

HISTORIC DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT
FIRST WARD TRIANGLE HISTORIC DISTRICT

I. Name

Historic: None
Current: First Ward Triangle Historic District

II. Location

The district is located on Milwaukee's lower east side and is centered around the intersection of North Prospect Avenue and East Juneau Avenue.

III. Classification

District

IV. Owner of Property

Multiple ownership

V. Description

A. Boundaries

The district bounded on the north by East Knapp Street beginning at the intersection of the west property line of 1115 East Knapp Street; thence easterly to the intersection of East Knapp Street; thence easterly to the intersection of East Knapp Street and North Franklin Place; thence northerly to the north edge of Burns Triangle; thence southeasterly to North Prospect Avenue; on the east by North Prospect Avenue beginning at the northeastern corner of Burns Triangle; thence southwesterly to the east property line of 1234 North Prospect Avenue; thence southeasterly to the east property line; thence southwesterly to the south property line; thence northwesterly to North Prospect Avenue, continue southwesterly along North Prospect Avenue to the north property line of 1216 North Prospect Avenue; thence southeasterly to the east property line; thence southwesterly to East Juneau Avenue; on the south by East Juneau Avenue beginning at that point; thence westerly to the intersection of East Juneau Avenue and the west property line of 1048-1056 East Juneau Avenue; and on the west beginning at this point; thence northerly along the west property line to the west property line of 1115 East Knapp Street; northerly to its intersection with East Knapp Street at the beginning point. This excludes those properties located at 1260 and 1224 North Prospect Avenue and 1236 East Juneau Avenue (see map attached to Common Council File No. 83-229)

B. General Character

The First Ward Triangle Historic District is a collection of fourteen buildings that exemplify a broad range of architectural styles and historical periods from the Civil War era to the 1930's. At the center of the historic district is a cluster of eleven structures that represent one of the last intact groupings of high style Victorian residential architecture in the city. The remaining three structures are apartment buildings; one that is an amalgam of additions and enlargements of a c.1856 Italianate Style Villa and the other two are examples of 1920's and 1930's apartment architecture.

Originally part of Rogers' Addition, the district is located at the junction of the Yankee Hill neighborhood to the south and the Prospect Avenue area to the north. The former was developed prior to the Civil War as the city's first neighborhood of the wealthy and social elite. Prospect Avenue was developed after the Civil War as a "Gold Coast" of opulent mansions. The

First Ward Triangle area is the transition zone between the older and more diverse Yankee Hill area and the exclusive late nineteenth century millionaires' row on Prospect Avenue.

The district derives its name from the small park contained within its boundaries. It is triangular in shape and was originally a single parcel, but is now divided by East Knapp Street. When James H. Rogers platted this area in 1847 he set aside this land as the First Ward Triangle making it one of the city's oldest public spaces. It was renamed Burns Triangle for the Scottish poet Robert Burns when a statue was erected in his honor on the park grounds in 1909.

The buildings in the district, except the apartment buildings, were all originally built as residences. Many are now occupied as offices. With the exception of the Diederich's House at 1241 North Franklin Place, which underwent extensive alteration in the late nineteenth century, all have remained fairly close in appearance to their original designs. The architectural styles used in the district are typical of the periods in which they were built and range from Classical Revival and Italianate to Victorian Gothic, Queen Anne, Romanesque and Chateausque to the Colonial Revival, Tudor and Moderne. An inventory entry on each building is contained at the end of this section including construction data, known alteration, a brief description and history.

VI. Significance

Date Built: c. 1855-1939

The First Ward Triangle Historic District is architecturally significant as one of the finest assemblages of high style architecture in Milwaukee. It exemplifies the broad range of styles that have persisted in this neighborhood of former upper-class residences. Represented here is some of the best work of the city's leading architects: George Mygatt, Edward Townsend Mix and Howland Russel from the nineteenth century, and Martin and Herbert Tullgren from the twentieth century. The district is historically significant as the residence of many prominent Milwaukeeans who made important contributions to the development of the city.

VII. Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the First Ward Triangle Historic District be designated as a historic district as described in the original Historic Designation Study report submitted to the Historic Preservation Commission on March 21, 1983 that excludes the properties at 1260 and 1224 North Prospect Avenue and at 1236 East Juneau Avenue; in accordance with the provisions of Section 2-335 of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances.

VIII. History

The First Ward Triangle Historic District was part of Rogers' Addition, platted in 1847. James H. Rogers was a New York businessman who purchased 100 acres on the lower east side during the early settlement of Milwaukee. Like other developers of the period, Rogers donated a small parcel of land to the city of public use that was named the First Ward Triangle Park. Rogers' Addition was not immediately developed as a result of its remote location far from the village center. Around the time of the Civil War the area became attractive to the upper classes because of its close proximity to Lake Michigan, the 7th Ward Park (now Juneau Park) and the adjacent Yankee Hill area. The "Hill" was Milwaukee's first prestige neighborhood of native settlers and Anglo-Americans. Rogers' Addition became an extension of the "Hill" and was favored as a place of residence for men of wealth and high social standing.

Among the important residents were William A. Prentiss, Stephen Harrison, Judge Jason Downer, and George P. Miller. Prentiss was an early civic leader having served as the president of the Wisconsin Territorial Legislature, the first trustee from the east side to the Common Council, Justice of the Peace and as Mayor of Milwaukee. Harrison was a master builder. It is assumed that he built his own house, at 1216 North Prospect Avenue, as well as many of the early commercial blocks in the city and over 2,100 miles of railroad track. Downer served as state Supreme Court justice, the director of many early companies and was a benefactor of several colleges including Wisconsin Female College at Fox Lake that eventually merged with Milwaukee Female College to form Milwaukee-Downer College. Miller was a

distinguished nineteenth century businessman, whose father-in-law was T.A. Chapman. After a successful law career, Miller served as president of the Chapman Department Store from 1898 to 1931. He was also the trustee of the estates of many prominent Milwaukee families and was head of the metropolitan sewerage commission.

Inventory

Name: Edward Diederichs House
Address: 1241 North Franklin Place
Date Built: c. 1855; rebuilt 1860; enlarged c. 1985
Architect: attributed to Mygatt Schmidtner; remodeled by Howland Russel, 1895.
Current use: Offices
Tax Key No. 359-0112

Legal Description:

Rogers' Addition in SE ¼ Section 21-7-22, Volume 1, Page 40. Block 196 E 118.57 feet of S 81 feet Lot 2

Description:

This structure is a two-story rectangular block that rests on a high brick foundation finished to resemble stone. The low-hipped roofline has a large cupola at the center and is trimmed with palmette antifixae. The exterior finish is brick with stone trim that has been painted. The main facade is proportionately divided by pilasters at the corners and between the bays on both levels. Between the two floors is a Doric order entablature and a boldly projecting cornice. This was the cornice line of the original house. A Classical porch defines the entry with Doric columns supporting a full entablature and pediment. The windows are single-light, double-hung sash with caps and elaborate molded enframements.

Alterations:

This house was seriously damaged by fire at the end of 1859. It was reported to have been rebuilt to its original condition in 1860. About 1895 the house was enlarged by adding a second floor, extending the front porch and adding a bay to the south elevation. In comparing it with historic photos the house has largely retained its 1895 appearance.

History:

This house was built as the residence of Edward Diederichs. He was a German immigrant who came to Milwaukee in 1849. His primary business was real estate, but it was reported that he was heavily involved with numerous unsound invest schemes. Diederichs assembled three small strips of land on Franklin Place beginning in 1852. When he purchased the third parcel in December of 1855, he was able to build his house. According to architectural historian, H. Russell Zimmermann, the pioneer architectural firm of Mygatt and Schmidtner provided the plans for the house. This attribution is based on an 1899 interview with master architect, Henry C. Koch. Koch had begun his career as a draftsman with the firm and was given the task of formalizing the plans from sketches provided by Diederichs. This included two white pine lions that flanked the front porch and nicknamed it the "Lion House" for nearly a century. Because of rot, the lions were removed in 1944. The house was badly damaged by a fire in 1859, but was rebuilt to near original condition by Diederichs the following year. The rebuilding was done at considerable expense and along with his other failed investments, Diederichs went bankrupt in 1861 and lost his house to the bank.

Subsequent owners of the house were a series of prominent Milwaukee businessmen. The first was Henry Mann who lived there from 1864-1895. He was an executive who served as the president of the German-English Academy, as the director of several state railroads and the president of Wilkens Manufacturing and Kinnickinnic Realty Company. In 1895, John Johnston purchased the residence. He was a native of Scotland and came to Milwaukee in 1856 to work in the bank of his uncle, Alexander Mitchell. It was Johnston who had the house enlarged to its present appearance. He commissioned architect, Howland Russel in 1895 to prepare the plans that included the addition of the second floor, enlarging the porch and adding the bay to the south facade. Russel's designs were so exact to the original fabric that it is difficult to imagine the house in its original state. Johnston was an officer in Mitchell's Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company Bank, now the Marine Bank and when he died in 1904, he was vice-president. His widow, Ethelinda, lived in the house until 1936. The last significant owner was Eliot Fitch who purchased the house in about 1944. It had briefly been a rooming house and Fitch, the president of the Marine National Bank restored and refurbished it for his own residence.

Inventory

Name: Mary B. Hawley House
Address: 1249 North Franklin Place
Date Built: 1896
Architect: Howland Russel
Current Use: Offices
Tax Key No. 359-0111

Legal Description:

Rogers' Addition in SE ¼ Section 21-7-22, Volume 1, Page 40. Block 196 W 118.57 feet of N 30 feet of S 111 feet Lot 2 together with a 4-foot ingress and egress easement

Description:

A 3-1/2-story structure on a high foundation with asymmetrical massing and a steeply pitched intersecting gabled roof covered with asphalt shingles. The walls are finished in common brick and are trimmed with stone and terra cotta. The wall planes rise above the rooflines and are topped with copings and pinnacles. The house is joined by a party wall on the north to the Bloodgood House on Knapp Street. The entry is a raised Tudor arch surfaced with smooth stone. The windows are double-hung, single light sash with stone sills and lintels.

Alterations:

The main alteration was the removal of the oriel above the entry in 1960. This surface was covered with sheet metal.

History:

There is little complete knowledge of Mary B. Hawley, the owner and first occupant of this house. She was of the Hawley family who owned extensive land holdings on the city's west side from 24th and Wisconsin Avenue to Hawley Road, named for the family. Hawley occupied this house for about five years, but was often abroad in Europe and never really lived there. It was rented to a succession of families and then sold to architect, William G. Herbst who remodeled it for his firm's offices. His son, Roger Herbst succeeded him, in 1960 who maintained the architectural firm, Herbst, Jacoby & Jacoby, at this site until 1981.

Inventory

Name: Burns Triangle
Address: 1300 North Franklin Place
Established: 1847
Benefactor: James H. Rogers
Tax Key No.: 359-0182-100

Legal Description:

Roger's Addition in SE ¼ Section 21-7-22, Volume 1, Page 40. part of platted Rogers' Addition now public park adj. Blk. 198 – Com. SW corner Lot 1, Blk. 198 – then S 378.16 feet – then NELY along WLY line N Prospect Avenue to a point 7 feet NWLY and 15 feet SWLY of SELY most corner lot, 1 Blk. 198 – the NWLY to beginning exc. part for East Knapp Street

Description:

A grassy triangular shaped parcel that is devoid of major landscape elements and approximately ½ acre in size. East Knapp Street divides the park into two parts. A statue of Robert Burns erected in 1909 stands in the lower part.

History:

James H. Rogers donated Burns Triangle to the City in 1847. This was customary of pioneer land developers who set aside a small parcel of land for public use. The triangle was originally called First Ward Park and is one of the oldest in the city. In the 1870's the newspapers reported that it was enclosed with a wrought-iron fence and that the landscaping and maintenance of the walks was at the expense of the city. In 1876, the surrounding neighbors decided to build a fountain from private donations. It was 36 feet in diameter and located in the upper portion of the triangle. Two years later it was donated to the city. In 1909 the statue of Scottish poet, Robert Burns, was erected and unveiled to Milwaukee's admiring Anglo population. The statue was a gift from native Scot, James A. Bryden.

Inventory

Name: George P. Miller House
Address: 1060 East Juneau Avenue
Date built: c. 1886
Architect: Fiedler (attributed by Richard W.E. Perrin)
Current Use: Offices
Tax Key No. 359-0104

Legal Description:

Rogers' Addition in SE ¼ Sec. 21-7-22, Volume 1, Page 40, Block 196, East 52 feet of West 157.82 feet, Lot 1 (Front)

Description:

A 2-1/2 story asymmetrical block with a steeply pitched hip roof covered with slate. At the southeast corner is a two story engaged tower with a bell cast roof covered with slate. The exterior finish is a combination of pink rock-faced Abelman Quartzite on the first floor, Milwaukee pressed brick on the second floor and an elaborate cornice of carved stone, tile inserts and copper sheet metal. The structure is trimmed with numerous stained glass windows, iron and brass grillwork and highly decorated Queen Anne style chimneys. The windows are largely single-light, double-hung sash with either transoms or blind-transoms overhead. Of particular note is the Tiffany style glasswork in the interior that includes a magnolia window over the fireplace in the library, floral windows on the stair landings and the sconces and chandelier in the library and elsewhere in the house. This glasswork was probably installed sometime between 1895 and 1900.

Alteration:

The house has had minimal alterations. Fire insurance maps indicate that a side porch on the east elevation between the tower and the bay was removed about 1890. A published lithograph in 1891 when compared to the present structure revealed no major alterations. A small garage was added to the west elevation in 1964.

History:

This residence was built as a wedding gift by Timothy A. Chapman for his daughter Laura and son-in-law, George P. Miller. Chapman was a pioneer businessman and civic leader who founded the T.A. Chapman Company in 1857. It was Milwaukee's oldest, continuous full line department store until it closed in 1981. George Peckham Miller was a Milwaukee native born in 1858. His father was prominent Milwaukee attorney, Benjamin K. Miller and his mother was Isabelle Peckham whose father, George Peckham was a noted educator and public school official. Miller's original intention was to become a banker with Alexander Mitchell's Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Bank Company. Upon his graduation from Pennsylvania College in 1877, Mitchell's new bank was still under construction and Miller went to Europe to further his education. At the Universities of Goettinger and Breslau, Germany, he studies law and returned to Milwaukee in 1881 and was admitted to the Wisconsin State Bar. In 1882, he joined his father's firm and became known for his expertise in corporate litigation. He later founded his own firm, Miller, Mack & Fairchild and was the senior partner. In 1887 he married Laura Chapman and moved into their stunning wedding gift home on Juneau Avenue. Miller further distinguished himself as a director of what is now First Wisconsin Bank, president of the T.A. Chapman Company from 1898 to 1931, a director of the Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company and chairman of the Milwaukee County Metropolitan Sewerage Commission. The Miller's had two daughters, Alice and Laura Isabelle, who lived in the house until her recent death.

Inventory

Name: Joseph Friedberg House
Address: 1115 East Knapp Street
Date Built: c. 1885
Architect: Unknown
Current Use: Residence
Tax Key No. 359-0107-100

Legal Description:

Rogers' Addition in SE ¼ Section 21-7-22, Volume 1, Page 40. Block 196 E 39.28 feet of W 116.28 feet of N 71 feet of Lot 2 and 1 foot Lot 3 adj. on N.

Description:

Similar in height, massing, and materials to 1119 East Knapp. Facade lacks diagonal stickwork. House is almost a twin to 1119 East Knapp.

Alterations:

The main elevations facing Knapp Street appear to have been little altered from its original appearance. To the rear a large two-story addition with a gambrel roof was built in 1919 and designed by architect, Alexander Eschweiler.

History:

The house was probably built for Joseph Friedberg, treasurer of Friend Brothers Clothing Company. City directories indicate that Friedberg lived here with his family from 1887 to 1894. Since then it had a succession of short-term occupants and became a rooming house in the 1940's.

Inventory

Name: Charles S. Forsythe House
Address: 1119 East Knapp Street
Date Built: c. 1885
Architect: Unknown
Current Use: Residence
Tax Key No: 359-0108

Legal Description:

Rogers' Addition in SE ¼ Section 21-7-22, Volume 1, Page 40. Block 196 E 39.29 feet of West 155.57 feet of N 50 feet Lot 2 and 1 foot of Lot 3 adj.

Description:

A 2-1/2-story frame structure on a raised foundation. The asymmetrical massing is a hipped block intersecting with a gabled block. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The exterior is finished with clapboarding with diagonal stickwork across the front between the first and second floors. The windows are large, one-over-one, double-hung sash.

Alterations:

This structure appears to have been little altered from its original appearance.

History:

The original owner of this house is unknown, but research indicates that Charles Forsythe lived here in the mid-1890s. He was the superintendent of the William Becker Leather Company that he helped to incorporate in 1880. Another long term resident was Mr. and Mrs. James Wood who lived here from 1903 to 1921. Wood was a real estate agent. The house was converted to a two-family residence in 1947.

Inventory

Name: Francis Bloodgood, Jr. House
Address: 1135-1139 East Knapp Street
Established: 1896
Architect: Howland Russel
Current Use: Office/Residence
Tax Key No.: 359-0110

Legal Description:

Rogers' Addition in SE ¼ Section 21.7-22, Volume 1, Page 40. Block 196 E 118.59 feet (N 29 feet Lot 2 Blk. 196 SD SUBD and S 1 foot, Lot 2 adj.) SUBDJ to ingress and egress easement over W 4 feet

Description:

A 2-1/2 story, rectangular block that rests on a raised foundation of cut stone. The roofline is a steeply pitched hip covered with asphalt shingles. The roof is pierced by seven steeply gabled dormers. Each dormer is decorated with pinnacles and crockets. The exterior finish is pressed brick trimmed with stone. Heavy brick corbelling below the eaves girds the house. The main entry is recessed behind two elliptical arches outlined with pressed brick moldings and is supported by a carved limestone column with a stylized Gothic capital. The windows are double-hung sash with multiple lights below and single lights above.

Alterations:

This house has been minimally altered. The major alteration was the removal of the red tile roof in 1960.

History:

This house was built for Francis Bloodgood, Jr. He was from a well-known Milwaukee family whose mansions lined Knapp Street from Astor Street to Prospect Avenue. His house is last survivor. Bloodgood's father, Francis, Sr., was a U.S. Court Commissioner and prominent attorney. Francis, Jr., distinguished himself as a specialist in corporate law handling the organization litigation for many Milwaukee companies. He was also one of the founders of St. John's Military academy in Delafield, Wisconsin.

Inventory

Name: Judge Jason Downer House
Address: 1201 North Prospect Avenue
Date Built: 1874
Architect: Edward Townsend Mix
Current Use: Offices
Tax Key No. 359-0103

Legal Description:

Rogers' Addition in the SE ¼ Section 21-7-22, Volume 1, Page 40, Block 196 Part Lot 1, Com 11.57 feet W of SE corner, Lot 1-th W 20 feet – then N 155 feet – then E 41.04 feet – then SELY 72.42 feet – then SWLY 158.77 feet to the beginning.

Description:

A 2-1/2 story elongated rectangle of asymmetrical massing. Steeply pitched hip roof with intersecting gables covered with asphalt shingles. Exterior finish is cream brick painted green with limestone belt courses and trim. Elaborate carved bargeboards, brackets and cornice details at the eaves. Windows are largely segmental, arched openings with stone sills and carved stone hoods with some having incised keystones. Above second floor bays on south and east elevations are decorative wrought iron crestings.

Alterations:

The house has had minimal alterations. A porch at the main entry on the east elevation has been removed and at the northeast corner a porch was added.

History:

This house was built as the residence of Judge Jason Downer, a prominent figure in Wisconsin civic and business affairs and benefactor of several educational institutions. He came to Milwaukee in 1842 and was the first editor-in-chief of the Milwaukee Daily Sentinel. In 1864 he was appointed by the governor as an associate justice of the State Supreme Court. He left this post in 1867 and returned to private law practice in Milwaukee. After his death in 1883, his widow occupied the house until her death in 1888 when it became the property of Immanuel Presbyterian Church. It was used as a rest home and guesthouse for Protestant clergymen. Immanuel sold the house in 1966. It is presently used as an office building.

Inventory

Name: Stephen A. Harrison House
Address: 1216 North Prospect Avenue
Date Built: 1866
Builder: attributed to Harrison
Current Use: Offices
Tax Key No.: 359-0277

Legal Description:

Rogers' Addition in SE ¼ Section 21-7-22, Volume 1, Page 40, Block 199 (NW 107 feet exc. NE 147 feet and SE 20 feet of NW 127 feet of SW 20.69 feet of NE 147 feet) Lot 1 Exc. NWLY 7 feet for street

Description:

A 2-1/2-story "T" plan with an intersecting gabled roof having flared eaves and covered with asphalt shingles. Exterior finish is painted cream brick, with pronounced brick quoins. Windows are double-hung sash with paired round-arched windows on the second floor. Surrounding the property is an elaborate wrought-iron fence.

Alterations:

The house was remodeled to incorporate fashionable Queen Anne features in the late 19th century. The front porch has been removed, as have the window canopies over the first floor windows on Prospect Avenue. On the north elevation, a new entry was added in 1945, and in 1977, two exterior stairs and a second floor exit were added on the same elevation.

History:

This house was the residence of Stephen A. Harrison. He came to Milwaukee in 1854 from England and became a well-known master builder and railroad contractor. It is believed he built his own house. Attributed to Harrison were the first buildings of the Soldiers' Home at Wood and the laying of over 2,100 miles of railroad track for six rail companies. The house sold in 1872 to Captain Irving M. Bean. He was a Civil War hero who commanded Company F, 5th Regiment of the Wisconsin Volunteers. Prior to the war he had been an attorney and was the manager of the Northwestern Iron Company and its president in 1867. He resigned this post in 1875 upon his appointment by the US Senate as the head of the Milwaukee Internal Revenue Service. The house remained in the Bean family until 1944 when it was converted to a rooming house. A year later it returned to a brief existence as a single-family residence, but was remodeled in 1949 as the first of a succession of offices to occupy it to the present.

Inventory

Name: Residence
Address: 1223 North Prospect Avenue
Date Built: c. 1880
Architect: Unknown
Current Use: Offices
Tax Key No. 359-0102

Legal Description:

Rogers' Addition in SE ¼ Section 21-7-22, Volume 1, Page 40, Block 196 Park Lot 1 Com. 31.57 feet W and 155 feet N of SE corner Lot 1 – then N 24 feet – then E 142.04 feet M/L –then SWLY 58 feet – then NWLY 72.42 feet – then W 41.04 feet to the beginning.

Description:

A 2-1/2-story structure of asymmetrical massing with a hipped roof and many intersecting gables covered with asphalt shingles. The exterior finish is cream brick and stone, painted with wooden oriels and dormers. On the main elevation is a two-story bay and third story balcony that enhances the structure's verticality. Above the main entry is a decorated Queen Anne style oriel. The windows are largely, single-light double-hung sash.

Alterations:

The house has been minimally altered. By 1910 the rear porch on the south elevation had been removed and the balcony above this was enclosed to make an oriel in 1922.

History:

This house was built as an investment property in the late 1870's shortly after the double townhouse at 1229-1231 North Franklin Place was constructed. It stands as probably one of the finest Queen Style residences extant in the City. The first notable tenant was Horace Rublee who lived there from 1885 until his death in 1986. Rublee was a noted Wisconsin newspaperman who moved to the state in 1840 with his father and lived in Sheboygan. He attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1849, but left to work as a legislative reporter for the Madison *Argus*. He also worked for the *State Journal* as an editorial writer and was temporary editor-in-chief for a brief time. Eventually he became part owner of the paper. His journalistic career was interrupted in 1869 when he was appointed minister to Switzerland. Rublee was also involved with state politics and was the head of the Wisconsin Republican Party organization for many years. He returned to journalism in 1880 as the editor of the Boston *Advertiser* where he stayed for one year. Rublee came to Milwaukee in 1881 and was put in editorial charge of the new Republican newspaper, *The Republican and News*. *The Milwaukee Sentinel*, which was the City's leading Republican newspaper, was impressed by Rublee's journalistic expertise and the two papers were soon consolidated with Rublee as editor-in-chief. After Rublee died this house was rented to a succession of Milwaukee businessman and then as a rooming house and eventually it was converted into offices in 1958.

Inventory

Name: Francis Hinton Investment Property
Address: 1229-1231 North Prospect Avenue
Date Built: c. 1875-1880
Architect: Unknown
Current Use: Apartments
Tax Key No.: 359-0101

Legal Description:

Rogers' Addition in SE ¼ Section 21-7-22, Volume 1, Page 40. Block 196, Part Lot 1 Com. NE corner lot 1-th W 45 feet – then S 40 feet – then E 133.96 feet – then NELY 19.60 feet – then N 23.81 feet to beginning

Description:

A three story, rectangular, double townhouse with an asymmetrical facade. The roof is a steep mansard that is broken by a corbelled stepped gable and three dormers. It is covered with slate shingles in a pattern of four courses of rectangular alternating with two courses of hexagonal shingles. The exterior finish is cream brick, painted, and trimmed with carved limestone lintel, sills and gable details.

Alterations:

This fenestration has been altered. The most obvious changes have been the removal of the original porches and the addition of second floor balconies.

History:

Francis Hinton was a traveling salesman for the Milwaukee Iron Company when he purchased the site for his townhouses in 1874. On the site was a two-story frame residence that had been constructed to Ebenezer Arnold. Hinton had this house razed and built the present structure about 1879 as income property. The first recorded tenants were Mr. and Mrs. William Biglow who lived in the north half. Subsequent occupants were prominent Milwaukee professionals including eminent architect, George Bowman Ferry. Hinton owned the property until his death in 1895. He was manager of the Illinois Steel Company and had become a wealthy man. His death was reported as a suicide; shooting himself in the head on the streets of Paris. The townhouses were at times sleeping rooms and offices, but were purchased in 1956 by the present owners and renovated as six apartments.

Inventory

Name: William Augustus Prentiss House
Address: 1234 North Prospect Avenue
Date Built: 1974-75
Architect: Unknown
Current Use: Offices
Tax Key No.: 359-0279

Legal Description:

Rogers' Addition in SE ¼ Section 21-7-22, Volume 1, Page 40. Block 199 SW 70 feet on Se LI of NE 76.60 feet of NW 127 feet, Lot 1 exc. NWLY 7 feet for street.

Description:

A two-story rectangular block with a low-hipped roof and center broken pediment. At the cornice line are large, carved wooden brackets. The exterior finish is cream brick, painted. The windows are round-arched openings with stone sills and keystones and heavy brick surrounds.

Alterations:

This house has been minimally altered. According to fire insurance maps there have been a variety of porches along the front. The current porch was added about 1910 and is probably similar in scale and size to the original. A full rear porch was added in 1905.

History:

This house was built for William August Prentiss in 1874. Prentiss was an illustrious public figure who was elected to a variety of political offices at both the state and local levels. He was a native of Northfield, Massachusetts and had a distinguished political career in Vermont before he came to Milwaukee in 1836. He first traded general merchandise with Lemuel M. Weeks at a shop on Water Street. In 1837 he was appointed by Governor Dodge as the Justice of the Peace, which gave him criminal and civil jurisdiction over Milwaukee County. At that time this included all of the present, Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee, Washington, Jefferson and part of Dodge Counties. He served in this post until 1848. Also, in 1837 he was elected to the County Board of Commissioners and served until 1840. In 1838 he was elected to a four-year term to the upper branch of the Territorial Legislature. He served as president of this body in 1840. He also served in the State Assembly in 1866 and 1867. Locally, Prentiss was the first member of the Board of Trustees representing the "eastside" and was elected the tenth mayor of Milwaukee in 1858. The house remained in the Prentiss family until the early 1900's. It was purchased in the 1930's by Herbert Tullgren for his architectural offices. The house has remained as an office building currently occupied by the Ogden Company.

IX. Preservation Guidelines

The following preservation guidelines represent the principle concerns of the Historic Preservation Commission regarding this historic designation. However, The Commission reserves the right to make final decisions based upon particular design submissions. These guidelines shall be applicable only to the First Ward Triangle Historic District. Nothing in these guidelines shall be construed to prevent ordinary maintenance or restoration and/or replacement of documented original elements.

A. Guidelines for Rehabilitation

The First Ward Triangle Historic District is important because of its concentration of well-preserved structures that exhibit fine craftsmanship and materials. Throughout the district's history owners have maintained their properties in nearly original condition. This has resulted in a district of intact high style structures representing a broad range of architectural styles and periods. These guidelines are based upon those contained in Section 2-2335 (1) of the historic preservation ordinance. These guidelines are not intended to restrict an owner's use of his/her property, but to serve as a guide for making changes that will be sensitive to the architectural integrity of the structure and appropriate to the overall character of the district.

1. Roofs

- a. Retain the original roof shape. Dormers, skylights and solar collector panels may be added to roof surfaces if they do not visually intrude upon those elevations visible from the public right-of-way. Avoid making changes to the roof shape that would alter the building height, roofline, pitch or gable orientation.
- b. Retain the original roofing materials, wherever possible. Avoid using new roofing materials that are inappropriate to the style and period of the building and district.
- c. Replace deteriorated roof coverings with new materials that match the old in size, shape, color and texture. Avoid replacing deteriorated roof covering with new materials that differ to such an extent from the old in size, shape, color and texture so that the appearance of the building is altered.

2. Exterior Finishes

a. Masonry

- (i) Unpainted brick or stone should not be painted or covered. Avoid painting or covering natural stone and unpainted brick. This is likely to be historically incorrect and could cause irreversible damage if it was decided to remove the paint at a later date.
- (ii) Retain painted masonry surfaces. Removal of paint could cause irreversible damage to the masonry. If it is decided to remove the paint from masonry surfaces, use the gentlest method possible.
- (iii) Repoint defective mortar by duplicating the original in color, style, texture and strength. Avoid using mortar in colors and pointing styles that were unavailable or not used when the building was constructed.
- (iv) Clean masonry only when necessary to halt deterioration and with the gentlest method possible. Sandblasting brick or stone surfaces is prohibited. This method of cleaning erodes the surface of the material and accelerates deterioration. Avoid the indiscriminate use of chemical products that could have an adverse reaction with the masonry materials, such as the use of acid on limestone or marble.
- (v) Repair or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible. Avoid using new material that is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed, such as artificial cast stone or fake brick veneer.

- b. Wood
 - (i) Retain original material, whenever possible. Avoid removing architectural features such as clapboards, shingles, cornices, brackets, stick work, window architraves and doorway pediments. These are in most cases an essential part of the building's character and appearance that should be retained.
 - (ii) Repair or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the appearance of the old as closely as possible. Avoid covering architectural features with new materials that are inappropriate or were unavailable when the building was constructed such as artificial stone, brick veneer, asbestos or asphalt shingles, vinyl or aluminum siding.

3. Windows and Doors

- a. Retain existing window and door openings that are visible from the public right-of-way. Retain the original configuration of panes, sash, lintels, keystones, sills, architraves, pediments, hoods, doors, shutters and hardware. Avoid making additional openings or changes in the principal elevations by enlarging or reducing window or door openings to fit new stock window sash or new stock door sizes. Avoid changing the size or configuration of windowpanes or sash. Avoid discarding original doors and door hardware when they can be repaired or reused.
- b. Respect the stylistic period or periods a building represents. If replacement of window sash or doors is necessary, the replacement should duplicate the appearance and design of the original window sash or door. Avoid using inappropriate sash and door replacements such as unpainted galvanized aluminum storm and screen window combinations. Avoid the filling in or covering of openings with materials like glass-block or the installation of plastic or metal strip awnings or fake shutters that are not in proportion to the openings or that are historically out of the character with the building. Avoid using modern style window units such as horizontal sliding sash in place of double-hung sash or the substitution of units with glazing configurations not appropriate to the style of the building.

4. Porches, Trim and Ornamentation

- a. Retain porches and steps visible from the public right-of-way that are historically and architecturally appropriate to the building. Avoid altering porches and steps by enclosing open porches or replacing wooden steps with cast concrete steps or by removing original architectural features, such as handrails, balusters, columns or brackets.
- b. Retain trim and decorative ornamentation including copper downspouts and guttering, copings, cornices, cresting, finials, railings, balconies, oriels, pilasters, columns, chimneys, bargeboards or decorative panels. Avoid the removal of trim and decorative ornamentation that is essential to the maintenance of the building's historic character and appearance.
- c. Repair or replace, where necessary, deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible. Avoid using replacement materials that do not accurately reproduce the appearance or the original material.

5. Additions

- a. Make additions that harmonize with the existing building architecturally and are located so as not visible from the public right-of-way, if at all possible. Avoid making additions that are unsympathetic to the original structure and visually intrude upon the principle elevation.

B. Guidelines for Streetscapes

The visual character of the streetscapes in the First Ward Triangle is a combination of the well preserved sites of the individual structures and the open spaces that are primarily park lands located within and adjacent to the district. This juxtaposition allows each structure to be viewed individually or in well-defined groupings without obstruction or intrusion from the surrounding neighborhood. The traditional landscape treatment of the district sites contributes to the maintenance of its historic character.

1. Maintain the height, scale, mass and materials established by the buildings in the district and the traditional setback and density of the block faces. Avoid introducing elements that are incompatible in terms of siting, materials, height or scale.
2. Use traditional landscaping, fencing, signage and street lighting that is compatible with the character and period of the district. Avoid introducing landscape features, fencing, street lighting or signage that are inappropriate to the character of the district.

C. Guidelines for New Construction

It is important that additional new construction be designed so as to harmonize with the character of the district.

1. Siting

New construction must reflect the traditional siting of buildings in the First Ward Triangle. This includes setback, spacing between buildings, the orientation of openings to the street and neighboring structures, and the relationship between the main building and accessory buildings.

2. Scale

Overall building height and bulk; the expression of major building divisions including foundation, body and roof; and individual building components such as porches, overhangs and fenestration must be compatible with the surroundings structures.

3. Form

The massing of new construction must be compatible with the surroundings buildings. The profiles of roofs and building elements that project and recede from the main block must express the same continuity established by the historic structures.

4. Materials

The building materials that are visible from the public right-of-way should be consistent with the colors, textures, proportions, and combinations of cladding materials traditionally used in the First Ward Triangle. The physical composition of the materials may be different from that of the historic materials, but the same appearance should be maintained.

D. Guidelines for Demolition

Although demolition is not encouraged and is generally not permissible, there may be instances when demolition may be acceptable if approved by the Historic Preservation Commission. The

following guidelines, with those found in subsection 9(h) of the ordinance, shall be taken into consideration by the Commission when reviewing demolition requests.

1. Condition

Demolition requests may be granted when it can be clearly demonstrated that the condition of a building or a portion thereof is such that it constitutes an immediate threat to health and safety.

2. Importance

Consideration will be given to whether or not the building is of historical or architectural significance or displays a quality of material and craftsmanship that does not exist in other structures in the area.

3. Location

Consideration will be given to whether or not the building contributes to the neighborhood and the general street appearance and has a positive affect on other buildings in the area

4. Potential for Restoration

Consideration will be given to whether or not the building is beyond economically feasible repair.

5. Additions

Consideration will be given to whether or not the proposed demolition is a later addition that is not in keeping with the original design of the structure or does not contribute to its character.

6. Replacement

Consideration will be given to whether or not the building is to be replaced by a compatible building of similar age, architectural style and scale or by a new building that would fulfill the same aesthetic function in the area as did the old structure (see New Construction Guidelines).

E. Guidelines for Burns Triangle

Burns Triangle is the historical focus of the district. As an open space it affords visual relief from the dense building fabric of the district and offers unobstructed vistas of the individual structures. Every attempt should be made to maintain the historic character of Burns Triangle, except that restoration to the documented original condition is encouraged.