

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES



Planning Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor

FROM: Elizabeth H. Tyler, AICP, Community Development Director / City Planner

DATE: September 6, 2007

SUBJECT: Joseph W. Royer Architectural District Brochure

Introduction & Background

At the Historic Preservation Commission meeting on August 1, 2007, Ilona Matkovszki and Councilmember Dennis Roberts presented a brochure entitled "The Joseph W. Royer Architectural District, In the Heart of Old Urbana" (copy attached). The brochure consists essentially of a walking tour, with a list and description of 14 buildings and sites in and near downtown Urbana designed by prominent Urbana architect Joseph Royer and a map which locates each of the properties. Ms. Ilona Matkovszki did the research and wrote the text; Councilmember Roberts created the design.

At the Historic Preservation Commission meeting, Councilmember Roberts proposed that the Commission and City Council:

1. Support the designation and creation of the "Joseph W. Royer Architectural District;"
2. Approve the creation of a brochure explaining the proposed district, and that it be published and distributed freely in the community; and
3. Approve future funding for marking historic buildings or building sites in the district, the Royer office site, and for marking the perimeter of the district at logical approach avenues.

The Historic Preservation Commission was impressed with and supportive of the concept of the brochure, although some commissioners took issue with some of the language in the brochure. At the end of the discussion, the Historic Preservation Commission passed a motion to endorse the concept of the brochure, to recommend that the district have signage, and that the Commission have the ability to review the wording of the brochure and any other promotional materials.

Discussion

Goal 12.4 of the Urbana Comprehensive Plan reads as follows:

12.4 Promote and educate the public about the benefits of historic preservation.

In its Implementation Program, the Comprehensive Plan promotes the preservation of historic structures within the community through educational coordination with local agencies such as PACA. The Implementation Program also promotes the designation of downtown Urbana and portions of West Main Street for historic district status.

Preparation and distribution of a brochure identifying and celebrating the contributions of Joseph W. Royer to Urbana would be consistent with these policy statements. The City has previously provided similar information about Royer in a brochure that was produced and distributed in 2003 using a grant from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (copy attached). This brochure is available at our website and is currently being updated.

While the City is supportive of continued promotion of historic resources, there are a number of concerns and some practical difficulties in supporting the district/brochure in its current format. First, and most importantly, the City already has a “Royer Historic District”, which includes 801 West Oregon Street, Royer’s residence from 1906 to his death in 1954, and 701 South Busey Street, a cottage Royer built for his mother-in-law. This District was established in 2001 according to the historic district designation process established in the City of Urbana’s Zoning Ordinance. To use the name ‘Royer’ and the word ‘district’ in both the Royer Historic District and the proposed Joseph W. Royer Architectural District would be confusing to the public and could undermine the importance and significance of the already legally established Royer District.

A second issue the proposal raises is with the use of the word ‘district.’ In historic preservation, the phrase ‘historic district’ has a definite meaning. According to the US Department of the Interior, it is “a geographically definable area, urban or rural, possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development”. A district may also comprise individual elements separated geographically but linked by association or history” (National Park Service, National Register, Regulations Section 60.3.d). The Urbana Zoning Ordinance defines a historic district as “an area designated pursuant to procedures prescribed herein which contains, within defined geographic boundaries, buildings, structures, sites or objects which may or may not be landmarks that contribute to the overall historic characteristics of the designated area” (Article XII, page 148).

An historic district has a specific legal meaning according to the Urbana Zoning Ordinance and the establishment of such a district must follow specific procedures involving public input and due process. City legal staff are concerned that the terminology and representations made in the brochure will lead members of the public to believe that this area is a protected district that has been legally sanctioned by the City or other governmental entity. Use of terminology that appears to mimic official designation could undermine existing and future zoning and historic designations in the area and could consequently affect real estate transfers or disputes in unanticipated ways.

It is likely that the public would confuse the proposed area with an actual historic district as the Historic Preservation Commission is involved with both. Additionally, the Commission is not able to ‘designate’ this area an ‘architectural district’ as they are not given the authority by the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to designate anything other than a local landmark and a historic district.

There are examples of other communities, where the term ‘historic district’ is used to mean an officially designated local or National Register historic district, and terms such as ‘walking tour’ or ‘historic sites’

are used for more general educational purposes. The City of Paxton, Illinois recently added a ‘Historic Homes of Paxton Walking Tour’ to their website. Rock Island offers brochures such as:

- Historical Highlights of Augustana College—A Walking Tour
- 20th Street Walking Tour
- History & Architecture Downtown Rock Island
- A Walking Tour of Western Downtown—Highlighting Commercial and Government Buildings

Urbana has also participated in walking tours and educational brochures with these more generalized terms (copies attached).

All of the above offer creative alternatives to the term ‘district.’ Possible alternative titles for the brochure could be:

- Architectural Heritage of Joseph W. Royer
- Joseph W. Royer in Downtown Urbana
- Joseph W. Royer Treasures
- Historical Highlights of Joseph Royer—A Walking Tour
- Joseph W. Royer Downtown Walking Tour

In conclusion, Staff supports promoting the listed buildings as a walking tour of Royer’s work in downtown Urbana, but not in creating a specific district with boundaries for the reasons set forth above. In addition, the Commission and staff have identified some minor errors in the brochure content that should be corrected prior to final production and distribution.

Recommendation

City staff recommends that the City Council direct staff to:

1. Work with the Historic Preservation Commission to improve the wording and content of the brochure, avoiding the use of “historic” or “district” terminology, in collaboration with the preparers.
2. Apply for a grant from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency to help fund production of the proposed brochure.

Prepared by:

Rebecca Bird, Planning Intern

Attachments: Joseph W. Royer Architectural District brochure and proposal
Minutes from the August 1, 2007 Historic Preservation Commission Meeting
Other City of Urbana brochures and walking tours

Cc: Historic Preservation Commission

The Joseph W. Royer Architectural District

The Presenting Parties propose that, after review of the "Joseph W. Royer Architectural District" plan:

- 1) The HPC will resolve to support its designation and creation,
- 2) Approve that a brochure be created explaining the proposed District, and that it be published and distributed freely within the community to promote the District (*mock-up of proposed brochure is provided*),
- 3) Approve future funding for marking historic buildings or building sites in the District, the Royer office site, and for marking the perimeter of the District at logical approach avenues.

The Joseph W. Royer Architectural District :

- Celebrates the architecture of Joseph W. Royer
- Defines an area bounded by Main Street and Green Street, Lincoln Avenue and Lynn St, as the Joseph W. Royer Architectural District
- Identifies 13 Royer buildings and sites within the District, some previously unrecognized
- Provides a focal point for historic education, renovation, and inspiration, extending into city neighborhoods
- Provides a rationale for grant proposals, funding requests, and development grant projects from state and national funding programs
- Brings greater focus on the three original streets platted in Urbana (Main, Elm, and Green) and their gradual extensions east and west
 - The historic nature of West Urbana is generally known and well documented
 - The historic nature of East Urbana is largely unknown and undocumented. The Architectural District will bring closer examination of this early Urbana neighborhood
 - The proposed District clearly integrates East and West Urbana into Urbana's historic downtown
- Becomes a tourist destination in central Illinois, promoting economic development and visitor interest
 - The Urbana Business Association can promote the history of Urbana to developers and investors
 - The District is a clearly explained and well mapped tourist destination
 - The University of Illinois is provided another recruitment tool
- The outlined District encompasses Historic Trails in Central Illinois
 - Walking paths and bike-ways lead into the downtown via the Main Street, Elm Street, and Green Street corridors.
 - The Boneyard Creek redevelopment project is within the proposed Architectural District and is mutually enhanced by it.
 - The Main Street to Green Street corridor follows the original pioneer trail across central Illinois as it passed just south of the Big Grove.
 - The District is on the Lincoln court circuit route. The state of Illinois is planning for the 200-year birthday celebration of President Lincoln; tracing and marking Lincoln's court circuit route is a state priority in 2008.
- The City of Urbana can use the "Joseph W. Royer Architectural District" to enhance the downtown and nearby neighborhoods through the integration of urban landscape and streetscape planning.

NOTE:

The Joseph W. Royer Architectural District DOES NOT ESTABLISH ANY RESTRICTION, FINANCIAL BURDEN, OR DESIGN REVIEW OR DIRECTIVE ON ANY PROPERTY, BUSINESS, OR CITIZEN WITHIN ITS BOUNDARY.

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

URBANA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DRAFT

DATE: August 1, 2007

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: City Council Chamber, 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, Illinois

MEMBERS PRESENT: Scott Dossett, Katherine Lipes, Alice Novak, Mary Stuart, Art Zangerl

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Rich Cahill, Trent Shepard

MEMBERS ABSENT: none

STAFF PRESENT: Robert Myers, Planning Division Manager; Rebecca Bird, Planning Division Intern; Tony Weck, Recording Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT: G. D. Brighton, Linda Lorenz, Ilona Matkovszki, Dennis Roberts

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Historic Preservation Commission Chair, Alice Novak. Roll was taken and a quorum was declared.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

3. APPROVAL OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Ms. Novak made one correction to the minutes of the May 2, 2007 meeting. With no other corrections or revisions proposed by the Commission, Mr. Dossett moved to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Zangerl seconded the motion. Upon a vote, the minutes were unanimously approved as amended.

4. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Rebecca Bird presented the Commission with copies of the 2007 Certified Local Government (CLG) Annual Report for the Commission's activities over the past year. There were no questions or comments from the Commission.

5. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none at this point in the meeting.

6. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

7. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

8. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

9. NEW BUSINESS

- **Proposed Joseph W. Royer Architectural District**

Robert Myers said that City staff had just received a draft brochure on the architecture of Joseph W. Royer which was composed by Ilona Matkovszki and Dennis Roberts.

Ms. Matkovszki and Mr. Roberts were then invited to present their proposal to the Commission. The brochure would be used not only as a recognition for the work of Joseph Royer and to promote Urbana's historic architecture generally, but also as a promotional tool to recruit new residents and professors. Recognition would be a way to spur investment and possibly be the basis for grants for public improvements in the downtown and near neighborhoods. Mr. Roberts said that that recognition of the district would not confer any restrictions on property owners. It is merely a designated, celebrated area. Ms. Matkovszki said she had enough research for perhaps a 36 page booklet and that this brochure is intended to be a highlight. Mr. Roberts asked the Commission to review and endorse the proposal and said that he planned on presenting it to the City Council at an upcoming Committee meeting. Following their presentation, questions and comments were taken from the Commission.

Ms. Stuart inquired if there would be a recommendation to City Council to earmark funds for the brochure. Mr. Roberts answered that he envisioned a request to pay for the brochure. Additionally, Ms. Stuart inquired as to why Joseph Royer seemed to be less prolific in terms of his professional output in later years. Ms. Matkovszki answered that Royer was indeed active in his profession until his death and worked in other Illinois cities as well. Mr. Roberts added that much of the text included in the draft brochure could be made into a more detailed booklet.

Mr. Zangerl noted that he liked the idea of a Royer architectural guide but said that care would need to be taken in using the term "historic" because of the special protections afforded under historic district status. Ms. Matkovszki added that although a lot of thought had already gone into the name, the precise nomenclature of the district, should it come to pass, could be sorted out. A discussion

also took place with several Commissioners concerned that use of the word “district” would be confusing because it could give the impression that properties are protected when they would not be.

Mr. Dossett made a motion that the Chair appoint an ad hoc committee to work on the wording, in collaboration with Ms. Matkovszki and Mr. Roberts, and bring back a final draft to the next Historic Preservation Commission meeting. And then at the next meeting the Commission could make a more definitive statement to the City Council about the proposal. Ms. Novak asked City staff about the timing of doing such. Mr. Myers responded that the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting was September 5th. If Mr. Roberts anticipates presenting the brochure to the Committee of the Whole at their September 10th meeting, there would not be enough time to prepare the Commission’s response to meet the Committee of the Whole packet deadline on the morning of September 6th. Further discussion by the Commission ensued, during which Mr. Zangerl made a motion that the Commission endorse the concept of a Royer architectural district with marked signage and that the Commission have an opportunity to review promotional materials should the City Council decide to support it. Ms. Novak asked for a roll call and the votes were as follows:

Mr. Cahill – (excused)	Mr. Shepard – (excused)
Mr. Dossett – Yes	Ms. Stuart – Yes
Ms. Lipes – Yes	Mr. Zangerl – Yes
Ms. Novak – Yes	

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dossett noted that his motion was still on the floor and asked Ms. Novak to call the question before the Commission. Ms. Novak asked for a roll call and the votes were as follows:

Mr. Cahill – (excused)	Mr. Shepard – (excused)
Mr. Dossett – Yes	Ms. Stuart – Yes
Ms. Lipes – No	Mr. Zangerl – No
Ms. Novak – No	

The motion failed by a vote of three to two.

10. MONITORING OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

It was noted by Mr. Myers and Ms. Bird that the local landmark-designated house at 108 North Webber Street appeared to be in need of repairs. The owner has informed City staff that she has plans to paint the house within the next few months.

11. STAFF REPORT

- **502 & 504 West Elm Street**

Mr. Myers informed the Commission that the City Council approved the applications to designate 502 and 504 W. Elm Street as local landmarks.

- **Demolition Review**

At the request of City Council, City staff is researching the issue of demolition review as a way to reduce the loss of historic resources and will be providing this information to the Council. Information will also be provided to the Historic Preservation Commission.

- **Historic Preservation Incentives**

Ms. Bird presented ideas to the Commission on possible incentives for historic preservation within the City. This information is also being provided to the City Council.

- **Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCDs)**

Mr. Myers updated the Commission on the status of Neighborhood Conservation Districts. He reported that the matter was under consideration by the Urbana City Council.

- **Windows Workshop**

Ms. Bird announced that the Windows Workshop would be held at the Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center on Saturday, August 25th and gave a brief update to the Commission on the status of its planning.

12. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements were made:

Ms. Novak stated that the Kids' Building Fair on May 19th had gone very well. She and Ms. Stuart also mentioned that the *Urbana Courier/Champaign-Urbana Courier* newspaper, a local news publication that preceded the present-day *News-Gazette* was now available online for the years 1916-1925.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Zangerl moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Dossett seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Submitted,

Robert Myers, Planning Division Manager

CELEBRATING THE
DESIGN GENIUS OF
URBANA ARCHITECT
JOSEPH W. ROYER



The Mary Lloyd House, 210 South Grove Street, East Urbana



JOSEPH WILLIAM ROYER
(1873-1954)

A native of Urbana, Joseph W. Royer was the city's premier architect between the late 19th and mid-20th century. Born in 1873, he graduated from the University of Illinois in 1895 with a degree in civil engineering. In 1898 he became city engineer of Urbana and remained in that position until 1906. Following his employment as Urbana's city engineer, Royer established his own architectural firm in about 1906. His office was located in the Flat Iron Building (#3) on Main Street, which he designed in 1904. The building burned down in 1948, destroying Royer's architectural plans of a lifetime.

Royer's earliest known building designs in Urbana date from 1898, all being for private residences. The Lloyd House (#13) in East Urbana is an example of these early designs. His earliest known public building in Urbana is the Champaign County Courthouse (#7) which he designed in 1900, at age 27. This project brought him instant local fame and prestige, and launched him on a locally highly successful career. Royer and his firm had designed a large number of buildings also outside of Urbana; they were particularly well-known for their period style high schools and county courthouses across the state.

Joseph Royer was a master of period revival architectural styles, and his architectural designs remained traditional throughout his long career. His buildings are typically constructed of red brick with light-colored, glazed terra cotta or limestone decorative elements. He had also designed an especially large number of buildings in the English Tudor Revival style. There are very few buildings known to have been designed by Royer and his company in styles that were popular or were developed during his lifetime.

Joseph Royer lived out his long life as a member of a very creative family. His wife, Adelaide Danely, a graduate of Northwestern University, Chicago, was a poet/writer and interior designer. She had cooperated with him as interior designer on several of his projects, among them the Champaign Country Club. She is best known as the author of the *Fairy Book*, a children's book featuring her mother's cottage (designed by Royer) and the surrounding gardens as the dwelling and playing places of fairies. The book was illustrated by her sister, Nell Danely Brooker Mayhew, nationally known painter. Adelaide's brother, Arthur, who lived next door to the Royers, was also an architect (UI graduate, 1896), and worked for years as Royer's partner.

THE
JOSEPH W. ROYER
ARCHITECTURAL
DISTRICT



The Joseph W. Royer Architectural District encompasses Main Street, Elm Street, and Green Street between Lincoln Avenue and Lynn Street. This area coincides with the city's historic downtown and its oldest residential neighborhoods, and contains the greatest concentration of historically and architecturally significant buildings in Urbana.

The district's architectural character is defined by the masterfully designed buildings of Joseph W. Royer, who had prepared plans for a total of thirteen buildings in the area. Among these are three major public buildings—the Champaign County Courthouse, the Sheriff's Residence and Jail (demolished), and the Urbana Free Library, and five business buildings—the Urbana Lincoln Hotel, the Tiernan, the Cohen, the Knowlton & Bennett, and the Flat Iron Buildings (destroyed by fire). In the adjacent residential neighborhoods he designed the Freeman and the Lloyd residences and three churches—Canaan Baptist Church (the former Christian Church), the Unitarian Universalist Church, and the First Presbyterian Church of Urbana (demolished). These thirteen buildings represent the greatest concentration of Royer buildings in the city. Royer not only designed buildings in this area, he also lived here. After his marriage in 1902, he and his wife resided at 604 W. Elm Street.

In addition to the many buildings designed by Royer, there are a number of other, architecturally and historically significant buildings in the area, some of which were designed by other noted Urbana architects. Most important among these are Rudolph Z. Gill, a contemporary of Royer, and Nathan C. Ricker, the founder and head of the Architecture Department at the University of Illinois, and reportedly the first person in the nation to have received a degree in architecture (U. of Illinois, 1873). Ten out of the fourteen designated Urbana landmark buildings outside the university campus area are also found here. Three of these are Royer buildings—the Tiernan Building, the Freeman House, and the Lincoln Hotel.

Research and text by Ilona Matkovszki
Design by Dennis Roberts

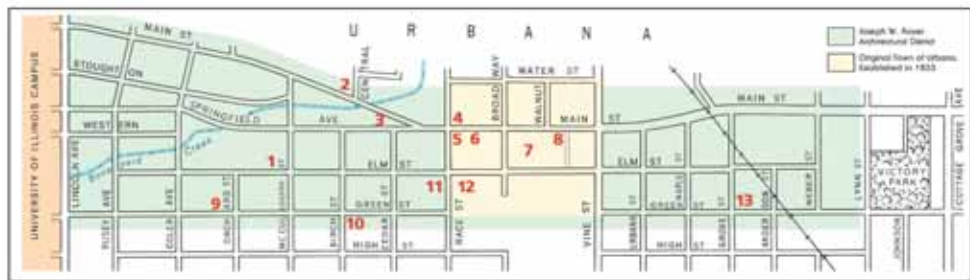
THE
JOSEPH W. ROYER
ARCHITECTURAL
DISTRICT

In the Heart of Old Urbana



The Gus Freeman House, 504 West Elm Street, West Urbana

EXPLORE THE HEART OF HISTORIC URBANA



Joseph W. Royer Architectural District

1. Freeman House, 1902-03

504 West Elm Street

This two-story, Classical Revival style residence was built by Gus Freeman, a former railroad engineer and later founder and owner of Urbana's first movie theater, the Princess (1915), and his wife, Alice Jane Busey, daughter of Simeon H. Busey, co-founder of Busey Bank. Mrs. Freeman's grandfather, Matthew Wales Busey, was an early Urbana pioneer and one of the city's founders.



2. Canaan Baptist Church 1909-10

402 West Main Street

This building was originally built as the second sanctuary of the Christian Church that was founded in 1896. Built in the Prairie style, the church was dedicated on June 3, 1910. The building consists of two distinct parts: a rectangular sanctuary and a polygonal chapel; the two are connected with a centrally placed tower. Built of concrete blocks locally manufactured by the Somers Brothers, this church is Urbana's first all concrete structure. The exterior details and ornaments are also of concrete. The building has 96 window, all but the basement windows are of the Tiffany style stained glass. Since 1978 the building has been home to Canaan Baptist Church.

3. Flat Iron Building, 1904

301 West Main Street

(Destroyed by fire in 1948)

One of Royer's early designs, the Flat Iron Building was built by a corporation of about 20 Urbana businessmen in 1904. This four-story brick building originally housed the Flat Iron Department Store on the first two floors and in the basement, Royer's architecture office and law offices on the third floor, and the Elk Lodge on the top floor. Between 1907-1921 a statue of Frances Willard, founder of the Women's Temperance Union, stood in front of the building. The building burned down on March 11, 1948, and the site was sold to the Ohio Oil Company (now Marathon Oil), which has maintained a service station here since then.



4. Cohen Building, 1907

136 West Main Street

This two-story Classical Revival style building was built in 1907 by Nathan Cohen, Urbana cigar manufacturer and avocational opera singer. He and his wife, Addie Bernstein, were excellent singers and leading figures in Urbana's music and theatrical life, and their home, originally located at 511 W. Elm Street, was a center of music. Built of red bricks with ivory colored terra cotta decorative elements, the Cohen building replaced an earlier Italianate building also built by Nathan Cohen (1886). Cohen's cigar factory operated on the second floor, and the first floor was occupied by the Urbana Banking Company and the Palace Barber Shop.



5. Knowlton and Bennett Building, 1926

130 West Main Street

This two-story commercial building was built by George M. Bennett to house the Knowlton and Bennett Drug Store. A drug store continually existed at this location since 1871. In 1885 Everett M. Knowlton purchased the store, and in 1887 he formed a partnership with his wife's brother, George M. Bennett. Under their operation the store became one of Urbana's leading businesses. The present building was erected in 1926 to replace the original two-story Italianate brick building. This building was built in Gothic Revival style of vitreous buff bricks with terra cotta decorative elements, and polychrome shield decorations.



6. Tiernan Building, 1914 (1871)

115 West Main Street

This four-story brick building was built in 1871 by Urbana businessman Frank Tiernan to house his grocery store. Tiernan's grocery occupied the ground floor, the second floor housed dentist's and lawyer's offices. The third floor was occupied by Tiernan Hall, an early Urbana opera house which featured vaudeville acts, live music and theatrical performances. In 1889 the building was sold to the Masons who converted the second floor into a banquet hall. The third floor was used as the Masons' lodge. The present white glazed terra cotta Classical Revival style facade, which was superimposed on the original Italianate brick facade, was designed by J.W. Royer in 1914.



7. Champaign County Courthouse, 1900-01

101 East Main Street

The present courthouse, located in the original central city square of Urbana, is the city's fifth courthouse at this location. Its construction began on May 1, 1900, and it was dedicated on August 25, 1901. Built of red sandstone and mottled red bricks, the building has a tile roof, and a front clock tower facing Main Street. Both the exterior and the interior of the building were built in



the Romanesque Revival style, with elaborate frescoes in the interior spaces, and marble floors and wainscoting in the corridors and lobbies. The recent addition on the east side of the building was completed in 2001-02.

8. Sheriff's Residence and Jail, 1905

201 East Main Street

(Demolished in 2000)

Built as Urbana's third jail building and sheriff's residence, this two-story structure stood on the east side of the Champaign County Courthouse. The structure was built of red brick in the Romanesque Revival style to compliment the style of the Courthouse. The building had a red tile roof, a foundation of Bedford stone, and a front porch with brick columns and arches. The sheriff's residence was "very commodious and finely finished in hardwood," while the jail had 26 cells and included a hospital room. The building was demolished in 2000 for the expansion of the County Courthouse.



9. First Presbyterian Church of Urbana, 1901-02

602 West Green Street

(Demolished in 1963)

The second sanctuary of the First Presbyterian Church of Urbana was built to replace the small, clapboard sanctuary originally erected in 1866-67. Royer was appointed architect and superintendent of the construction on May 14, 1901. The new church, dedicated April 20, 1902, was built in the Romanesque Revival style, with arched, limestone-framed windows and a bastion-like bell tower. The large arched windows under the gables were adorned with leaded glass. The church was demolished in 1963 to be replaced by the present modern church building. The bell of the old sanctuary stands on the front yard of the present church.



10. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1913-14

309 W. Green Street

This English Gothic Revival style building was erected over the foundation of an earlier brick sanctuary built in 1870-71 by a group of Universalists who had been meeting as a congregation



since 1859. The 1870 cornerstone can still be seen in the north wall of the basement. The new church was constructed of Bedford stone with a slate roof. The interior was built in typical turn of the century Arts and Crafts style. The original rose window was replaced with colored glass imported from France, set in the original woodwork as a spectrum of colors radiating from the center.



11. Urbana Free Library, 1917-18

201 West Green Street

Founded in 1874, the Urbana public library did not have its own building until 1918. On January 2, 1917, Mrs. Mary E. Busey offered a donation of

\$35,000 for the construction of a library building as a memorial to her late husband, Samuel T. Busey, co-founder of Busey Bank. Built in the Renaissance Revival style, with a front stone terrace and balustrade, the new library was dedicated on July 18, 1918. A modern, two-story addition was built onto its west side in 1974-75, and in 2003-05 a second addition was built onto the first addition in a style matching the original building. At this time the exterior of the modern 1970's addition was also rebuilt in the historic style.

12. Urbana Lincoln Hotel, 1923-24

209 South Broadway Avenue

This Tudor Revival style five-story brick building was built by the Urbana Hotel Company, a public stock company formed by about 100 Urbana businessmen. The hotel had 130 rooms, with a main entrance facing southeast (now inside Lincoln Square Mall). A. W. Stoolman, the general contractor, also built the Virginia Theater of Champaign. The hotel opened on January 30, 1924. In 1944 the hotel was purchased by Charles R. Webber, Champaign County Judge, and Gordon F. Kamerer, Urbana businessman, developers of Lincoln Square Mall. In 1965 they sold the hotel to Carson, Pirie, Scott, & Co., the builder and owner of Lincoln Square Mall. In 1975 the hotel was sold to James Jumer of Peoria, who had added a banquet and convention center to the hotel's north and east side in 1983.



13. Lloyd House, 1898

210 South Grove Street

This one-and-a-half story Queen Ann style cottage is the earliest known building designed by architect Joseph W. Royer in the city of Urbana. The house was built by Mary Lloyd, former wife of George A. Lloyd, Urbana railroad worker, and daughter of Alexander Spence, pioneer Urbana businessman and owner of the former Spence business block on the southwest corner of Main and Broadway streets. The Lloyd house features leaded glass front windows and a large bay window on the south side.

Joseph W. Royer's advertisement as architect in the 1904 Urbana City Directory



In 1833, Legislators approved the charter for Champaign County and named Urbana as its county seat. By 1850, a land grant to the Illinois Central Railroad guaranteed rail service to the area. The new route was eventually chosen to be located two miles west of the city in an area that began to informally be referred to as "West Urbana" and eventually Champaign. The construction of the railroad along with the establishment of Illinois Industrial University, later the University of Illinois, in 1867 set the tone for the growth of the Urbana-Champaign area. A boom of construction from the late 19th century is quite evident on campus, in downtown Urbana, and in the established neighborhoods adjacent to downtown.

The postwar years brought another growth spurt to the community as the University increased enrollment. In an effort to accommodate the increasing number of students, many large turn-of-the-century homes were being converted to multi-family housing. By the 1960's and 1970's, the pressures of "progress" threatened many historic properties as large scale apartment buildings were proposed to replace single-family homes and parking lots were proposed to replace historic commercial structures in the downtown area. These times brought an awareness of the historical and architectural significance of the area and sparked interest in neighborhood preservation and the restoration of historic buildings.

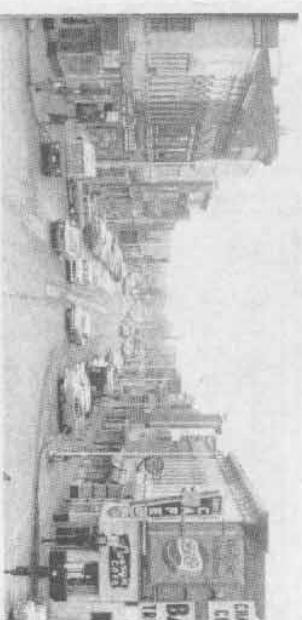
Located in the heart of the prairie in central Illinois, the City of Urbana enjoys a wonderful stock of historic commercial and residential buildings whose history and architecture help illustrate the evolution of the community.

For more information about historic preservation projects in Urbana, or other planning issues please contact the City of Urbana by calling 217 384-2440 or visit our website: www.city.urbana.il.us



Historic Downtown Urbana

A WALKING TOUR HIGHLIGHTING
THE ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL
SIGNIFICANCE OF
URBANA'S DOWNTOWN



Sponsored by the
Urbana Historic Preservation
Commission
June 29, 2002



1. / The Champaign County Courthouse, at 101 East Main Street, was built in 1901. This Joseph Royer design, with brick and sandstone exterior is the fifth Champaign courthouse.

15. / Post Office - built 1915, at a cost of \$75,000 including \$12,000 for the site at the corner of Market and Elm Streets.

14. / First United Methodist Church The Methodist Episcopal Church was the first church organized in the City of Urbana, this is the 3rd building on that site.

13. / Historic Lincoln Hotel - built 1924. This was an early and mid 20th Century fine dining spot, - when an expensive meal used to be less than \$2!

12. / Urbana Free Library - built 1917, with a large contribution of \$35,000 from Mary T. Busey to honor her husband, General Samuel T. Busey. The addition on the west side was completed in 1974.

11. / World War One Armory - built - c. 1915. The Armory housed Troop B, First Illinois Calvary, during WW1. At the time of dedication in 1915, Illinois was the only state in the union with a full regiment militia Calvary.



2. / Tiernan's Block/ Masonic Temple, - built - 1871. Urbana native and University of Illinois graduate J. W. Royer was the architect that designed this building with a terra cotta façade.

3. / Busey's Hall/Princess Theatre - built - 1870. Originally built in the Italianate style to house Busey Brother's bank, this was the first "block" building constructed in Urbana and one of the few buildings that survived the 1871 fire.



10. / Kirby Firestone Building - built - c. 1920/Service building c. 1927. Of particular interest is the high pitched bell-cast mansard roof covered in red Spanish tile and the dramatic extension of roof above entrance, supported by two columns.

9. / Flat Iron Building - Built 1904. The Flat Iron Building occupied the wedge-shaped intersection of Springfield Avenue and Main Street from 1904 until it was destroyed in a tragic fire in 1948.

8. / The Courier Building - built - circa 1916. Alvin T. Burrows, owner of the Courier Newspaper, purchased the land on which Courier Café is today. Competition forced the Courier Newspaper to close its doors in 1979 and it was remodeled in 1980 to become the well know Courier café.

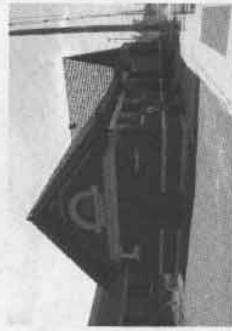


4. / Cohen Building - built - 1907. Joseph Royer designed this commercial building in the Classical Revival style for prominent Urbana businessman and resident, Nathan Cohen.

5. / Knowlton & Bennett building - built - 1926. This building was built with a reinforced foundation of concrete piers. The basement extends under the north and west sidewalks, and originally had access.

6. / Goose Alley This alley is one of the original features of early Urbana. It was even called Goose Alley when the original charter was issued in 1883 to the "Town of Urbana". One story suggests that the farmers brought chickens and poultry to the market around present day Race Street. Instead of crating the birds, farmers would drive the geese into town by way of the alley.

7. / Station Theatre/Railroad Depot - built - 1889. The station was built in 1889 by the Big Four Railroad Company, later known as the Peoria and Eastern Railroad and New York Central. For several years it served as a VFW post before being converted into a theatre in 1967.



*H*istoric
*U*rbana



*A self guided tour of the Home
of the University of Illinois*

History

History

Early Settlement

What is now central Illinois was occupied by native people whom the French called the Illinois. They still lived in the region in the 1830s, when they were forced to emigrate. The white settlers, who in the 1820s moved to the area known today as the City of Urbana, grew substantially in numbers by the 1850s. The establishment of several mills and the Illinois Central Railroad Depot in “West Urbana,” modern day Champaign, were responsible for much of the growth. Several hundred commercial buildings and houses were erected within a year of the arrival of the railroad. Urbana was chartered as a city by the state legislature in 1855 and on June 2, Archa Campbell was elected as the first mayor. In 1863 the first streetcar, drawn by mules, began operating between the newly incorporated Village of West Urbana depot and the Urbana courthouse. After the Civil War, African-American people leaving the South arrived; the 1870 census records indicate that 40 Americans of African descent lived in Urbana.

The Downtown

The location of the county seat in Urbana has always played an important role in ensuring the vitality of the downtown area, drawing ordinary and even renowned persons, such as Abraham Lincoln, into the city. The completion of Clark R. Grigg’s Indianapolis, Bloomington, and Western Railroad in 1869 also contributed to the growth of the Downtown. The I.B. & W. provided a direct rail route that enabled Urbana to become a stable and independent trade center. Merchants were no longer dependent on the streetcar railroad to transport shipments of goods from the Illinois Central depot in Champaign. To service the ever-growing railroad industry, the Big Four rail car repair shops opened in Urbana in 1871 and became a major employer in the city.



*

downtown area, drawing ordinary and even renowned persons, such as Abraham Lincoln, into the city. The completion of Clark R. Grigg’s Indianapolis, Bloomington, and Western Railroad in 1869 also



*

Main Street

Originally many of the buildings along Main Street were of wood frame construction. When these were destroyed in the 1871 Urbana fire, brick became



*



*

the dominant construction material. Some of the original buildings that lined Main Street were Tiernan’s, Busey’s Hall, Knowlton–Bennett Drugstore, Peterson Café, the Columbian Hotel, Hubbard Drug Company, and Dickenson’s grocery store.

Many of the architecturally significant homes and public buildings were constructed in the late 1800s and early twentieth century. Prominent individuals who built their homes on Main Street near the downtown, included Dr. Austin Lindley, Clark R. Griggs, Samuel Busey, and Frank Marriott. Notable public and semi-public structures include the Unitarian Universalist Church, the United States Post Office, the Champaign County Courthouse, and the Urbana High School.

University of Illinois

Nothing has influenced the economy, land use, traffic, and development of Urbana as much as its relationship with the University of Illinois. A member of the state legislature, Clark R. Griggs, is credited with bringing the University to the county. In 1867, Governor Richard J. Oglesby signed the bill to establish the Illinois Industrial University, now the University of Illinois. A number of resources associated with the early development of the



University remain in Urbana. Some of the oldest surviving of these landmarks are the experimental Morrow Plots, the South Farms, Harker Hall, the Astronomical Observatory, the Natural History Building, and Altgeld Hall.



*

Local landmarks

Urbana has five local landmarks. A local landmark property is a building, structure, site, or object which is worthy of rehabilitation, restoration, and preservation because of its historic and / or architectural significance to the City of Urbana.

1. *The Nathan Ricker House*

612 West Green Street - built 1892



The Ricker House was designed and built by Nathan Ricker, founder and head of the Department of Architecture at the University of Illinois from 1873 to 1910. Gables containing overlapping wood sawn shingles and the

large full-width front porch are prominent features of the Queen Anne home. Ricker lived there until the time of his death in 1924. The Preservation and Conservation Association restored the home during the 1990s using private loans, grants, and volunteer efforts.

2. *Busey's Hall / Princess Theatre*

120-124 West Main Street - built 1870

Originally built in the Italianate style to house the Busey Brothers' Bank and other local businesses, this was the first brick "block" building constructed in Urbana and one of the few buildings that survived the 1871 fire. Busey's Hall, an opera house situated on the top floor, was the first Opera House in the area and has remained substantially unaltered since 1903. In 1915, the first floor of 120 West Main housed the Princess Theatre, which was renamed the Cinema Theatre in the 1960s. It closed in 1994. The Art Deco façade was added in 1934 and the steel and porcelain entrance in 1949.



3. *Tiernan's Block / Masonic Temple*

115 West Main Street - built 1871



Urbana native and University of Illinois graduate J.W. Royer was the architect that designed this building with a terra cotta façade. Originally this structure housed Frank Tiernan's grocery store at street level, a lawyer and dentist's

offices on the second floor, and an Opera House on the 3rd floor. In 1994, a parapet was added to the current facade. The building was the site of the Urbana Masonic Lodge for nearly 100 years.

4. *The Gothic Revival Cottage*

108 North Webber Street - built circa 1850

This pre-Civil War house is the oldest local landmark in one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city. Its steep gabled roof, decorative bargeboard, and narrow lancet windows are all features of the Gothic Revival style, rare to this region. Because of its proximity to the railroad, it is thought to originally have been provisional housing for men who were mechanics, cooks, and waiters for the Big Four Railroad.



5. *The Lindley House*

312 West Green Street - built 1895



This Queen Anne house was built for Dr. and Mrs. Austin Lindley from the designs of Urbana architect and 1887 University of Illinois graduate, Rudolph Zerses "Doll" Gill. Dr. Lindley was a prominent surgeon and physician who used the first floor as his

office and the second floor as the family's residence. He and his wife, Minnie, lived in the home until 1922. Characteristics of the Queen Anne style, include varied roof lines, wall treatments, wood trim and shingles, and varied window sizes and shapes. Before being converted to a bed and breakfast in 1996, it was used as a music conservatory.

Royer District

National Register

A Historic District is a group of buildings, structures, sites, or objects within a defined geographic boundary that are historically and/or architecturally significant to the City of Urbana.

6. Joseph W. Royer House

801 West Oregon Street - built 1905

This house was the original residence of Joseph W. Royer, a prominent Urbana native and architect. It was built in the Mission architectural style with an Arts and Crafts influence. It is believed that Royer was inspired to construct the home after seeing the "California Building" at the 1904 World's Fair in St.



Louis. The home has a brick foundation, a stucco façade, and a clay tile roof. A second story constructed of modern wood siding was added in 1968. Royer and his wife, Adelaide, lived in the home until the 1950s.

Ella Danely Cottage / Fairy House

701 South Busey Avenue



Originally designed by Royer as a cottage for his mother-in-law, Ella Danley, this home was constructed after the primary residence at 801 W. Oregon. The house was designed in the English Revival style of architecture. Both houses in the Royer District have stucco facades, which relate them visually. Some of the most prominent features of the home are its arched, eyebrow entrance and the chimney finished in stucco with randomly placed fieldstones, which have remained largely intact and unaltered.



Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is administered by the National Park Service. Properties listed on the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that have local, state, or national significance in history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and/or culture. In addition to one or more of these criteria, properties must also have integrity. Anyone can fill out a nomination form for properties that meet these criteria. Twenty properties within the City of Urbana are listed and are eligible for Federal tax benefits and funding.

7. Alpha Delta Pi Sorority House

1202 West Nevada Street - built 1926

The narrow site for this substantial, formal brick house is balanced by a steeply pitched roof. Notable details are the oriel window on the Goodwin Street side and the tie rod that connects the tall chimney to the slate roof. The building echoes those constructed by the wealthy during the French Renaissance.



8. Alpha Xi Delta Sorority House / Opus Dei

715 West Michigan Avenue - built 1915



This house was designed by University of Illinois grad Joseph Royer in the Tudor Revival architectural style. The home was designed for the Matthew Busey family, one of Urbana's early prominent families.

9. Altgeld Hall, University of Illinois

Wright and Green Street - built 1896-1897

Nathan Ricker worked with James McLaren White to design Library Hall, later known as Altgeld Hall. This Richardsonian Romanesque structure was the last of Ricker's designs. It houses the famous bell tower from which "Hail to the Orange" and other familiar tunes can be heard daily at 12:50 p.m.



National Register

10. *The Chemistry Laboratory / Harker Hall* *University of Illinois* 1305 West Green Street - built 1878



Harker Hall is one of the original buildings located on the quadrangle. Formerly known as the Chemistry building, it was designed by Nathan Ricker in the Second Empire Style with a raised main story and a mansard roof.

It currently houses the University of Illinois Foundation offices and is the oldest standing academic building.

11. *Clark R. Griggs House* 505 West Main Street - built 1871

This example of Italianate architecture was built by Clark R. Griggs. Griggs served as mayor of Urbana and was president of the Indianapolis, Bloomington, and Western Railroad. After being elected to the Illinois General Assembly, Griggs worked to bring the University of Illinois to the area after gaining the 1865 federal land grant for the University.



12. *Elm Street Court/ Buena Vista Court* 1-8 Elm Street Court - built circa 1925



The court consists of eight Spanish Mission style cottages that face a central courtyard. This architectural style, while common in California and the southwestern U.S., is unusual in the Midwest. The

single-story cottages are stucco over tile construction and have flat roofs and wrought iron window décor.

13. *Experimental Dairy Farm Historic District* *University of Illinois* 1201 West St. Mary's Road - est. 1902-1913

The South Farms were designated as a historic district in 1994. The property contains barns, silos, outbuildings, and farm houses that tell a story of the University's scientific progress in agriculture. The Three Round Dairy Barns, built between 1902 and 1913, served as a model dairy farm and were part of the agricultural experiment station. Popular legend maintains that the barns were built round in order to appear smaller to tax assessors.



14. *Gamma Phi Beta Sorority House* 1110 West Nevada Street - built circa 1910

Though built around 1910, the Gamma Phi Beta chapter did not purchase this house until 1918. The house has been enlarged and remodeled, yet the main element of the building, the

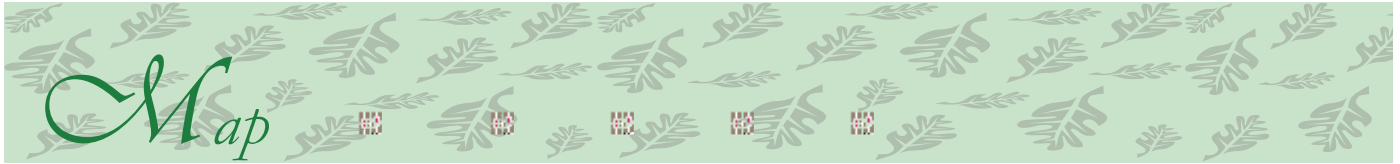


central three-story rectangle with the asphalt shingle roof, remains largely intact. Greek Letter Society dwellings are historically significant because they provided much needed housing for pre-World War II students and established a means of socializing.

15. *Greek Revival Cottage* 303 West University Avenue, Leal Park - built circa 1854

This is the best example of the Greek Revival style in the area. The house was originally located on Springfield Avenue and was relocated to Leal Park and restored in 1987. Leal Park is located on Boneyard Creek and contains graves of early Champaign County settlers and Native Americans. Currently the cottage houses Urbana Park District offices.





National Register

16. H.E. Kenney Gym & Kenney Gym Annex, University of Illinois

1402-1406 W. Springfield Avenue - built 1901 & 1890

The Drill Hall (later called the Kenney Gym Annex) was designed by Nathan Ricker and initially used for student military instruction, primarily during the time between WWI & WWII. It contains a large, unified space, the result of Ricker's innovative use of wood- and metal-trussed framework that left the interior free of support structures. The Kenney Gym, formerly the



Men's Gymnasium, was designed by Nelson Strong Spencer, a student of Ricker. His architectural design closely imitated that of the nearby Drill Hall, exemplifying the then current architectural engineering techniques.



17. Mumford Farm House University of Illinois

1403 East Lorado Taft Drive - built 1871

This farm house is the oldest surviving structure on the University of Illinois campus. It was built three years after the University opened on what was then the horticultural grounds. It was designed to provide a model of what a modest farmer's



house should look like, "tasteful in appearance, economical in cost, and compact and convenient in arrangement." Several important University professors and staff lived in the house, including Thomas J. Burrell, George E. Morrow, Dean Eugene Davenport, and Herbert W. Mumford.

18. Main Library, University of Illinois

1408 West Gregory Drive - built 1924 - 1929



This Georgian Revival building was sited and constructed in accordance with the 1921 University Campus Plan by architect Charles A. Platt. It is the fifth largest library in the country, the third largest academic library, and the largest state

supported university library in the United States.

19. The Nathan Ricker House

612 West Green Street - built 1892

This house was designed by Nathan Ricker, who in 1873 was the first person in the nation to receive a degree in architecture from the former Illinois Industrial



University. Gables containing overlapping wood sawn shingles and the large full-width front porch are prominent features of the home's Queen Anne architectural style.

20. Natural History Building, University of Illinois

1301 West Green Street - built 1892

The Natural History Building is another Nathan Ricker creation. Designed in the American High Victorian Gothic style, the building brought a change of architecture to campus. Additions in 1909, 1910, and 1923 completed the original design as intended by Ricker.



21. Phi Mu Sorority House

706 West Ohio Street - built 1927-1928



This three-story Spanish Eclectic style building is constructed of rough tan and orange brick with a side-gabled tile roof. Its style was influenced by the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition where the public was exposed to Spanish and Latin American architectural styles.

National Register

National Historic Landmarks

22. *Smith Memorial Hall, University of Illinois* 805 South Mathews Avenue - built 1920



This structure was designed as part of the Blackall Olmsted plan between 1912-1920. Smith Hall terminates the vista of the east-west axis down Nevada. The formality and rectilinear organization of space continues on the Quad.

23. *Unitarian Church of Urbana Chapel* 1209 West Oregon Street - built 1908

This modified Tudor Revival building looks much the same as it did when it was built in 1908. This architectural type was promoted and distributed by the American Unitarian Association especially in the Midwest, to develop new congregations.



24. *Warm Air Research House* 1108 West Stoughton - built 1922-1924



The National Warm-Air Heating and Ventilating Association constructed this 2 1/2 story, Colonial Revival house in Urbana to conduct experimentation with the heating systems. During this time the completely furnished house, resembling real living conditions, served

as a research laboratory. Mechanical engineering professors, including Arthur C. Willard, and students at the University of Illinois installed and studied the various furnaces for over twenty years. Willard devoted his career to searching for ways to heat homes more effectively. In 1940, the house was sold to a private individual when researchers turned their attention to smaller housing types that were becoming more commonplace after WWII.

The Astronomical Observatory and the Morrow Plots have the honor and distinction of both National Register and National Historic Landmark status.

National Historic Landmarks are nationally significant historic places designated by the National Park Service and Secretary of the Interior because they possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. Today, fewer than 2,500 historic places in the country bear this national distinction.

25. *Astronomical Observatory, University of Illinois* 901 South Mathews Avenue - built 1896



The observatory was the first University building of permanence situated south of the former University Hall (Current location of the Illini Union). This structure has been an important element in the development of the science of astronomical photoelectric photometry. The observatory still contains the original telescope used for examining the universe.

26. *Morrow Plots, University of Illinois* Gregory Drive at Mathews Avenue - est. 1876

The Morrow Plots are the nation's oldest experimental fields in continuous rotation. Over the years results have demonstrated that the use of science and technology has increased crop production over four-fold. In 1969, the Undergraduate Library was constructed underground to prevent shading of Morrow Plots because of their importance to the University.





Joseph W. Royer (1873-1954)

Joseph W. Royer was a prominent architect in Champaign County from the late 1890's through the mid 1900s. He lived in Urbana his entire life and studied architecture under the instruction of Nathan Ricker. While working as an engineer for the City of Urbana, Royer designed many distinguished buildings in the city, including the Masonic Temple, County Courthouse, and Sheriff's residence (demolished 1998). He also designed the Urbana Free Library, Urbana High School and the Urbana Lincoln Hotel (currently the Historic Lincoln Hotel). After working at the city he started his own firm which was originally located in the Flat Iron Building and later moved to the Masonic Temple when the Flat Iron Building burned down in the late 1940s. Some of Royer's buildings featured earlier in this brochure include, the Alpha Delta Xi/Opus Dei House, Tiernan's Block/ Masonic Temple, and the Ella Danley Cottage. Others of local significance are pictured here.



Historic Lincoln Hotel
209 S. Broadway Ave

Alpha Delta Xi/Opus Dei
715 West Michigan



Flat Iron Building
Main & Springfield
Burned down in 1948
Present site of Kirby
Firestone building

Urbana Post Office
202 S. Broadway



Urbana High School
1002 South Race Street



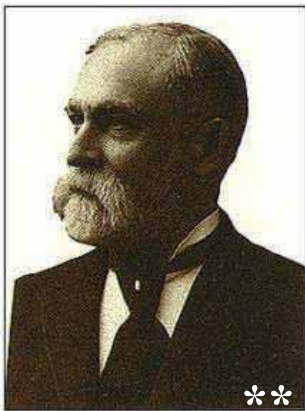
Urbana Free Library
201 South Race

Ricker

Historic Landmark & District Criteria

Nathan Clifford Ricker (1843-1924)

Nathan Ricker was born on a farm in Acton, Maine in 1843. He became a country school teacher at the young age of 18 and taught himself Latin, French, Geology, and Botany. He later worked in a factory making piano cases, and then in a wagon and



blacksmith shop. Striving to do more with his life Ricker enrolled in the newly founded Illinois Industrial University in 1870 (the present day University of Illinois), and became the first American graduate in architecture. In 1873 Ricker assumed a permanent teaching position at the U of I. He also held many important

offices within the College of Engineering, including Dean, and Head of the Department of Architecture. Ricker retired in 1911 after the death of his wife, Mary Carter Steele, niece of Judge and Mrs. J.O. Cunningham, one of Urbana's founding families. During his career, he designed five buildings for the U of I, including the Natural History Building, the Kenney Gym Annex, Altgeld Hall, the Aeronautics B Lab (Metal Shop), and Harker Hall (Chemistry Laboratory). Ricker's home at 612 West Green is the only known residential building he designed. Ricker emphasized technology, building design, construction, and history; subjects still integral to the architectural curriculum at the University today.



The Urbana Historic Preservation Commission considers the following criteria for designating local historic districts:

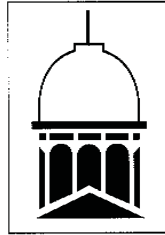
1. A significant number of buildings, structures, sites, or objects meeting any of the standards required for historic landmark status (see below).
2. An area containing a contiguous grouping of properties having a sense of cohesiveness expressed through a similarity of characteristics of style, period, or method of construction .
3. An area of sufficient historical integrity to convey a sense of time and place.

The following criteria are considered for local historic landmarks:

1. Significant value as part of the architectural, artistic, civic, cultural, economic, educational, ethnic, political, or social heritage of the nation, state, or community.
2. Associated with an important person or event in national, state, or local history.
3. Representative of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type, inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, craftsmanship, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials and which retains a high degree of integrity.
4. Notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, or artist whose individual genius has influenced an area.
5. Identifiable as an established and familiar visual feature in the community owing to its unique location or physical characteristics.
6. Its character is a particularly fine example of a utilitarian structure, including but not limited to, farmhouses, gas stations, or other commercial structures with a high level of integrity or architectural significance.
7. Areas that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

The activity which is the subject of this brochure has been financed in part with Federal funds from the Department of the Interior, administered by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior or the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of Interior nor the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.

This program received Federal financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age of Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or age in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to:



Office for Equal Opportunity
National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

or

Equal Employment Opportunity Office
Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
Old State Capitol Plaza
Springfield, IL 62701

Please Contact:

City of Urbana
Community Development Services
400 South Vine Street
Urbana, IL 61801

Phone: 217-382-2440
Fax: 217-384-2367
www.city.urbana.il.us



Production and photos (except those noted) by Lauren Kerestes
Map by Rob Kowalski, City of Urbana

* Photo from *Urbana, A Pictorial History* by Raymond Bial

** Photo credit unknown

17

Smith House
808 West Main Street/
c. 1904
Dutch Colonial Revival

Original owner was John R. Smith who owned and operated Smith's Ice and Cold Storage in Urbana. The gambrel roof is the defining feature of this Dutch Colonial. Common are the wall dormers to illuminate the upper half story. These dormers feature steeply-pitched gable roofs which flare slightly, and 12/1 original double-hung windows.

19

Mast-Folk House
807 West Main Street/
c. 1894
Queen Anne Influence

This vernacular Stick and Shingle style house with Queen Anne elements was built by Henry Gordon Mast. The home remained in the Mast family for 60-years. First story façade features wrap-around porch with columns and balustrade rail. Home features double hung windows and decorative transoms above the first floor picture window.

21

707 West Main Street/
c. 1912
American Four Square

Exhibits many typical features of the American Four Square vernacular house type, including squarish or blockish form, hip roof, prominent hip roof dormer, and side door to the driveway. Not so common is the porte cochere extension of the porch. Original windows include beveled leaded glass at the main door which matches the transom above the front 1st story picture window.



18

Beers-William House
810 West Main Street/
c. 1921
Bungalow/ Craftsman

House features Bungalow and Craftsman stylistic influences, typical of the early twentieth century. Low pitched side gable roof, a wide central roof dormer, and multi-paned windows. First floor is brick while second story is wood siding. Enclosed sunroom on front is a typical design element of bungalow home; popular from 1900-1920.

20

Sheldon Residence
803 West Main Street/
c. 1905
Arts and Crafts

In 1905, the Sheldon family commissioned an unknown eastern architect to design the homes. The house that originally stood on the site was moved to Stoughton and Busey where it stands today. Actually a duplex with a first floor grandparent's apartment, this home has not been substantially altered since its original construction.



The Urbana Historic Preservation Commission

The Urbana Historic Preservation Commission is responsible for administering the Urbana Historic Preservation Plan and Ordinance. The Commission considers and acts on nominations for both historic landmarks and historic districts. The Commission also sponsors related activities intended to raise awareness of historic preservation in Urbana. For an area or structure to be considered "historic" it must relate to the City's architectural, artistic, civic, cultural, economic, educational, ethnic, political or social heritage.

To date, the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission has designated five individual structures as Local Landmarks. The five structures include:

Tiernan's Block/Masonic Temple located at 115

West Main Street

The Lindley House located at 312 West Green

Street

The Ricker House located at 612 West Green Street

The Gothic Revival Cottage located at 108 North

Webber Street

Busey's Hall/Princess Theater located at 120-124

West Main Street

The Commission has also designated two Local Districts, which are:

Joseph Royer District located at 801 West Oregon

Street and 701 South Busey Avenue

Buena Vista Court located at 1-8 Buena Vista

Court

For more information, please contact:

City of Urbana – Planning Division
400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

Phone: (217) 384-2440

Website: www.city.urbana.il.us

THE URBANA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

PRESENTS:

HISTORIC WEST MAIN STREET

A WALKING TOUR HIGHLIGHTING
THE ARCHITECTURAL AND
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF
URBANA'S WEST MAIN STREET

<p>14 St. Patrick's Church 710 West Main Street/ Gothic Revival c. 1903</p> <p>By 1900, Urbana parishioners left separating gable peaks on the sides, and prominent bell tower of the west of the facade.</p>	<p>15 Matthew Bussey House 804 West Main Street/ Italianate c. 1879</p> <p>Matthew Bussey purchased land from cousin Col. Samuel Bussey and built this house in 1879 for his family of six. Italianate style of architecture characterized by symmetrical elements. Windows with closed shutters are actually "dummites" but placed to give symmetry. Legend that Bussey children created a make-believe school in the cupola.</p>	<p>16 David C. Bussey Home 806 West Main Street/ Queen Anne c. 1900</p> <p>Example of the architectural transition from Queen Anne to Colonial Revival around the turn of the century. The porch's full pediment and classical columns, as well as the shaped pediment drip caps, show influence of the Colonial Revival, while the mix of clapboards, wood shingles and shaped brackets are influences of the Queen Anne style.</p>
<p>13 Sale House 606 West Main Street/ I-House c. 1898</p> <p>This architectural style was very popular in Illinois, Indiana and Iowa (hence, I-House). Wood frame house consisting of a main two-story section. At the rear is a lower wing with its primary gable facing the back. Majority of the home has not been altered except for the rear wing which now contains enclosed porches.</p>	<p>17 Tieren's Block 115 West Main Street/ Classical Revival c. 1871</p> <p>Designed by Urbana architect J. W. Royer. Originally stores on ground floor and opera house upstairs for live performances. Opera House closed in 1887 sold to Masons who occupied space for nearly 100 years. Full exterior renovation in 1914 includes Classical Revival facade. Became J. C. Penney's in 1940. Classically designed parapet in 1953.</p>	<p>2 Tieren's Block 115 West Main Street/ Classical Revival c. 1871</p> <p>Designed by Urbana architect J. W. Royer. Originally stores on ground floor and opera house upstairs for live performances. Opera House closed in 1887 sold to Masons who occupied space for nearly 100 years. Full exterior renovation in 1914 includes Classical Revival facade. Became J. C. Penney's in 1940. Classically designed parapet in 1953.</p>
<p>12 Savage House 605 West Main Street/ Queen Anne/Italian Villa c. 1901</p> <p>John Savage was the Deputy County Treasurer and played a major role in organizing one of the first banks in Urbana. The home features many Queen Anne details on the porch, a projecting square tower and stained glass above the double hung windows.</p>	<p>3 Knowlton-Bennett Building 135-7 West Main Street/ Gothic Revival c. 1926</p> <p>Current building replaced original Italianate building from 1870. Knowlton & Bennett operated a drugstore from 1887-1971 selling medicines, paints, wallpaper and school supplies. Gothic Revival style of brick and terra cotta was popular for commercial buildings in the 1920s. Contains Tudor and gothic arches, etched glass and terra cotta finials.</p>	<p>3 Knowlton-Bennett Building 135-7 West Main Street/ Gothic Revival c. 1926</p> <p>Current building replaced original Italianate building from 1870. Knowlton & Bennett operated a drugstore from 1887-1971 selling medicines, paints, wallpaper and school supplies. Gothic Revival style of brick and terra cotta was popular for commercial buildings in the 1920s. Contains Tudor and gothic arches, etched glass and terra cotta finials.</p>
<p>11 Wahl House 510 West Main Street/ Queen Anne c. 1890</p> <p>Louis Wahl, a local tavern owner, built this 2.5 story house. Exterior exhibits two types of wood shingles as well as excellent examples of the Queen Anne style of West Main Street. Key elements are a varied roof line, a wrap-around porch, and varied wall treatment including "fish scale" shingles. A prominent tower on the west elevation of the roof was removed in 1954.</p>	<p>4 Cohen Building 136 West Main Street/ Classical Revival c. 1907</p> <p>Designed by architect J. W. Royer. Originally housed Cohen's cigar factory. Embassy Tavern. Prominent cornices and dentils. Bays are divided by terra cotta piers on first floor. Unusual face features on the southeast and northwest corners of the building. Building incised with 19 NAT H COHEN 07.</p>	<p>4 Cohen Building 136 West Main Street/ Classical Revival c. 1907</p> <p>Designed by architect J. W. Royer. Originally housed Cohen's cigar factory. Embassy Tavern. Prominent cornices and dentils. Bays are divided by terra cotta piers on first floor. Unusual face features on the southeast and northwest corners of the building. Building incised with 19 NAT H COHEN 07.</p>
<p>10 Yearsley/Brokens House 508 West Main Street/ Queen Anne c. 1893</p> <p>Land purchased for \$1,000 and home built for \$3,000 in 1893. One of several excellent examples of the Queen Anne style of West Main Street. Key elements are a varied roof line, a wrap-around porch, and varied wall treatment including "fish scale" shingles. A prominent tower on the west elevation of the roof was removed in 1954.</p>	<p>5 World War I Army 310 West Main Street/ Classical Revival Influence c. 1915</p> <p>The World War I Army was built and dedicated in 1915. Illinois was the only state in the union to have a full regiment of militia cavalry. The lower story was devoted solely to drill purposes. The second floor includes office spaces in the front. Brick in the front, the building is modestly influenced by Classical Revival style through its extended metal cornice.</p>	<p>5 World War I Army 310 West Main Street/ Classical Revival Influence c. 1915</p> <p>The World War I Army was built and dedicated in 1915. Illinois was the only state in the union to have a full regiment of militia cavalry. The lower story was devoted solely to drill purposes. The second floor includes office spaces in the front. Brick in the front, the building is modestly influenced by Classical Revival style through its extended metal cornice.</p>
<p>9 Marriott House 506 West Main Street/ Queen Anne c. 1893</p> <p>Franklin Marriott bought this land from Col. Samuel T. Bussey who formerly pastured horses on the site. The home features a brick foundation, frame construction and clapboard siding and three story stair tower with pyramidal roof. Large three season porch original to design. Great example of Queen Anne Architecture.</p>	<p>6 Canaan Baptist Church 402 West Main Street/ Prairie/Mission Style c. 1909</p> <p>Built for \$25,000 in 1909, the exterior is an influence of Prairie style. Designed by J. W. Royer, it was Urbana's first all concrete structure using blocks locally manufactured. Deep overhangs, pilasters motifs and decorative surfaces. General massiveness reflects Mission style popular in early 1900s. Notice art glass clerestory windows on the east and south sides of the church.</p>	<p>6 Canaan Baptist Church 402 West Main Street/ Prairie/Mission Style c. 1909</p> <p>Built for \$25,000 in 1909, the exterior is an influence of Prairie style. Designed by J. W. Royer, it was Urbana's first all concrete structure using blocks locally manufactured. Deep overhangs, pilasters motifs and decorative surfaces. General massiveness reflects Mission style popular in early 1900s. Notice art glass clerestory windows on the east and south sides of the church.</p>
<p>8 Luther House 507 West Main Street/ T-Plan/Gothic Revival Influence c. 1878</p> <p>T-Plan is a vernacular building type that refers to the overall layout of the house. If viewed from the air, the roof coverage of the decorative bargeboard along the front gable home would resemble the letter "T". The decorative bargeboard along the front gable gives the Gothic Revival influence. This structure has not been greatly altered over the years so the original architectural integrity is intact.</p>	<p>7 Griggs House 505 West Main Street/ Italianate/Side Hall Plan c. 1871</p> <p>Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. Home was owned by Griggs, a mayor of Urbana and State Representative. Features wide eaves, paired carved brackets, bay windows and rectilinear form which are all characteristics of Italianate style, popular in the late 1800s. Notice the small circular red stained glass window on the west side of the structure.</p>	<p>7 Griggs House 505 West Main Street/ Italianate/Side Hall Plan c. 1871</p> <p>Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. Home was owned by Griggs, a mayor of Urbana and State Representative. Features wide eaves, paired carved brackets, bay windows and rectilinear form which are all characteristics of Italianate style, popular in the late 1800s. Notice the small circular red stained glass window on the west side of the structure.</p>

