

LANDMARK LINK

The newsletter of the Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission.

FLW Historic District boundaries expand

The boundaries of the Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture National Register Historic District were officially expanded following final approval by the National Park Service on May 22, 2009.

This project, which was sponsored by the Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission, took four years to complete.

The Historic Preservation Commission supervised an architectural survey of the historic district beginning in 2005, including proposed expansion areas on the east, west and south. The survey was begun by volunteers and completed by Thomason & Associates, a consultant hired in 2007.

Digital photos of every property were donated by the Oak Park Photography Club. Following completion of the architectural survey, Thomason & Associates created survey forms for each property and evaluated the boundaries of the historic district. The process included the following:

- Public meetings at the Oak Park Public Library in June 2007 and March

2008.

- Draft nomination to update the existing National Register historic district nomination, which includes a list of contributing and non-contributing resources, submitted to the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency in February 2008.

- Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council recommended approval of the expansion in September 2008, and the nomination forwarded to the National Park Service for final approval.

- The boundary expansion officially listed in the National Register of Historic Places on May 22, 2009.

The National Register is the nation's official list of places recognized for their historical or architectural significance and considered worthy of preservation. The National Register is an honorary listing and

does not prevent property owners from making changes – including demolition – or force owners to make improvements. The listing also does not limit the use of a building. Properties within a National Register historic district are not required to undergo design review by the Historic Preservation Commission. Only properties within a locally

designated historic district require Historic Preservation Commission review. Contributing resources are eligible for tax incentives for rehabilitation, including the Property Tax Assessment Freeze program for single-family residences, the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit for multi-family and commercial buildings, and the Façade Easement donation for both.



New historic landmarks approved

July 20, 2009: The Robert Parker House is a two-story wood-frame house at 1019 Chicago Ave. designed by architect Frank Lloyd Wright in 1892 in the Queen Anne/Prairie style. It is a rare surviving example of Wright's "boot-legged" houses, designed between 1891 and spring 1893 while he was still working for Adler and Sullivan.



1019 Chicago Ave.

Of the eight executed bootlegged houses, only six remain. Although some of these remaining structures feature popular architectural styles of the era, as a group they represent Wright's evolving design ideas during the 1890s that would lead to his mature Prairie style of architecture. The Robert Parker House has retained excellent integrity, and its exterior stands virtually unchanged from its 1892 appearance.



1139 Woodbine Ave.

July 20, 2009: The Benson/Armstrong House is a two-story brick house at 1139 Woodbine Ave. designed by architect George (Gustav) E. Pearson in 1929 in the Italian Renaissance Revival style. The property is significant for its architecture and for its association with Pearson. The house is located in the



175-181 Linden/643-645 Ontario

Kenilworth Boulevard Addition to Oak Park located between Division Street and North Avenue, and between Oak Park and Woodbine avenues.

The Bensons owned a successful dairy on Chicago's west side in the 1920s. Architect George E. Pearson designed at least 229 buildings in Oak Park between 1919 and 1938, many north of Division Street. The house has been in the Armstrong family since 1960.

October 5, 2009:

The 1916 Linden Apartments are significant for their association with architect John S. Van

Bergen and for their rarity as one of few multiple-dwelling buildings ever constructed in the Prairie style

The Linden Apartments, located at 175-181 Linden/643-645 Ontario, were commissioned by Salem E. Munyer and constructed by the local construction firm of Guy & McClintock at a cost of \$54,000. Van Bergen worked in the offices of Walter Burley Griffin, E. E. Roberts, Frank Lloyd Wright and William Drummond before starting his own practice. Van Bergen designed 23 buildings in Oak Park.

Help Oak Park preserve its past

Strategic Historic Preservation Plan

The Historic Preservation Commission is leading a community wide effort to create a 10-year Strategic Historic Preservation Plan to help guide efforts to identify and protect important historic resources throughout the Village of Oak Park.

The following is the meeting schedule to create this plan. All meetings begin at 7 p.m.

Oct. 21, 2009: Community Workshop I, Brooks Middle School, 325 S. Kenilworth Ave.

Dec. 16, 2009: Community Workshop II, Hatch School, 1000 N. Ridgeland Ave.

Feb. 17, 2010: Steering Committee meeting II, Oak Park Conservatory, 615 Garfield St.

March 17, 2010: Community Workshop III, Beye School, 230 N. Cuyler Ave.

For more information,
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Historic Preservation Commission Members

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The Historic Preservation Commission is an 11-member body of citizen volunteers appointed by the Village President to implement the Village's Historic Preservation Ordinance. Its mission is to preserve, protect and enhance the distinctive historic and architectural heritage of Oak Park. The Commission strives to preserve the historic integrity of the Village by reviewing altera-

tions of the exteriors of historic properties to ensure that the historic character of the building exteriors is preserved. The Commission also identifies landmark buildings and historic districts, and seeks to enhance the attractiveness of the Village by educating property owners and citizens about the importance of preservation, restoration and rehabilitation of properties.