

Local Landmark Designation Process

WHAT IS THE HIGHLAND PARK HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE?

The Highland Park Historic Preservation Ordinance provides a mechanism to identify and preserve the distinctive historic, architectural and/or landscaping features of Highland Park that represent the City's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history. By encouraging preservation, rehabilitation and restoration, the City fosters civic pride in the beauty and noble accomplishments of the past as represented in Highland Park's landmark buildings and historic districts. Preservation efforts enhance the attractiveness of the City to its residents, home buyers, tourists, visitors and shoppers, and thereby support and promote business, providing economic benefit to the City.

WHAT IS THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION?

The Preservation Ordinance created a need for the Historic Preservation Commission in 1984. The Commission is composed of nine citizens, appointed by the mayor, with a demonstrated interest, knowledge, ability, experience, and expertise in architectural restoration, rehabilitation, and local history.

The Commission meets at 7:30 PM every third Thursday at City Hall to carry out its responsibilities, which include making recommendations to the City Council on preservation issues, identification of landmark buildings and areas, and review of alterations to landmarks. The Commission also presents a variety of public awareness programs, informing residents on the importance of preserving historic resources.

Note: Meeting dates vary. If you would like to attend a meeting, call the Department of Community Development to confirm the date and time: (847) 432-0867.

WHAT IS A HIGHLAND PARK LOCAL LANDMARK?

The City of Highland Park is empowered by ordinance to designate objects, structures, buildings, districts and sites as local landmarks if they have aesthetic, architectural, cultural and/or historic value. Highland Park's local landmark designation affords properties more protection than state or national landmarking programs do. Once a property is locally designated, any exterior alteration, construction, demolition or removal requiring a building permit is reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission. The review process is handled in a timely fashion and careful consideration is given

to the owner's needs. The Commission works as a resource for owners of landmark properties. Property owners can rely on the Commission's technical expertise to aid them in developing their plans. Furthermore, Staff is assigned to landmark homeowners, giving them a dedicated City advocate.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF OWNING A HIGHLAND PARK LANDMARK?

Highland Park landmarks receive community-wide recognition and protection. A certificate signed by the Mayor is presented to the owner(s) of a landmark property containing a statement of significance. Because Highland Park's Historic Preservation Ordinance is certified by the Illinois State Historic Preservation office, landmark owners are eligible for tax benefits. State legislation provides an eight year property tax assessment freeze for owners of single family residences that are substantially rehabilitated, following the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation. For more information on the Property Tax Assessment Freeze Program call the Local Government Services Coordinator at the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency at (217) 785-4512. Landmark homes receive support from the Historic Preservation Commission and may be eligible for special City-sponsored incentives. Relative to any possible effect landmarking will have on the resale value of your house, we suggest you call a Realtor.



Henry Towner House c.1990
133 Laurel Ave • Colonial Revival
Architect Unknown
Landmarked: 2000

Local Landmark Designation Process Continued

CAN ALTERATION, CONSTRUCTION OR DEMOLITION OF A DESIGNATED LOCAL LANDMARK OCCUR?

Once a site or structure has been designated as a local landmark, the property is subject to Commission approval for exterior alterations, construction or demolition plans requiring a building permit. Interior work is never reviewed by the Commission. Generally, building permits are required for any action other than basic maintenance and upkeep. This review process is an effective way to protect and preserve Highland Park's historical and architectural heritage and provides an excellent opportunity for property owners to receive free design review and technical advice from the Commission. It is unlikely that demolition of a landmark home will ever be allowed.

ABOUT HIGHLAND PARK

Highland Park is predominantly a suburban residential community characterized by fine examples of many significant architectural styles dating from the 1870s to the present. Excellent Victorian structures stand side-by-side with Prairie School residences, historic revival style buildings and International Style homes. Some are very large; others are quite modest. But all contribute to the rich fabric of Highland Park architecture, which illustrates not a single period of outstanding significance, but a broad overview of the development of architectural styles.

In 1984, the City Council passed the Highland Park Historic Preservation Ordinance. The purpose of this Ordinance is to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the community by protecting the City's heritage. This overview is not intended to be a substitute for City Ordinance Chapter 24: Historic Preservation. The Ordinance is available in its entirety for download, through the Department of Community Development, or from the City Clerk.



"Thornecote" c.1901
215 Prospect • Howard Van Doren Shaw
National Register of Historic Places
Landmarked: 1987

WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING HIGHLAND PARK LANDMARKS?

In making decisions about whether a nominated property qualifies as a Highland Park Landmark, the Preservation Commission will consider the criteria listed below (Section 24.015):

- 1) It demonstrates character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, county, state or country;
- 2) It is the site of a significant local, county, state or national event;
- 3) It is associated with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the City, county, state or country;
- 4) It embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural and/or landscape style valuable for the study of a specific time period, type, method of construction or use or indigenous materials;
- 5) It is identifiable as the work of a notable builder, designer, architect, artist, or landscape architect whose individual work has influenced the development of the City, county, state, or country;
- 6) It embodies, overall, elements of design, detailing, materials, and/or craftsmanship that renders it architecturally, visually, aesthetically, and/or culturally significant and/or innovative;
- 7) It has a unique location or it possesses or exhibits singular physical and/or aesthetic characteristics that make it an established or familiar visual feature;
- 8) It is a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian structure or group of such structures, including, but not limited to farmhouses, gas stations or other commercial structures, with a high level of integrity and/or architectural, cultural, historical and/or community significance; and/or
- 9) It possesses or exhibits significant historical and/or archaeological qualities.

The nominated property must also demonstrate sufficient integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship to make it worthy of preservation or rehabilitation and any nomination must include the written consent of the owner for the landmark designation.

Prepared by the Highland Park Historic Preservation Commission, August 2007 (updated December 2018)