the original as closely as possible.
- Do you have historic sidewalks (stone, brick, etc.)? You should make every effort to preserve, reuse and repair historic sidewalks and paving.
- Replace damaged sidewalks with matching materials
- 



Historic wrought-iron fencing can often be repaired by replacing missing pieces, sanding, powder-coating, and repainting.

## RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES FOR ANY SITE PROJECT

### Maintenance and Repair

- Preserve historic site features and landscapes with a regular maintenance schedule.
- Regularly clean and touch-up paint on historic fences.
- Regularly inspect and repair masonry on historic walls, piers, and other masonry site features.
- New plant materials, trees, sidewalks, and fences should reflect what was there historically or be compatible with the character of the property.
- Excavations for basement windows should only be conducted on surfaces not visible from the street.

### Protection

- Protect historic trees and other vegetation during construction and renovation projects.
- Protect historic site features, such as masonry and stone sidewalks, during construction or renovation projects, including Village-owned stone sidewalks.

### Restoration

- Remove non-historic site features, like fencing, driveways, sculptures, or vegetation that were added outside the period of significance. Maintain and restore historic landscape patterns and plant materials. When replacement is necessary, replace
- historic plants with plants of the same species and in the same location.



## REQUIREMENTS FOR SITE PROJECTS REVIEWED BY THE HPC

### Fences

#### *Property Owners Shall:*

- Maintain and repair historic fencing and walls.
- If repair of the original is not possible, replace damaged or missing materials with new materials that are similar in size, shape, texture, pattern, color, and overall appearance.
- Selectively replace damaged or missing materials with new materials to match the original in size, shape, texture, color, and overall appearance.
- Replace damaged or deteriorated materials with new materials to match the original in size, shape, texture, pattern, color, material, and overall appearance.
- Add new fencing similar to historic fencing used at the site or characteristic of the period of significance.

### Sidewalks and Paving

#### *Property Owners Shall:*

- Retain and repair historic sidewalks and paving.
- Replace sidewalks in materials similar to those used in the period of significance of the building or historic district.

### Site Features

#### *Property Owners Shall NOT:*

- Add chain link fences where they are visible from the street. Metal or plastic slats shall not be used in chain link fences where visible from the street.
- Add stockade type wood fences where they are visible from the street. Where the Zoning Ordinance permits, solid wood fencing or walls which are visible from the street may be approved if they are designed in character with the historic building.
- Add conjectural site elements, such as Victorian type street or yard lighting, ornate benches, gazebos or the like which are visible from the street, unless historic documentation shows that they existed on the site, or unless they are characteristic of the period of significance.
- Replace Village-owned historic slate/stone sidewalks in front of a building, unless, in the opinion of the Village, it has been irreparably damaged. If replaced, they shall be replaced with materials of like thickness, color and size. Cost of replacing damaged sidewalks shall be borne by the person responsible for the breakage.