



## **Springfield Historic Sites Commission**

### **2018 Certified Local Government Annual Report to City of Springfield**

The Springfield Historic Sites Commission reports annually to the City of Springfield on the Commission's activities regarding preservation issues, recognition programs, public awareness campaigns and collaborative efforts with other preservation and redevelopment groups.

Revitalization of Springfield's declining historic neighborhoods and buildings is a major goal for the City of Springfield and the Springfield Historic Sites Commission. These areas, and the resources within them, form the historical and cultural foundations of the city and should be preserved as a living history of our community life and development. It is this Commission's pleasure to report to you our activities during 2018.

The Historic Sites Commission has four standing committees making recommendations to the full commission. Those committees are:

#### **Committee Name**

Design Review  
Registry, Landmarking & Zoning  
Education & Web  
Community Relations

In addition to the four standing committees, the Commission appoints special committees to deal with other matters. One example would be the Request for Proposal Review Committee, which is appointed on an as-needed or annual basis.

#### **Resources**

Springfield has a great wealth of history, not only in its people and events, but also in its structures. The Historic Sites Commission has approved a total of 71 local landmark applications to date, including private residences, apartment buildings, commercial structures, tourism sites and a theater marquee. 42 of these are also listed on the National Registry, along with 29 other structures.

There are three Springfield Historic Zoning Districts (H-1, H-2 & H-3), one Springfield National Register Historic District (Downtown) and one Federal Historic District (Lincoln Home National Historic Site) all of which are located within blocks of downtown Springfield.

#### **Architectural Surveys**

In order to accurately inventory the historic structures around Springfield, the Historic Sites Commission conducted several surveys. These surveys have identified key historical structures within the city that have potential landmark status. The following surveys have been completed to date:

- Architectural Survey of Springfield's Central Business District. (June 1991 by Fever River Research)
- Architectural Resources of the Enos Park Neighborhood. (June-1997 by Fever River Research)
- Architectural Resources of the West Side of Capitol Neighborhood. (March-1998 by Fever River Research)
- Architectural/Historical Survey of the East Part of the Central Business District. (January-1995 by C. Kirchner & Assoc.)
- Catalogue of Marked & Unmarked Historical and Architecturally Significant Buildings in Springfield. (1998 by Leadership Springfield Team)
- Architectural Resources Survey of Aristocracy Hill and Neighboring Area. (September 2003 by Fever River Research)
- Central Springfield National Register Historic District Boundary Expansion. (February 2015 by The Lakota Group)
- National Register of Historic Places Thematic Survey of Springfield's African-American Community, and The Central East Neighborhood, Springfield, Illinois. (October, 2018 by Fever River Research)

Copies of all surveys are located at the Sangamon Valley Collection at the Lincoln Library. It is the intent of the Historic Sites Commission to continue to apply for grants to conduct surveys as appropriate within the city.

The most recent architectural survey, "National Register of Historic Places Thematic Survey of Springfield's African-American Community, and the Central East Neighborhood, Springfield, Illinois", identified 32 additional properties within City Limits that are architectural important. None of these properties have yet to be added to the demolition delay list nor have been locally landmarked but they are currently being deliberated within the Commission.

### **Landmarking**

The Springfield Historic Sites Commission continues to promote participation, interest and public awareness, as well as the benefits of landmarking properties. The Commission continually seeks ways to increase the number of properties on the local register.

### **Design Review**

The Design Review Committee reviewed three exterior design changes to properties that were either landmarked or lie within a historic zoning district, as required by ordinance. The properties that were reviewed include 101 E. Adams St., a Local Landmark, approved exterior sign replacement; 605 S 7th St., a Lincoln Era home in the H-2 district, approval of a complete restoration including demolition, material reuse, woodwork, and new additions built on the existing footprint of the building; 503 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St., a Lincoln Era, Locally Landmarked property in the H-3 district, approval for restoration of the structure to its previous appearance after being damaged in a fire.

The Commission works with the City's Building & Zoning Department on policies pertaining to exterior signage, property usage, landscaping in historic areas and demolition/building permits on certain properties. Approximately twelve properties, for which demo/repair permits were applied, were referred from the City's Building & Zoning Department because the addresses appeared on the Demolition Delay List. Internal review determined that no action was required by Historic Sites Commission.

The Commission also worked with the City's Building & Zoning Department to expedite the demolition of a Nationally Landmarked property located at 631 S. 4th Street. This structure was determined to be unsafe and dangerous by Building & Zoning staff, likely to completely collapse.

### **Zoning**

The Commission also works with the City's Building & Zoning Department to review petitions for rezoning or conditional permitted uses for properties in the City's three Historic Zoning Districts. The Commission did not review or hear any such petitions in the year of 2018.

## **Summary of Commission Activities/Accomplishments:**

- Coordinated with the City of Springfield on its downtown façade easement program and provided review and approval of new facades and changes to existing facades.
- Oversaw the successful completion of the National Register of Historic Places Thematic Survey of Springfield's African-American Community, and The Central East Neighborhood, Springfield, Illinois.
- Identified 32 potential structures of architectural significance.
- Provided design review for structures that are locally landmarked, located in the downtown historic district or located in one of the City's three historic zoning districts.
- Maintained the SHSC website to include image and narrative of every landmarked property in the community.
- Continued to collaborate with Springfield's Dept. of Building & Zoning to protect historic and potentially historic structures.
- Continued coordination with the Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission.
- Chairman continues to act as a consulting party for the US Department of Transportation in the Carpenter Street Underpass project, where an archeological site was discovered.

## **Commission's Community Involvement**

The Commission as a whole, in addition to its individual commissioners, was involved with a variety of preservation efforts and with neighborhood groups and civic associations that focus on preservation issues.

## **Website**

The Springfield Historic Sites Commission's website is maintained through the City's Office of Planning & Economic Development. The website currently offers Landmarking application, Map of Springfield Historic Districts, Historic Sites Gallery, as well as financial assistance and incentives for rehabilitating and restoring Springfield's Architectural Treasures.

## **Community Relations**

*Public Input.* The Commission values input by groups with common interests and has welcomed volunteers to assist in our projects. The Mayor and the Aldermen are always welcome to participate as guests of the Commission to help further the message of historic preservation.

Staff from the City's Building & Zoning Department, Landmarks Illinois, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Office of Planning & Economic Development, along with local developers and other interested individuals, attended commission meetings during the year. Jerry Jacobson, Save Old Springfield, frequently attends.

The demo-delay list is updated annually by the Office of Planning & Economic Development and is published in the *State Journal-Register*. The eligibility requirements for the properties on this list include:

- Any City of Springfield designated landmark;
- Any properties within the City of Springfield on the Illinois Historic Landmark Survey list;
- Any properties within the City of Springfield on the National Register;
- Any historically significant buildings or structure identified by other lists and inventories that are conducted under the auspices of the federal, state or City of Springfield governments.
- Any historically significant buildings or structure identified by other lists and inventories that use a methodology approved and certified by the Historic Sites Commission and/or the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency; and

- Any historically significant buildings or structure identified by other lists and inventories that specifically identifies buildings and structures eligible for landmarking under local, state and federal law.

#### **Current Historic Sites Commission Members and Staff**

David Steckel, Acting Chairman  
Myrel Simmons  
Ron Ladley  
Molly Berns  
Stephanie Do  
Peggi Gant  
Lakeisha Purchase  
Aaron Schroeder  
Don Walton

#### **Staff**

Kyle Quinn, City of Springfield Liaison to the Historic Sites Commission

It has been the pleasure of the members of the Commission to serve the City of Springfield in 2018. We appreciate the support and interest of the Mayor and the City Council in our activities.