



515 Fair Oaks Avenue



1139 Randolph Street

## Designating Oak Park Historic Landmarks: The Details

### Glossary of Terms

**Certificate of Appropriateness:** A certificate issued by the Historic Preservation Commission indicating its approval of plans for the alteration, 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.

**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.

**Nomination:** The process of submitting an application to the Village to begin the process of designating a property as a Landmark.

**Historic District:** An area possessing a significant concentration of properties united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development that has been designated pursuant to Village ordinance. An historic district may include properties that are individually designated as historic landmarks and may also contain other properties, which, while not of such individual value to be designated historic landmarks, nevertheless contribute to the overall special character or value of the historic district as a whole.

**Historic Landmark:** A property which has special character or significant historical, 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 Village ordinance. This includes all designated interior landmarks.

**Interior Landmark:** The interior of a property that is accessible and open to the public which has special character or significant historical, architectural, 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 Village ordinance.



Oak Park

For more information, call or write:

Oak Park Historic  
Preservation Commission  
Community Services Department  
Planning Division  
123 Madison Street  
Oak Park, IL 60302  
708.358.5417  
comsvcs@oak-park.us

Or visit the Village's web site at  
[www.oak-park.us](http://www.oak-park.us)

On the front:  
339 North Oak Park Avenue

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Oak Park



313 Forest Avenue

## Introduction

A building that has architectural or historic significance may be designated as an Oak Park Historic Landmark, a special category created under the 1994 historic preservation ordinance. Owners of historic landmark structures may obtain professional advice and tax incentives, which enable them to protect the historic integrity of their buildings, while fostering continued, contemporary usage.

## What is a Landmark?

An historic landmark building must be at least 50 years old and have some historical, cultural, architectural or engineering significance. Any of the following criteria may be used to determine historic landmark eligibility:

- Significance in the development of Oak Park, the State of Illinois or the United States.
- Site of an historic event.
- Closely identified with a significant historical figure, architect, designer, etc.
- Listed by the Village as a significant structure in one of the historic districts.

- Distinguishing characteristics or distinctive design elements of a significant architectural or engineering type.
- Representative of an architectural, cultural, economic, historical or social style or period.
- Identified on the Village's official inventory of significant properties.

## What does Historic Landmark status mean?

Historic Landmark status is awarded to a property that meets certain architectural or historic standards. Designation recognizes that the property is significant to Oak Park and that its historic character and architectural merit should be maintained and preserved for current and future generations.

## What does Historic Landmark status REALLY mean?

Once property is designated as a Historic or Interior Landmark, the owner must follow the Village's Architectural Review Guidelines when making changes. The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) strongly encourages the types of changes that will keep a building functional, while retaining its important physical character. Therefore, any significant alterations to an Historic or Interior Landmark building require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the HPC. The certificate ensures that alterations are compatible with the historic and architectural character that qualified the structure as a landmark. Significant alterations include work that requires a building permit, including additions, demolition and sand blasting.



321 North Euclid Avenue

## What is the Historic Preservation Commission?

The Historic Preservation Commission is a volunteer advisory body of 11 Oak Park citizens appointed by the Village President. Each Commissioner has some interest or experience in historic preservation or a related field, including architecture and history. The Commission's charge is to preserve the unique and important architectural character and historic heritage of Oak Park. In addition to recommending landmark designations, the Commission reviews changes to Historic or Interior Landmarks, and to buildings within the Village's historic districts.



123 South Marion Street

## Why should I consider applying for Historic Landmark status?

- To protect your property from future demolition.
- To protect the historic and/or architectural character of the exterior of your property that makes it so unique by preventing destructive, damaging or arbitrary changes by future owners.
- To protect the unique historic and/or architectural character of the publicly accessed interior spaces of your property.
- To make your property eligible for property tax relief and other incentives.
- To make your property eligible for free technical assistance and architectural advice from preservation specialists.
- To maintain Oak Park's quality of life and increase the economic viability of the Village's tourism economy.



460 Lake Street

- To have your property recognized as an Historic Landmark by the Village through its official literature, marketing programs, publications and web site.
- To receive a bronze designation plaque.

## Who Can Nominate a Building as a Historic Landmark?

Anyone can nominate a building by completing an Oak Park Landmark Nomination Form. The nomination must be recommended by the Historic Preservation Commission after a public hearing on the nomination. Final approval comes by the Village Board enacting an ordinance. Buildings with significant interior spaces that are open to the public may be nominated for Interior Landmark status as well.

## How Do I Nominate My Building as a Historic Landmark?

Contact the Community Services Department at Village Hall and ask for an Oak Park Landmark Nomination Form. Call 358.5425 or email [comsvcs@oak-park.us](mailto:comsvcs@oak-park.us). A form also can be downloaded and printed from the Village website at [www.oak-park.us](http://www.oak-park.us).