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Architectural survey to document buildings in Arts District, South Town

Students in the Historic Preservation Program at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) will conduct an architectural survey in the Oak Park Arts District (Harrison Street) and South Town (Oak Park Avenue at Harrison) during March and April.

Sponsored by the Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), the architectural survey is intended to identify and document historic resources in the two neighborhoods.

Students will complete an individual information form for every property within the survey area. Each property will be categorized as a building that is architecturally significant, has architectural merit or has no architectural merit.

Properties also may be identified as potential historic landmarks or for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Potential Oak Park or National Register historic districts may be identified as well.

The HPC will integrate the SAIC survey findings into the 2003 Neighborhood Character Plans that were completed by planning students from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Commissioners say they hope the findings will assist property owners and the Village in making sound judgments that will help these two neighborhoods stay vibrant and vital over the long-term.

"Historic resources help to give a neighborhood its character and are among the most important factors in making Oak Park such a unique place to live, work and visit," said Tom Basset-Dilley, HPC chairman. "To make the most effective use of these resources, it is important to consider historic preservation issues as a part of the larger community planning process."

The public is invited to join the HPC and the SAIC students for a presentation and discussion of the preliminary survey findings. The presentation is scheduled for 9 a.m., Mon. April 19, at Village Hall, 123 Madison St.

For more information on the survey process, or how the information could be used in the future to assist property owners, call 708.358.5417 or email planning@oak-park.us.

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