



ROCKFORD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

425 East State Street
Rockford, Illinois 61104

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM FOR DESIGNATION OF A HISTORIC DISTRICT

The following instructions are designed to aid you in completing the application for creating a local historic district, as provided in Chapter 113 of the Rockford Code of Ordinances. Each application must include the following:

- ❖ A petition using the form authorized by the Historic Preservation Commission, signed by the owners of 66% of the properties proposed for inclusion in the district;
- ❖ At least one map of the proposed district as described on page __ of these instructions;
- ❖ Photographs of the proposed district, as described on page __ of the instructions; and
- ❖ A check (or checks) totaling \$122 for the district as a whole plus an additional \$23 per property, made out to the City of Rockford.

Completed applications should be returned to the Secretary of the Rockford Historic Preservation Commission, Rockford City Hall, 425 East State Street, Rockford, Illinois 61104. **If you have any questions about filling out the form, please feel free to call the Commission Secretary at 779/348-7447.** The Secretary will be happy to go over your application with you before you officially submit it to make sure it is filled out completely and correctly. Information included in the application forms must be accurate, complete and correct. When preparing the forms, please double check all information for accuracy. Information on the forms should be typed or clearly printed in black ink, with the original being submitted to the Rockford Historic Preservation Commission. If additional pages are needed to answer questions completely, label the top of each page with the number of the question being answered and, if more than one such page is needed, the number of the continuation page.

1. HISTORIC NAME

This block identifies the different names by which each district has been known, either historically or in common use. In general, the historic name (see the following examples) will be used in referring to the district in local publications as it will continue to be meaningful regardless of changes in use or occupancy.

Historic Name

Only one name should be entered here. If the area has more than one historic name, use the one that most closely reflects the major significance of the district as it is being proposed. When there is no true historic name, enter "N/A."

The historic name is one that is generally associated with the significance of the district and ordinarily reflects one or more of the following:

- Original owner or builder (usually confined to an individual landmark), such as the Lake-Peterson House;
- Significant people or events associated with the district, such as the Jane Addams Historic District;
- Original or later uses of the property, such as the Barber-Colman Historic District;

- Innovative or unusual characteristics of the district, such as the Beattie Park Mound Group; or
- Accepted professional, scientific, technical or traditional names, such as the Haight Village Historic District.

Common Name

The common name is the title by which the district is known at the time of designation. It may be representative of the district’s history or it may reflect current ownership or popular use.

2. LOCATION

Provide a verbal description of the outer boundary of the proposed district. **For example**, Napoleon to Bonaparte Streets, Wellington to Nelson Avenues. List inclusive street address numbers for all streets within the proposed district. **For example**, 120-157 East Main Street; 210-1139 Perry Street. If only one side of a street is included, specify which side, either by the odd or even side, or by direction (e.g., north side of the street).

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership

Public and private ownership are, in most cases, evident from the information given in question #5. In districts where both are present, check “Public and private” and describe the general types of ownership in response to question #8.

Primary Use

Fill in the most predominant use(s) within the district (e.g., residential or residential and institutional).

Number of Resources Within the District

Two things are required here. First, you must determine the number of buildings, sites, structures and objects within the proposed district; then you must determine how many are contributing and how many non-contributing. Use the following definitions as you do this:

- **Building.** Any structure designed to shelter any form of human activity, such as a house, barn, church, hotel or store. Garages should be counted as buildings.
- **Site.** A site is the location of a significant event; a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity; or a building or structure, whether standing, ruined or vanished, where the location itself has historic cultural or archeological value regardless of the value of any existing structure. For example, the Effigy Mounds in Beattie Park constitute a site.
- **Structure.** Structures differ from buildings in that they are usually made for purposes other than creating shelter. For example, a bridge would be considered a structure but not a building.
- **Object.** Objects are constructions that are primarily artistic in nature or are relatively small in scale and simply constructed. Although it may, by nature or design, be movable, an object is associated with a specific setting or environment such as statuary in a designed landscape. Objects should be located in a setting appropriate to their significant historic use, role or character. Examples of objects include Symbol and the statue of the Civil War soldier at Main and Auburn.

- **Contributing.** A contributing building, site, structure or object adds to the historic architectural qualities, historic associations, or archeological values for which a district is significant because
 - It was present during the district’s period of significance (see question #4 for this) and possesses historic integrity reflecting its character at that time or can yield important information about that period; or
 - It independently meets the criteria to be designated a landmark by the City of Rockford.
- **Noncontributing.** A noncontributing building, site, structure or object does not add to the historic architectural qualities, historic associations, or archeological values for which a district is significant because
 - It was not present during the district’s period of significance;
 - It no longer possesses historic integrity due to alterations, disturbances, additions or other changes; or
 - It does not independently meet the criteria to be designated a landmark by the City of Rockford.

4. PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

Period of significance relates to the criteria under which an area is being nominated for historic district status. To determine what it is, answer the question of when did activities in the proposed district occur that resulted in its being qualified to be a district. If the primary reason for designation is architecture, then this will probably be the years when contributing buildings were constructed. If it relates more to certain historical events, then the timing of those events would determine the period of significance.

5. OWNER(S) OF PROPERTY

Attach a list of the owners of all properties included within the proposed district. In addition to the owner’s name, the list should include the location and PIN number of each property within the district, and the mailing address of the owner if it is different from the location.

You may obtain a copy of the map of your proposed district from the Secretary of the Rockford Historic Preservation Commission. This will show you the PIN numbers. Information concerning owners can be obtained from the Winnebago County Treasurer’s Office in the County Administration Building at 404 Elm Street.

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

Many properties nominated to be included in a local historic district have already been listed in local or statewide surveys done by either the Rockford Historic Preservation Commission or the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. Any properties within your proposed district that are included in one of these surveys should be noted in this block. Copies of surveys are not necessary – simply list the address of the property, the year the survey was done, who did it, and how the property was ranked. This information is available at the Rockford Historic Preservation Commission office.

7. DESCRIPTION

Describe the historical and current condition of the district. The narrative should document the evolution of the district, describing major changes that have taken place since its initial development or period of significance. Begin with a summary paragraph that briefly describes the general characteristics of the district such as its location and setting, types of uses and structures to be found there, and any other information that will convey a good understanding of what the district is about.

The following outline lists the types of information that should be included in describing districts based on the presence of significant architectural or historical properties.

- Natural and manmade elements within the district, including prominent topographical features and structures, buildings, sites, objects or other kinds of development.
- Architectural styles or periods represented in the district and their predominant characteristics such as scale, proportions, materials, color, decoration, workmanship and quality of design.
- The general physical relationship of buildings to each other and to the environment – façade lines, street plans, squares, open spaces, density of development, landscaping, principal vegetation, and important natural features. Any changes to these relationships over time should be noted as well. Some of this information may be provided on a sketch map. If you use the map approach, make sure elements on it are clearly labeled and that the map as a whole is labeled as part of Question #6.
- The appearance of the district during the period(s) when it achieved significance, and any changes that have occurred since then.
- The general character of the district – residential, commercial, industrial – and the types of buildings, including outbuildings, found in the district.
- General condition of the buildings, including alterations and additions, and any restoration or rehabilitation activities.
- Identify which properties contribute to the district’s significance and which do not. (See above for definition of contributing and noncontributing.) This can be done either as text, or as a table. In either case, some basic information should be included for each property – address, type of use (such as duplex or office building), architectural style, date of construction, builder and/or architect (if known), and whether it is contributing or noncontributing. In addition, a map indicating contributing and noncontributing should also be included.
- The qualities that distinguish the proposed district from the areas surrounding it.
- The presence of any archeological resources, or of open spaces such as parks, vacant lots, wetlands and wooded areas.
- For **industrial** districts, describe the following:
 - Industrial activities and processes that took place there, and important physical features related to these processes or activities such as streams, quarries or mines.
 - Original and other historical machinery still in place.
 - Linear systems within the district such as rail lines that serve(d) industries there, with the location of terminal points.

If you are not familiar with architectural styles and terminology, the Rockford Public Library has several books that you can use to help with this aspect of the application. These include

- *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAlester, R 917.304927 M114F
- *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945* by John Blumenson 720.973 BLU 1981

- *What Style Is It?* [2003 edition] by John C. Poppeliers, 720.973 P831W
- *A Field Guide to American Architecture* by Carole Rifkind, 720.973 R564F
- *A Field Guide to Contemporary American Architecture* [1940s to the present] by Carole Rifkind, 720.973 R564F
- *House Styles in America: The Old-House Journal Guide to the Architecture of American Homes* by James C. Massey, 728.0973 M416H
- *American House Styles: A Concise Guide* by John Milnes Baker, 728.370973 B167A
- *Houses from Books: Treatises, Pattern Books and Catalogs in American Architecture* by Daniel D. Reiff, 728 R361H
- *The Visual Dictionary of American Domestic Architecture* by Rachel Carley, 728.0973 C281V
- *Old-House Dictionary: An Illustrated Guide to American Domestic Architecture (1600-1940)* by Steven J. Phillips, R 728 P563

8. SIGNIFICANCE

Describe what it is that makes this area eligible for designation as a historic district. Drawing on facts about the history of the district and historic trends – local, state or national – that the district reflects, make the case for its historic significance and integrity. Specifically show how historic events, activities, people, physical features, artistic qualities, architectural styles and/or archeological evidence within the district relate to the criteria under which it is being nominated. Be sure to include in this discussion the rationale for the period of significance for the proposed district.

Type of information that may be covered in this section include the following:

- Basis for the selected “period of significance” for the district.
- Features and characteristics that distinguish the district from adjacent areas and/or the rest of the community.
- Origins and historical development of the district. This can include a discussion of any architects, builders, designers or planners who were important to the district’s development.
- How the district conveys a sense of historic and architectural cohesiveness through its design, setting, materials and/or workmanship.
- How significant individuals or events contributed to development of the district.
- How the district affected the historical development of the City of Rockford.
- How intrusions and noncontributing structures and buildings affect the district’s ability to convey a sense of its significance.
- How the district compares to similar areas in the City of Rockford.
- Description of any preservation or restoration activities occurring in the district, and how they affect its historical significance.
- For industrial districts, how the industrial functions or processes represented in the proposed district relate to the broader industrial or technological development of the City of Rockford. This could include a discussion of any entrepreneurs, engineers or other innovators contributed to development of the district and/or how the remaining buildings or structures within the district reflect industrial production or processes.
- Resources of possible archeological significance.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Enter the primary and secondary sources of information used in documenting and evaluating this district in a standard bibliographical style. General reference works on architecture, archaeology, etc. need not be included unless they provide specific information which is of assistance. For unpublished manuscripts, indicate where copies are available. For interviews, include the date of the interview, the name and title of the person interviewed, and the name of the person who conducted the interview.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

This section is to include a definition of the proposed district's boundaries **and** an explanation of how they were derived. Carefully select boundaries to include, but not exceed, the full extent of the significant resources making up the district. The area to be designated should be large enough to include all the features of the district, but should not include buffer zones of acreage not directly contributing to the significance of the district.

Required information in this section includes a legal description of the proposed district.

Be sure to select boundaries that encompass the significant concentration of buildings, sites, structures and/or objects making up the district. **Boundaries may be based on any of the following but must, by City ordinance, be “natural or existing improved” boundaries.**

- Visual barriers that mark a change in the historic character of the area or that break the continuity of the district, such as new construction, highways, or development of a different character or era.
- Boundaries at a specific time in history, such as the original recorded boundaries of a subdivision.
- Visual changes in the character of the area due to different architectural styles, types or periods, or to a decline in the concentration of contributing resources.
- Natural topographic features such as a ridge, river or forest.
- Clearly differentiated patterns of historic development, such as commercial versus residential or industrial.
- Manmade features such as streets or railroad tracks.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Enter the name, title and organization (if applicable), address and daytime phone number of the person or persons who prepared the application form.

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION

In addition to the application form itself, an application for designation of a historic district in the City of Rockford must also include the items described on the following pages before it will be accepted for review.

12. SIGNATURE

Just what it says on the form – the applicant's signature.

13. PETITION

Each application must include with it a petition signed by the owners of two-thirds (66%) of the parcels proposed for inclusion in the district indicating their desire to be included in a local historic district. **This petition must be in the form provided by the Rockford Historic Preservation Commission.**

14. MAP(S)

Include one or more maps showing the boundaries of the proposed district and the location of all buildings and structures in the area included in the application. These should be drawn as much to scale as possible. Any maps submitted in digital form should be a pdf file or in ESRI's ArcView format. Printed maps should not be any larger than 11" x 17" in size unless a larger format is needed for readability.

Maps should clearly display the information listed below by coding, cross-hatching, numbering or other graphic techniques.

A map does not need to be absolutely precise in scale, but it does need to be close enough to give a clear picture of what is being shown. The key map should identify the following:

- Boundary of the proposed district.
- Names of streets and places.
- Highway numbers where applicable (e.g., IL-2).
- North arrow.
- Approximate scale.
- Contributing buildings, sites, structures and/or objects, keyed to photographs and the discussion in Questions 7 and 8.
- Noncontributing buildings, sites, structures and/or objects, keyed to photographs and the discussion in Questions 7 and 8.

Maps may also be used to supplement the description of the evolution of a district; or to indicate where major architectural styles, periods or building types occur in a district; or to show where specific events occurred.

15. PHOTOGRAPHS

Applications must include photographs of the exterior of any buildings or structures as they are seen from a public right-of-way. This includes alleys and the Rock River where applicable. Streetscapes and landscapes are recommended as well as a means of conveying the overall character of the district. **Key all photographs to the key map included with the application.**

Photographs may be submitted in one of two formats – as prints from a standard 35 mm SLR camera, or in digital format. Guidelines for the former are as follows:

- Photos should be at least 4" x 6" in size.
- They should be printed on paper with a standard finish (matte, glossy or satin).
- They should not be mounted.
- Label photos in pencil on the back with the following information:

- Street address;
- Date the photo was taken; and
- Photo number as keyed to the map. (If there is more than one map, make sure to indicate which one.)
- Do **not** use adhesive labels as they will fall off over time.
- If the paper the photo was printed on does not take pencil, use a permanent audio-visual marking pen or pencil such as a Sharpie.

Digital photographs should be done in the following manner:

- Capturing the image:
 - Best – minimum 6 megapixels at 300 dpi
 - Acceptable – minimum 2 megapixels at 300 dpi
- Paper and inks:
 - Ink – manufacturer recommended ink for photographic printing
 - Paper – manufacturer recommended paper for photographic printing
 - Not acceptable – standard copier or printer paper; disk only without prints

16. FILING FEE

Applications must be accompanied by the required filing fee of \$122 for the proposed district as a whole, plus \$23 per parcel. For the purposes of the application, a parcel is any piece of property with its own PIN number. If, for example, an individual owns two parcels, one with a house on it and the other serving as additional yard space, then that would be considered two parcels as long as each has its own PIN number. The fee should be paid in the form of a check (or checks) made out to the City of Rockford and submitted with the application form. Applications will not be accepted without payment of the filing fee.

17. DESIGN GUIDELINES

Starting at the time when an application is accepted – when all of the above information is submitted to the office of the Rockford Historic Preservation Commission and accepted for review – any exterior changes to properties within the proposed district that are visible from a public right-of-way are subject to review by the Commission. (A change is a change in material and/or design from what is currently there, not from what may have originally been there.) The Commission’s review will be based on its *Design Guidelines for Historic Properties in Rockford* and must be completed before any building permits or zoning clearances will be issued. These Guidelines are viewable on the City of Rockford website at <https://rockfordil.gov/city-departments/community-and-economic-development/construction-and-development-services/historic-preservation/historic-preservation-forms/>

The Rockford Code of Ordinances does give applicants the option of proposing customized guidelines for use by the Commission in reviewing work in their particular district. **Should you wish to do this, the proposed guidelines should be included with the other application materials.**

QUESTIONS??

If you have any questions about the form or the process of submitting a landmark application, please call the Rockford Historic Preservation Commission at 779/348-7447.