

City of St. Charles, Illinois

Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 10-2023

A Resolution Recommending Approval for Landmark Designation (838 N. 5th Ave. – Saxony Terrace)

WHEREAS, per Section 17.32.060 of the St. Charles Zoning Ordinance, it is the responsibility of the St. Charles Historic Preservation Commission to evaluate applications for Landmark Designation and to make recommendations to the City Council regarding them; and

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission has reviewed the application for designation of 838 N 5th Ave. and hereby finds that the Landmark nomination meets one or more of the criteria for Landmark Designation listed in Section 17.32.060.C of the St. Charles Zoning Ordinance based on the historical and architectural significance as described in the following findings:

1. The property has character, interest or value which is part of the development, heritage or cultural character of the community.

In 1896, an Elgin trolley streetcar route was extended as an interurban south to St Charles and Geneva. It was later joined by an Aurora trolley route extending north through Batavia to become the Elgin, Aurora and Southern Traction Company. The company operated an interurban along the Fox River route from Carpentersville on the north to Yorkville on the south. The Fox River interurban was later merged into the Aurora, Elgin, & Chicago RR (A,E & C), and operated as The Fox River Division. The A,E & C was a high speed interurban which operated mostly upon private right-of-way, and mainly used a third rail for electrical pickup. The house is along that path.

2. Property is identified with a person who significantly contributed to the development of the community.

Carol and Gertrude Norris, parents of Lester, purchased the home from the original owners in 1924. However, they did not live in the structure, but Lester and Dellora did reside in the structure.

Dellora was the niece of Col. E. J. Baker and heir to the Texaco fortune. Along with her husband she formed the St. Charles Charities (now the Dellora A. and Lester J. Norris Foundation) in 1924 and funded multiple civic improvements throughout their lives including; the St. Charles Country Club, Arcada Theatre, Delnor Hospital, the Dellora A. Norris Cultural Arts Center, and the John B. Norris Recreation Center.

3. Structure embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials.

The home is built in the Prairie style. The identifying features are low pitched, hipped roof; wide overhanging eaves; two story with one story porch or wing; eaves; cornices; horizontal lines; and square porch supports.

4. Property is identified with the work of a master builder, designer, architect, or landscape architect whose work has influenced the development of the area, the county, the state, or the nation.

The current owners believe that August and Oscar Wilson (Chicago Tribune May 18, 2008) built this home. The Wilson Brothers worked with Frank Lloyd Wright and built as many as 100 structures throughout the valley during the first half of 1900 under their own Wilson name.

5. Structure embodies elements of design, detailing, materials, or craftsmanship that are of architectural significance.

Massive square piers to support the porch roof; horizontal decorative emphasis; small pane window glazing; broad flat chimney; contrasting wall and trim materials that emphasize the upper story; and decorative door surrounds.

6. Property has a unique location that make it a familiar visual feature.

The property is one the Norris Family Estates along North Fifth Avenue.

The landscape of the entire lot provides the proper mass, size, and space required for this structure, which should be considered as part of the overall landmark designation.

7. The property is suitable for preservation or restoration.

Yes. The home remains original both exterior and interior with any interior improvements keeping within the prairie style architecture. An interesting item is that the current ceramic tiles covering the roof which was added in 1926 still covers the original shake material when the home was constructed in 1913. Exterior brick, stucco, wood windows/doors/storms remain today.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the St. Charles Historic Preservation Commission to recommend to the City Council that the property known as 838 N 5th Ave. as legally described in Exhibit "A", be designated as a Landmark, and that it be referred to as the "Saxony Terrace", with a construction date of circa 1913.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Malay, Kessler, Pretz, Smunt, Rice, Kramer
Nays: None
Absent: Dickerson
Abstain: None

Motion Carried.

PASSED, this 18th day of October, 2023.

Chairman

Exhibit "A"
Legal Description

THAT PART OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 27, TOWNSHIP 40 NORTH, RANGE 8 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS; COMMENCING AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 7, DELNOR PARK ADDITION ONE, ST. CHARLES, KANE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, BEING ON THE WEST LINE OF SIXTH AVENUE NORTH; THENCE SOUTHERLY ALONG SAID WEST LINE EXTENDED 790.16 FEET; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG A LINE FORMING AN ANGLE OF 88 DEGREES 27' WITH THE LAST DESCRIBED COURSE, MEASURED COUNTER- CLOCKWISE THEREFROM 331.82 FEET TO THE EAST LINE OF FIFTH AVENUE NORTH; THENCE SOUTHERLY ALONG SAID EAST LINE FORMING AN ANGLE OF 88 DEGREES, 27' WITH THE LAST DESCRIBED COURSE, MEASURED CLOCKWISE THEREFROM, 66.02 FEET; THENCE SOUTHERLY ALONG SAID EAST LINE FORMING ANGLE OF 180 DEGREES 06' 10" WITH THE LAST DESCRIBED COURSE, MEASURED COUNTER-CLOCKWISE THEREFROM 183.74 FEET FOR THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE CONTINUING SOUTHERLY ALONG SAID EAST LINE 230 FEET; THENCE EASTERLY ALONG A LINE FORMING AN ANGLE OF 88 DEGREES 15' 20" WITH THE PROLONGATION OF THE LAST DESCRIBED COURSE, MEASURED COUNTER-CLOCKWISE THEREFROM, 295 FEET; THENCE NORTHERLY ALONG A LINE FORMING AN ANGLE OF 88 DEGREES 15' 20" WITH THE LAST DESCRIBED COURSE, MEASURED CLOCKWISE THEREFROM, 230 FEET; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG A LINE FORMING AN ANGLE OF 88 DEGREE 15' 20" WITH THE PROLONGATION OF THE LAST DESCRIBED COURSE, MEASURED COUNTER-CLOCKWISE THEREFROM, 295 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, IN THE CITY OF ST. CHARLES, KANE COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

PIN #09-27-253-006