



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Bruce Walden, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Elizabeth Tyler, AICP, Director

DATE: January 4, 2006

SUBJECT: Historic Preservation Commission Report

Background

The purpose of the attached Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) report is to brief the City Council on the Commission's accomplishments for the period 1998-2005. The Historic Preservation Commission was established on July 20, 1998 through Council adoption of the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Article XII of the Zoning Ordinance). At that time, the Urbana City Council by resolution requested that a report on the ordinance's implementation be provided to City Council. In accordance with this resolution, the attached report includes:

1. The number and location of applications for historic district or landmark designation;
2. The number and location of historic districts approved since the adoption of the Historic Preservation Ordinance;
3. The number and location of historic landmarks designated since the adoption of the Historic Preservation Ordinance;
4. The number of protests filed with the city Clerk on any designation.
5. An update to the City Council on survey or educational work conducted by the Historic Preservation Commission; and
6. Other information deemed necessary by the City Council or the Historic Preservation Commission.

This report was based on HPC cases files, meeting minutes, and other pertinent information.

Discussion

This Historic Preservation Commission report demonstrates the achievements of the Historic Preservation Commission over the past seven years. Since February 1999, there have been two local historic districts approved and five properties designated as local landmarks. Exterior

changes to designated local landmarks and districts are monitored by the Historic Preservation Commission through review and issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness.

The establishment of the Historic Preservation Commission led to the City of Urbana being designated a Certified Local Government (CLG) by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA). CLG status provides opportunities for funding of preservation work and events. Grants have allowed the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission, working with City staff, to coordinate an informational workshop, prepare a brochure of Urbana historic properties, and pursue a planned workshop on stucco repair. In addition to these events, the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission has held two walking tours and three workshops as part of the Commission's goal of educating the public on historic preservation issues. The Commission also participates in other local preservation events, such as the annual Kids' Building Fair held by the Orpheum Children's Science Museum and Preservation and Conservation Association (PACA).

This report also highlights the importance of the Historic Preservation Commission for implementing goals set out in the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan. Implementation strategies for carrying out the Comprehensive Plan include updating and expanding historic surveys of older neighborhoods, designation of specific areas of historic districts, adoption of a conservation district ordinance, designation of significant civic buildings as historic landmarks, and studying the feasibility of low interest loans for designated local landmarks. The Historic Preservation Commission will be working to help the City accomplish these goals.

Recommendations

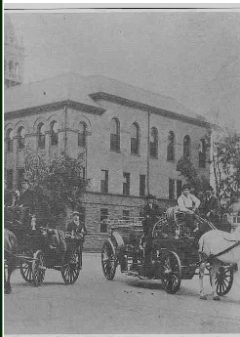
At their January 4, 2006 meeting, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed this report and, following revisions, recommended that it be forwarded to the City Council for acceptance. These revisions are incorporated in the attached report. *Therefore, City staff and the Historic Preservation Commission recommend that the City Council move to accept this report as evidence of the HPC's accomplishments in carrying out the Council's direction.*

Prepared by:

Robert Myers, AICP, Planning Manager

Attachments: Historic Preservation Commission Report, 1998-2005

cc: Alice Novak, HPC Chair



*Historic Preservation Commission
Report of Activities*

July 1998- November 2005





DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning Division

400 S. Vine

Urbana, IL 61801

(217) 384-2440

*Historic Preservation Commission
Report of Activities*

July 1998- November 2005

Prepared By:
Rebecca Bicksler
1 December 2005

Photos for this report have been taken by city staff, the Historic Preservation Commission, or the Preservation and Conservation Association (PACA). Photos marked with an asterisk (*) originate from: Bial, Raymond. *Urbana A Pictorial History*. St. Louis, Mo.: G. Bradley Publishing, Inc., 1994.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to summarize and communicate the activities of the Historic Preservation Commission since its establishment. When the Commission was formed in 1998, the City Council requested that a report be written five years following the Commission's formation. It is appropriate that this report be written now, as many new Council members and a new Mayor have been elected into office.

Background

On July 20, 1998, the Urbana City Council adopted Article XII (Historic Preservation) of the Zoning Ordinance and thereby established the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). The first Historic Preservation Commission meeting was held on February 24, 1999 and has since met on 41 occasions. This report lists cases and activity from July 1998 through November 2005.

In accordance with a resolution of the Urbana City Council, described in the Historic Preservation Commission by-laws, the Commission is to provide a written report every five years to the City Council, including:

1. The number and location of applications for historic district or landmark designation;
2. The number and location of historic districts approved since the adoption of the Historic Preservation Ordinance;
3. The number and location of historic landmarks designated since the adoption of the Historic Preservation Ordinance;
4. The number of protests filed with the city Clerk on any designation;
5. Survey and educational work conducted by the Historic Preservation Commission; and
6. Any other information deemed necessary by the City Council or the Historic Preservation Commission.

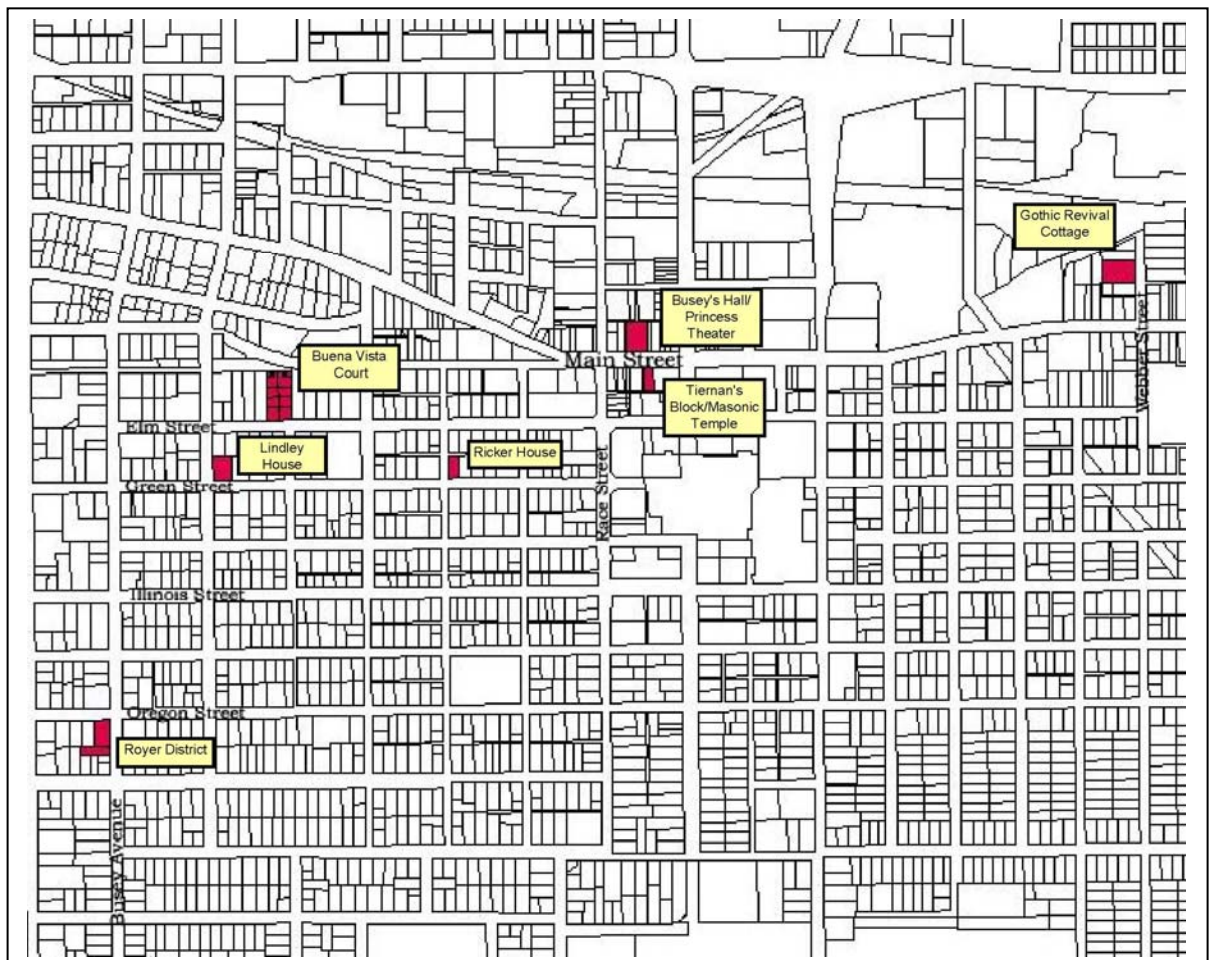
Past and Present HPC members

The following HPC members have been appointed by the City Council.

Name	Term Began	Term End*
Alice Novak (chair)	Jan. 11, 1999	June 30, 2007
Art Zangerl (vice-chair)	Jan. 11, 1999	June 30, 2008
Trent Shepard	Jan. 11, 1999	June 30, 2008
Liz Cardman	Jan. 11, 1999	Oct. 8, 2003
Lachlan Blair	Jan. 11, 1999	June 30, 2000
Paul Ecklor	Jan. 11, 1999	June 30, 2008
Rich Cahill	July 6, 1999	June 30, 2007
Sharon Irish	July 1, 2000	June 30, 2003
Bill Rose	July 1, 2000	June 30, 2006
Scott Dossett	Oct. 6, 2003	June 30, 2006
Mary Stuart	Feb. 21, 2005	June 30, 2007

*Current commissioners may continue their term beyond the date noted herein.

Local Historic Districts and Landmarks Map



Applications for historic nominations

Local designation of historic districts and landmarks offer the greatest protection for historic properties in Urbana. Unlike listing in the National Register of Historical Places, local landmarks and historic districts are protected from demolition and exterior changes affecting historic character. Since being established, the Historic Preservation Commission has reviewed three applications for local historic district nominations (two of which were approved) and six applications for local landmark designations (all of which were approved).



The Flat Iron building stood at the intersection of Springfield and Main Street. It is one of Urbana's historic buildings that have been demolished. The Historic Preservation Commission is dedicated to the conservation of historical sites in Urbana, such as this.*

Historic district applications were received for the following locations:

- **Joseph Royer Historic District:** 801 W. Oregon and 701 S. Busey, applied 2001.
- **West Main Street Historic District:** 310, 311, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 413, 415, 417, 419, 501, 502, 503, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 608, 609, 702, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 802, 803, 804, 806, 807, 807 1/2, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, and 816 West Main Street & 209 North Coler Avenue, applied 2002.

At its preliminary determination hearing on February 6, 2002, the HPC determined the application did not meet minimum requirements because the signatures of property owners in support of the nomination fell short of the 25% requirement. No subsequent hearings were held.

- **Buena Vista Historic District:** 1-8 Buena Vista Court, applied 2004.

Individual landmark applications were received for the following locations:

- **Tiernan's Block/Masonic Temple:** 115 W. Main Street, applied 2000.
- **The Lindley House:** 312 W. Green Street, applied 2000.
- **The Gothic Revival Cottage:** 108 N. Webber Street, applied 2000.
- **Busey's Hall/Princess Theater:** 120-124 W. Main Street, applied 2000.
- **Ricker House:** 612 W. Green Street, applied 2000.
- **Fejes House:** 206 Cedar Street, applied 2004.

This application was withdrawn by the applicant.



Historic Downtown Urbana*

Approved historic districts

Following consideration and recommendation by the Historic Preservation Commission, the Urbana City Council adopted two historic districts.

Joseph Royer Historic District, approved November 5, 2001 (801 W. Oregon Street and 701 S. Busey Avenue)

The Joseph Royer Historic District consists of two homes designed by Royer: Royer's home at 801 West Oregon Avenue and the "Ella Danely Cottage" or "Mother-in-Law Cottage" located at 701 West Busey Avenue. Joseph Royer is Urbana's most noted and recognized architect. The Theta Club owned 801 West Oregon, but the home had been vacated after a fire in June 2001. The Theta Club did not support the nomination request whereas Ann Wymor, owner of 701 S. Busey Ave., supported the inclusion of her property in the district. Because more than 40% of the district opposed the nomination, a two-thirds majority vote of the City Council was required in order to designate the property. The City Council approved the nomination on November 5, 2001.



Royer's home:
801 W. Oregon Ave.



Joseph Royer*



Ella Danely Cottage: 701 W. Busey Ave.

Buena Vista Historic District
(1 - 8 Buena Vista Court)

In July, 2004, Urbana City Council designated Buena Vista Court as a local historic district. West Elm Court is the original historic name because its primary entrance fronted on Elm Street. The court consists of eight Spanish Mission style cottages, built circa 1925, that face a central courtyard. The architectural style, while common in California and the American southwest, is unusual in the Midwest. These single-story cottages were constructed with stucco over tile and have flat roofs and wrought iron window décor. The Buena Vista Court retains its architectural and integrity as a cohesive collection of bungalows in the Spanish Mission style, all retaining their original stucco exterior.



Examples of homes found in Buena Vista Court

Historic landmarks approved



Front entrance to Tiernan's Block/Masonic Temple

Five buildings were nominated for designation as local landmarks. Each of the following nominations were first brought before the HPC for preliminary determination on December 1, 1999, reviewed at a regular meeting on January 19, 2000, and approved for consideration at the City Council meeting on February 21, 2000.

Tiernan's Block/Masonic Temple, approved 2/21/2000 (115 W. Main Street)



Tiernan's Block/Masonic Temple

The Tiernan's Block/Masonic is noted as a Classical Revival building designed by William S. McWilliams. It is constructed of brick with terra cotta façade. The original structure was built in 1871 and a terra cotta façade, designed by Joseph W. Royer, was added in 1914. The building was nominated based on its association with the master local architect and for its cultural significance as an opera house and then a Masonic lodge. At the time of the nomination, the structure was owned by Norman and Carolyn Baxley.



Historic photo*

The Lindley House, approved 2/21/2000 (312 W. Green Street)



Porch detail



The Lindley House

The Lindley House is a Queen Anne style Victorian house designed by R.Z. Gill, an Urbana native and University of Illinois graduate. The house was constructed in 1895 for a prominent Urbana family, Dr. Austin Lindley and Mrs. Minnie Hubbard Lindley. It retains its original features consistent with the Queen Anne style. The Lindley House was owned by Norman and Carolyn Baxley at the time the nomination was approved.



Gothic Revival Cottage

The Gothic Revival Cottage, approved 2/21/2000
(108 N. Webber Street)

As its name suggests, 108 N Webber is built in the Gothic Revival style of architecture. The home was constructed near four major railroad tracks, circa 1850's, and was often occupied by railroad workers. It also has architectural value as a rare architectural style within Urbana. Very few examples of the Greek and Gothic Revival architectural styles remain. This property is owned by Norman and Carolyn Baxley. Christa Meyer was the applicant.



Busey's Hall/Princess Theater

Busey's Hall/Princess Theater, approved 2/21/2000
(120-124 W. Main Street)

Constructed in 1870, Busey's Hall was one of the first brick buildings constructed in Urbana. It was used as an opera house until its conversion to a movie theater in 1915. The architect is unknown. The architectural style of the building was originally Italianate but in 1934 the façade was modernized in the Art Deco style. Its façade is constructed of brick, stainless steel and porcelain panels on the first story, brick and glazed brick on the second story, and a prominently projecting metal marquee accented with neon. Busey's Hall / Princess Theater was nominated by Shauna Haas based on its value as a civic, cultural, and artistic asset to the City's history. The property is owned by Norman and Carolyn Baxley.



Nathan C. Ricker House, approved 2/21/2000
(612 W. Green Street)

Nathan Ricker was a famous local architect who was instrumental in the establishment and development of the University of Illinois' architecture program. He built this relatively modest home in 1892 and lived there until his death in 1924. The architectural style of the Ricker House is Queen Anne. The property was nominated by Jamie Clapper on behalf of Preservation and Conservation Association, the property owners.



Ricker House

Above: Nathan Ricker and Wife*

Protests

No formal protests to any nominations were filed with the City Clerk.



Urbana's historic downtown

Survey and educational work

The Urbana Historic Preservation Commission has been involved in many educational events for the community. The following activities demonstrate the Historic Preservation Commission's dedication to educate the community about Urbana's history as well as good historic preservation practices.

Urbana-Champaign joint HPC Meeting, May 3, 2000.

A joint meeting between Urbana's and Champaign's historic preservation commissions was held in an effort to mutually learn about recent efforts. Each city made a half-hour for presentation, following which discussion was held.

Certified Local Government (CLG) status.

Urbana applied for status as a Certified Local Government (CLG) in December of 2000. Catherine O'Conner from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency attended the HPC's June 20, 2001 meeting to explain the benefits and expectations of being a CLG.

Historic Walking Tour and Workshop, October 21, 2000.

Over 100 people attended the HPC's walking tour which was led by the following historic preservation commissioners: Liz Cardman, Art Zangerl, Sharon Irish, Alice Novak, Trent Shepard, Rick Cahill, and Bill Rose. City staff prepared packets of information for the Commissioners to use on the tour. (see appendix)

House History Research Workshop, February 17, 2000.

This workshop, held at the Urbana Free Library, began with a HPC presentation on Commission procedures and the landmark application process. Afterward, the library's archive staff gave an overview of library resources for house research. The workshop was open to the public and was attended by more than 65 participants.



Logo for the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA). The IHPA has designated the City of Urbana as a Certified Local Government for its preservation programs.



The Urbana Free Library is the site of many historic preservation events, such as the Historic Home Research Workshop*



An honorary plaque is displayed at the Ella Danelly Cottage, 701 S Busey.

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments.

The Historic Preservation Commission produced two amendments to the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to improve preservation procedures and standards. The first revision, which took place in early 2000, clarified procedures for designating local landmarks. At the request of the Urbana Plan Commission, a second zoning text amendment, concerning standards for projecting signs (Table IX-3 of the Zoning Ordinance), was brought before the HPC on June 20, 2001.

Historic Urbana Brochure, 2002.

City staff produced a Historic Urbana brochure, funded in part by a Certified Local Government grant of \$2,000. The brochure was updated in 2005.

Downtown Urbana Walking Tour, June 24, 2002.

Approximately 200 people attended two walking tours of West Main Street and downtown Urbana. Many Historic Preservation Commission members served as tour guides. Properties in the tour included: the County Court House, Tiernan's Block, Crane Alley, 110 West Main, Busey's Hall, 136 Main, Goose Alley, Station theatre, Courier Café, Old Armory, Iron Post, Urbana Free Library, Howard Apartments, and Jumers. (see appendix)



2002 Downtown Urbana Walking Tour

"Historic Districts: Preserving Community Identity," April 12, 2003.

The purpose of the public forum was to help educate the community about historic preservation. The forum, held in the Cobb Auditorium of the Urbana Senior High School, involved City staff and Historic Preservation Commission members, as well as guest speakers. It was funded by a \$900 grant from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. (see appendix)



2002 Downtown Urbana Walking Tour

Joseph Royer Historic District Plaque Presentation, May 7, 2003.

The owners of the two homes in the Joseph Royer Historic District, at 801 W. Oregon Street and 701 S. Busey Avenue, were presented a plaque to display the property's landmark status. This presentation was made at the Historic Preservation Meeting on May 7, 2003.

Orpheum Children's Science Museum, "Kids' Building Fair" Annual event held in May.

The "Kids' Building Fair" is a yearly program sponsored by the Orpheum Children's Science Museum and the Preservation and Conservation Association (PACA). Many local businesses participate in the program. Volunteer contractors, who are involved in renovation of historic buildings, help kids learn carpentry, painting, setting tile, laying brick, faux finishing, making poster moldings, etc. May 2005 was the fifteenth annual Kid's Building Fair.



The Kids' Building Fair is held annually at the Orpheum Children's Science Museum

Open House for the M.O.R. Design Guidelines, June 3, 2004.

Working in conjunction with the Historic Preservation Commission, City staff devise design guidelines for the new Mixed Office and Residential (MOR) zoning district. On June 3, 2004 the guidelines were presented to the public at Lincoln Square Mall where the public was encouraged to provide input before being review by the City Council on June 10, 2004.

Historic preservation surveys.

Alice Novak, the HPC chair, submitted to the City Historic Preservation surveys completed by students at the University of Illinois. The surveys incorporate many of the residential homes in west and east Urbana, as well as some commercial structures.

Display Case in City Hall, October, 2005.

In October 2005, City staff provided a display case exhibiting information on historic properties and districts in Urbana. The display adjoins the entry to the Council Chamber.



HPC member Trent Shepard teaching a child how to do an etching at the Kids' Building Fair



CITY OF URBANA
2005
COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN

Stucco Workshop, scheduled for May 21, 2006.

The city applied for a CLG grant in fall 2004 to host a workshop on stucco repair. Many community members, especially those living within the Buena Vista Historic District, have requested that the city host such an event. With help of the Historic Preservation Commission, the workshop will be held in May 2006.

Additional Information

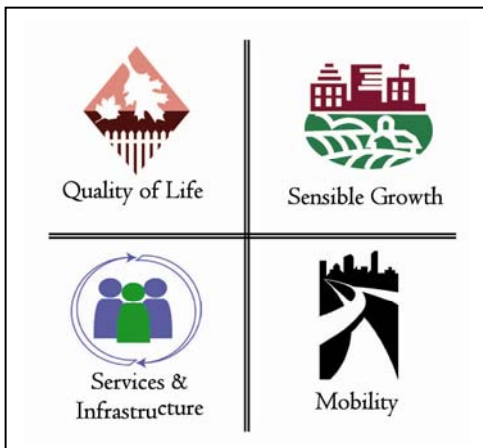
The City of Urbana in 2005 adopted a new comprehensive plan which include significant goals and strategies for historic preservation and good design in Urbana.

The comprehensive plan includes goals encouraging compatibility of new development with surrounding areas. The plan also includes an entire section of goals specifically related to historic preservation. In part, the plan states:

Goal 12.0 Preserve the characteristics that make Urbana unique

Objectives

- 12.1 Identify and protect neighborhoods and areas that contain significant historical and cultural resources.
The MOR design guidelines, created with the help of the Historic Preservation Commission, are used to protect the neighborhoods close to downtown Urbana.
- 12.2 Pursue the establishment of historic landmark and/or historic district status for sites that have contributed to the history of Urbana
The Historic Preservation Commission approves and denies applications for historic status based on requirements in the zoning ordinance and their personal expertise.
- 12.3 Encourage public/private partnerships to preserve and restore historic structures/sites.
Workshops open to the public help to build such public/private partnerships.
- 12.4 Promote and educate the public about the benefits of historic preservation.
The Historic Preservation Commission holds workshops that inform the public of preservation and encourage community involvement in the process of historic preservation.





Old Main Street, Urbana*

12.5 Preserve and maintain brick sidewalks and streets which are unique to Urbana's older neighborhoods consistent with the city's Brick Sidewalk Plan.

The Historic Preservation Commission is concerned with all aspects of the city that make Urbana unique. The Brick Sidewalk Plan is carried out by public works, but the HPC encourages the efforts.

In summary, the Historic Preservation Commission functions to protect features of historical and architectural significance and which contribute to Urbana's unique character. The commission has recommended approval for successful applications for six local landmarks and two historic districts. The Commission has continued to protect these assets by review of seven applications for exterior changes (Certificates-of-Appropriateness). With guidance from the Historic Preservation Commission, Urbana will continue to work toward protection its unique character and identity.