



The Network an E-Newsletter for Ohio's Certified Local Governments

Ohio Historic
Preservation Office
Ohio Historical Society

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Shaker Heights—The Vision of Two Brothers

The City of Shaker Heights has a rich history as one of the country's premier planned communities. The unique character and integrity of the City is apparent to residents and visitors alike. Tree-lined streets, well-planned neighborhoods, distinctive residential architecture, and an efficient rapid transit system are among the City's distinguishing features.

The City was developed in the early twentieth century by two brothers, Oris Paxton and Mantis James Van Sweringen, who envisioned a suburban residential community based on the principles of the English Garden City Movement.



Mansion built for Van Sweringen brothers, 1916-1919

With visions of designing a residential community, the brothers purchased a small parcel of land; this parcel of land had originally been owned by the North Union Colony of the "United Society of Believers" (known as the Shakers). They quickly hired the F.A. Pease Engineering Company to design a system of roads. The two east-west boulevards were laid with the intention of accommodating both automotive and rapid transit uses. Two north-south roads were already in existence and completed the primary street pattern. With traffic directed to these major roads, a street hierarchy could be established. The smaller residential roads, following the natural topography of the land, discouraged through traffic.

Shaker Village was incorporated in 1912. As Shaker Village was owned by one company, its development could be strictly controlled. Each residential development had to be approved by the Van Sweringen Land Company. To ensure the quality of homes being built, as well as to assist architects with this approval process, design guidelines were established. *Shaker Village Standards*, first published in 1925, informed those interested in building a home of the architectural styles allowed as well as the materials and colors that could be used depending on the style of architecture chosen. As the number of permits for new homes grew, an Architectural Board of Review was established to review and approve all plans. This Board is still in existence today, reviewing all exterior alterations on buildings within the City.

Securing the village's future as a residential community was of extreme importance to the Van Sweringens. Deed restrictions were attached to each property requiring that it forever be zoned residential.

Although Shaker Village was only eight miles from downtown Cleveland, the travel time by streetcar was 45 minutes to one hour. The Van Sweringen brothers understood this lengthy commute for Cleveland businessmen diminished the village's attraction as a place to build a home. Consequently, they began investigating the possibility of developing a rapid transit service. The brothers hired F.A. Pease Engineering Company to construct the transit line. Beginning in 1914, track construction took six years to complete. World War I and a post-war steel strike delayed construction from 1916-1919. The rail line was completed and the first car traveled on April 11, 1920. Five days later, the second line commenced operation.

The easy and quick accessibility to downtown, 21 minutes, coupled with the natural beauty of the residential sites, enticed

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thousands of families to build homes during the 1920's and 1930's. According to a 1928 Van Sweringen advertisement, one family a day moved to Shaker Village in 1927. As the area grew, residents decided to incorporate as a city. In 1931, the city's charter was approved; the City of Shaker Heights was established.

The zoning ordinance, adopted in 1927, required uniform building setbacks and building heights. Residential setbacks were large, and the deep front yards and dense tree lawns allowed the quickly developing area to retain its wooded appearance. The dense tree lawn served a dual purpose: creating a beautiful enclosure to the street while separating it from the neighboring homes. The restrictions on building heights created a standard building mass which allowed the homes, differing greatly in architectural styles and ornament, to create a cohesive streetscape.

Palatial homes for wealthy families were not the only homes built in the quickly developing Shaker Village. The Van Sweringens, when creating the zoning ordinance, designated specific areas of the village for smaller single-family homes as well as two-family homes. This gave families of all income ranges



Winslow Road, Unique Shaker two-family homes with one front entrance.



Smaller home in Shaker Village.

the opportunity to live in Shaker Village. The design of Shaker's two-family homes is unique; they have one front entrance. By sharing one entry, the two-family homes retain the appearance of

single family homes.

The design and construction of smaller homes were held to the same Shaker standard as larger homes. The Shaker Village Standards required that the architectural expression be "as carefully considered as in the higher priced sections."

Initially, apartment buildings were not allowed within Shaker Village. This changed in the late 1920's when the Van Sweringens recognized the need for density to fully support the rapid transit system which was built along the main thoroughfares only. The brothers required that the rental properties be built to the established Shaker standard of quality architecture and craftsmanship.



Plymouth Church, 1919

The Van Sweringens envisioned Shaker Village not as one entity, but as a conglomeration of

different, distinct neighborhoods. The focal point of each neighborhood was a school. The majority of school buildings were placed on prominent parcels of land; allowing each passerby to understand the importance the community placed on the education of its children. In time, the schools' influence expanded beyond the physical structures as community organizations within the city were named for a school located in its neighborhood.

In order to entice private schools to the area, the Van Sweringens offered the donation of land; three schools accepted the offer and continue to thrive. The brothers were also interested in having religious organizations relocate to the area. Similar to schools, the placement of religious buildings was important. They also received visually prominent parcels of land on which to build.

Donations of land were given to recreational organizations as well. In 1913, the Van Sweringens offered a donation of land (unsuitable for homes as it is a flood

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Tax Credit Legislation Signed by Governor

January 2nd was a momentous day for historic preservation in Ohio. That is the day Governor Taft signed into law the bill authorizing a historic preservation tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic properties. Both the Ohio House and the Senate had passed the amended bill in mid-December. The legislation creates a two-year trial program with a 25% tax credit for up to 100 projects per year. The tax credit is expected to stimulate reinvestment in historic properties, much as similar credits in other states have. Our thanks and appreciation goes to Sen. Kirk Schuring of Canton, who moved the bill and its amendments through the Senate, and Rep. Charles Calvert of Medina, chief sponsor of the bill in the House. To view the entire legislation or to access a PDF version of the bill visit: http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=126_HB_149.

Of special note is the fact that the definition of historic buildings in the state tax credit legislation includes those properties designated by Certified Local Governments. Now there's a direct benefit of local listing! Watch for more information in the next issue of The Network.

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plain) to the Euclid Golf Club. The offer was accepted, and the club was renamed the Shaker Country Club. Public lands were developed around the two lakes created by the Shakers, and the two lakes formed by the Van Sweringens.

ARCHITECTURE

The Van Sweringens insisted that each house built must be architecturally unique. Because of this, most of the homes within Shaker Heights are not exact replicas of a particular architectural style. The house may have a dominant style, but small details of differing styles have been interjected, creating an architectural richness to each home that will not be duplicated. Also, the Van Sweringens promoted the use of natural and textured materials for all construction.



New construction in the local landmark district is subject to design review by the Architectural Board of Review.

Three broad architectural styles were promoted within *Shaker*

Village Standards: French, English, and Colonial. These three revival styles, although different, blend harmoniously with each other creating classic, refined neighborhoods that have stood the test of time. Shaker's strict adherence to architectural standards includes paint colors. In fact, the city is widely known for its publication *Shaker Village Colors*.

Shaker Heights became a certified Local Government in 1993 and since that time has made extensive use of CLG grants. Funded projects include preservation month lectures and updating and reprinting of two historic preservation technical booklets, design guidelines, a heritage education teachers workshop and curriculum development, a study and revisions to their local ordinance, an archaeological survey and most recently an intensive survey of the Winslow Road area, one of the oldest streets in the city. Shaker Heights remains committed to the vision of the Van Sweringens.

This article was written by Stacey Pfau, a Planner with the City of Shaker Heights.

National Trust Grants Available

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is currently accepting grant applications from non-profit organizations and public agencies for three grant programs: the Johanna Favrot Fund for Historic Preservation, the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Fund for Historic Interiors, and the Hart Family Fund for Small Towns (less than 5000 in population). All three grant programs have a **March 1, 2007** postmark deadline.

National Trust grants are designed to encourage preservation at the local level by providing seed money for preservation projects focused on preservation planning or preservation education efforts. Support is offered for obtaining professional expertise in areas such as architecture, archaeology, engineering, preservation planning and fundraising. Grants range from \$500 to \$10,000 and require a 50/50 match. Information about the Trust's grant programs can be obtained by visiting their web site at www.nthp.org.

Madison—Ohio's 43rd Certified Local Government



Madison Village Hall

The Village of Madison, in Lake County, is Ohio's 43rd Certified Local Government. Though it was not incorporated until 1867, Madison Township, of which Madison is the township center, was settled as early as 1802 and incorpo-

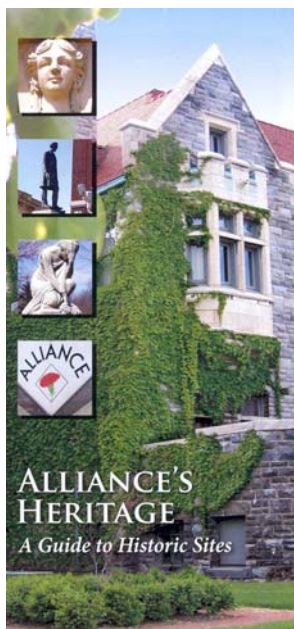
rated in 1811. Because it was the seat of township government and later a prosperous railroad town, Madison's historic architecture represents an unusually high level of quality for a village its size. The historic architecture of Madison was recognized nearly thirty years ago when the Madison Multiple Resource Area was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Multiple Resource Area includes numerous churches, homes and public buildings and a historic district surrounding the public square. Today, a five member Design Review Board oversees proposed changes within the Village of Madison Historic Preservation District. According to Village Mayor, Michael Evangelista, the Design Review Board

has been received quite well by downtown businesses. The Mayor notes that residents are working to keep the antiquity and character of the community for generations to come. For more about Madison, visit www.madisonvillage.org



Historical Bank Building, Now "His Majesty's Tea Room" S/E corner of Park & Main Street

"Alliance Heritage" Brochure Promotes Cities Historic Sites



The City of Alliance has a new historic sites brochure. Funded by the Alliance Area Chamber of Commerce, the attractive and user-friendly brochure includes a simple map highlighting the featured historic sites, great photographs and a capsule summary of each site, including location, hours of operation, entrance fees (if any) and whether the site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. For more information about historic sites in Alliance, visit AllianceMemory.org

If your community does not have an up-to-date historic sites brochure, your board or commission should consider sponsoring or co-sponsoring such a project. Remember that CLG grant funds may be used to publish historic site inventories, walking tour brochures, design guidelines and other educational materials.

For more information about CLG grants visit our web site at www.ohiohistory.org

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards Applying them to your Board or Commission's Work

As a member of your architectural review board or commission, you should be familiar with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and recognize them as the basis for your design guidelines. In the next several issues of The Network, we will focus on the Standards but will annotate them with your board or commission's work in mind. In this issue we discuss Standards 1-3. Portions of these articles are based on an article that appeared in the September/October 2006 issue of The Alliance Review. Photographs are from the Ohio Historic Preservation Office Building Doctor Program.

Standard #1

A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal changes to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

In other words, any new use should be a "good fit"—one that is compatible with the old building. Adaptive use projects frequently do not use a structure for its historic purpose. This warehouse space may not be suitable today for its original industrial use, but with the clever use of partitions, the space is transformed into a mall that still retains all the floors, ceilings, its structure and openness. When reviewing adaptive use projects, ask yourself, "Would the property be



recognized by a visitor or owner from the property's heyday?"

Standard #2

The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

Architectural details, features and spaces contribute to the character and integrity of historic buildings. Examples in-

clude the ornate scrollwork on a late nineteenth century house, a sheet metal cornice with brackets on a masonry commercial building and the scale and setback of the buildings along an historic Main Street. In order to convert it to a single family dwelling, this house has undergone unnecessary changes (the removal of a door) that compromise the symmetry and balance of its façade.



If a change of use is necessary, the exterior appearance of the door could have been retained, while closing off the door in the interior. Commissions and

boards must be diligent in identifying what contributes to the character and integrity of historic buildings and insure that local architectural design guidelines address these issues.

Standard #3

Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its own time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding features or architectural elements from other buildings shall not be undertaken.



Well meaning property owners may want to make changes to a building to make it look "more historic" by adding features or elements from earlier styles or more ornate buildings. Doing so creates a false sense of history and does not honestly convey the building's life. Sometimes a building has been altered to such an extent over the years that it has lost its historic identity. Your board or commission can

discourage inappropriate conjectural alterations by requiring documentation (photographs, drawings, etc.) of the building's earlier appearance. If documentation is not available, require that the changes be in keeping with the buildings historical character.

An interactive web class on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation is available at www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/e-rehab/index.htm.

OHPO's Resource Protection and Review Department to Hold Training Classes

This winter and spring, the Ohio Historic Preservation Office's Resource Protection and Review (RPR) Department will hold a series of training classes about the new Project Summary Form that standardizes the manner in which information about federally assisted projects are submitted to the OHPO. At the training classes, RPR staff will explain how to use the new form to send good documentation.

Beginning early this year, the form will be required for most submissions made to the OHPO pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The new form will assist agency staff, applicants for federal funding and permits, consultants, engineers, contractors, archaeologists, historians, architects, and others and will help insure that project information submitted to the OHPO is complete and accurate. This will increase the efficiency and value of the Section 106 review process for all parties. (Projects covered by special agreements with OHPO that include specific documentation requirements and procedures are exempt from this requirement.)

The training sessions will be held at the State Library of Ohio, located at 274 E. First Avenue in Columbus, on the following dates and times: Wednesday, February 7, 9:00 a.m.-

11:00 a.m.; Tuesday, February 20, 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.; Tuesday, March 6, 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.; and Thursday, May 10, 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. Classes are \$25 and seating is limited. Check-in begins 30 minutes before each session.

Please visit our web site at www.ohiohistory.org to register for the classes and to learn more about other educational opportunities provided by the Ohio Historic Preservation Office in 2007. If you have any questions about the Project Summary Form or the training, please contact our office at (614) 298-2000 or email us at section106@ohiohistory.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Preservation Organizations Statehood Day,
March 1, 2007

Heritage Ohio State Conference
May 16 & 17, 2007

**Ohio Historic Preservation Office
2007 Workshops**

**Section 106 Review
Project Summary Form
Training Classes**
February 7, 9-11 a.m.
February 20, 1-3 p.m.
March 6, 9-11 a.m.
May 10, 1-3 p.m.

**Historic Rehabilitation
Tax Credit: How to
Apply and Qualify**
May 22, 9 a.m.-Noon

**Historic Rehabilitation
Tax Credit: Understanding
IRS Aspects (Tentative)**
May 22, 1-4 p.m.

Ohio Archaeological Inventory
May 22, 9 a.m.-Noon

Historic Archaeology Workshop
May 22, 1-4 p.m.

**Identifying and Evaluating
Resources of the Recent Past**
September 27, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Section 106 Advanced
October 6, 9 a.m.-Noon

**Section 106: Preparing
Agreement Documents**
October 6, 1-4 p.m.

**St. Paul Minnesota
National Preservation Conference**
October 2-6, 2007



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Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
(Individual staff hours may vary)
To better serve you we recommend that you
call ahead for an appointment

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U.S. Department of the Interior regulations prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental federally assisted programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or disability. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility operated by a recipient of federal assistance should write: Director, Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127.