

Neighborhood Preservation

While neighborhood planning is not directly under the charge of the Preservation Commission, some of the Commission's duties and powers can help shape neighborhood preservation for the future of Carbondale. Most directly related is the criterion for neighborhood preservation designation, which provides for areas where:

j. Its recognition as a Carbondale neighborhood, commercial area, or public activity center characterized by solid housing or commercial buildings (which are not necessarily significant or homogeneous in architectural design), and whose properties and structure are threatened by deterioration, demolition, or disharmonious alteration. (Carbondale Zoning Ordinance, "Preservation District")

In this respect, the Preservation Ordinance may serve as a tool for neighborhood conservation. Numerous areas of the City are being recommended as potential historic districts and neighborhood preservation districts in this Preservation Plan. The designation of these areas would provide design review for not only the extant buildings, but also for new infill construction within these areas. Maintaining and enhancing the character of these areas can provide a renewed sense of pride in not only the residents of the neighborhood, but also in the community as a whole, as properties are stabilized.

Support, awareness, and concern for neighborhoods was illustrated in the Comprehensive Plan process, and again in the Preservation Plan process. Neighborhood issues were among the most common responses at the Community Interactive Workshop, held in conjunction with the preparation of this Preservation Plan. Comments ranged from participants noting the City has "architecturally significant neighborhoods," to "rental [housing being] rundown" and "nice, old neighborhoods not being maintained." A number of responses focused around seeking a return of multi-family conversions back to single family dwellings, better property maintenance, and more student housing being provided on the Southern Illinois University campus.

The Comprehensive Plan points to four key factors which create a sense of pride in the citizens who live in Carbondale, with neighborhoods being one of the factors. A variety of neighborhoods offer a desirable living environment, with convenient amenities, safety, and friendliness in these neighborhoods being a strong part of what draws people to the community. Focus groups, which participated in the development of the Comprehensive Plan, identified key neighborhood-related issues as well. Among these issues were infill development for vacant land, concern over the deterioration of the housing stock, and the conversion of single family housing to multi-family housing (accompanied by a lack of maintenance). The general concern over historic neighborhoods is identified especially in a policy statement related to high density residential areas:

"There are a lot of older homes in Carbondale that add historic value and are in need of repair. The restoration of these homes can add new life to the housing stock and enhance neighborhoods. The City should encourage the restoration of

older homes, or demolition and rebuilding of non-historic existing structures to maintain the quality of the adjacent lots.” (Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 5)

The key to any success in designations for neighborhood preservation districts will be education, awareness, and involvement. The citizens of Carbondale seem to generally view the City in terms of the four quadrants: northeast, southeast, northwest, and southwest. Since this “sense of place” is already commonplace in the City, any neighborhood efforts should work within this existing framework, to build upon this recognition. Within the four quadrants, smaller neighborhoods might be defined by traffic patterns, with more heavily traveled streets separating areas in a similar fashion to how the four quadrants are identified. Factors such as dates of subdivision plats and ages of buildings may also have an effect on the sense of neighborhood. Building use could have an impact on neighborhood definition as well: single family versus residences converted into multi-family rentals versus larger-scale multi-family apartment buildings. However, the sense of neighborhood is probably best defined by the perceptions of the residents themselves. How residents relate to each other can defy any physical characteristics within the quadrants.

Through architectural/historic surveys, tours, and various preservation education actions, the Preservation Commission could facilitate neighborhood identification and encourage the formation of neighborhood organizations for areas which currently have no organization. The Commission might begin this process by holding informational meetings in neighborhoods to highlight historic district and neighborhood preservation district recommendations in the Preservation Plan, and to explain the process/benefits of designation. Some of the numerous education actions suggested in this Plan could focus on neighborhoods. “How to Research your Old Building” workshops might be held within each neighborhood, with Preservation Commissioners highlighting places which have been recommended for local designation. Walking tours could also focus on neighborhoods, whether a single neighborhood, or common aspects of various neighborhoods, i.e. vernacular house types in Carbondale as a themed tour.

The physical identification of neighborhoods through signage or banners can also help to build a sense of neighborhood. The Preservation Commission could recommend to the City aesthetic measures which may assist with neighborhood identification, regardless of property designations. A good example is the Broadway Neighborhood in Rock Island. The City placed neighborhood signs as a third layer on corner street signs, calling the neighborhood the “Broadway Area.” Several years later, a National Register nomination was successful, and the “area” is now a National Register historic district. The identification program helped form a stronger neighborhood identity. Streetlights might also be a way to provide distinctions between the various neighborhoods.

One of the challenges presented to any neighborhood preservation efforts in the City is the high number of rental houses, particularly student rentals, which occupy portions of these neighborhoods. These include single family houses and numerous historic houses which were originally single family, but have been converted into multi-family. Residents should be encouraged to participate in any activities which are geared toward creating and improving a sense of pride within neighborhoods.

Recommendations

- The Preservation Commission should focus some of their education efforts on creating attention to the City's historic neighborhoods.
- The Preservation Commission should hold informational meetings in neighborhoods to highlight historic district and neighborhood preservation district recommendations in the Preservation Plan and to explain the process/benefits of designation.
- The Preservation Commission should consider creating a Neighborhoods Committee, with liaisons from each of the City's neighborhoods. The Neighborhoods Committee could work with the Preservation Commission to develop some of the education activities which have been suggested in this Plan.
- The Preservation Commission should work with residents and the City in code enforcement, where violations are conveying a negative image for some historic areas.
- The Preservation Commission should encourage the formation of neighborhood organizations for areas which currently have no organization.
- The Preservation Commission could recommend to the City aesthetic measures which may assist with neighborhood identification, regardless of property designations.
- The Preservation Commission should work with the City to create various grants programs which could focus on the enhancement of historic neighborhoods. Such programs might include a paint rebate program (to encourage painting rather than artificial siding), exterior facade grants (for porch repairs or removal of artificial siding), or even a freeze on local property taxes similar to that offered by the state for the rehabilitation of locally designated properties. (See Section IV. *Recommendations: Incentives for Historic Preservation* for additional information.)
- The Preservation Commission should work with Development Services staff to examine potential incentive programs which encourage the conversion of rental properties to owner-occupied dwellings and/or encourage the reduction of the number of units in converted single family houses.

The following codes have been used with the recommended properties below to indicate that a property has been documented through a previous survey:

- KIR - *Report of an Architectural/Historical Survey of the Central Area of Carbondale, Illinois*, November 1991, Charles Kirchner & Associates, project consultants.
- THO - *The Historic Town Square, Carbondale, Illinois*, May 1997, Thomason and Associates, consultants
- IHSR - *Illinois Historic Structures Report*
- IHLS - *Illinois Historic Landmarks Survey*

The numbers accompanying the references to the Kirchner and/or Thomason surveys refer to the survey form number. A survey map accompanies each of these survey projects, showing the survey numbers and the location of the properties. When names of buildings are listed, these are historic names and do not necessarily reflect the current occupant of the building.

In addition, the following codes have been used with the recommended properties below to indicate a property is suitable for further investigation for nomination to the National or Local Register program, or is listed in **BOLD** if it is presently included on the National or Local Registers:

- NR - National Register of Historic Places
- NRHD - National Register of Historic Districts
- LL - Local Landmark
- LHD - Local Historic District
- LNPD - Local Neighborhood Preservation District

Neighborhood Preservation Districts

For the following neighborhood preservation district recommendations, general boundaries or blocks to be included are given with the proposed name of the neighborhood preservation district. Beneath these general boundaries are street/address lists for properties which have been documented in previous surveys. The street/address lists are based solely on previously surveyed buildings and may not be all encompassing for properties which should be included in the proposed neighborhood preservation districts. The general description should be the boundary of each neighborhood preservation district.

West Pecan Street Neighborhood Preservation District

Generally 512 through the 800 block of W. Pecan and the 400 block of N. Poplar

Documented buildings on West Pecan Street include:

512 W. Pecan KIR236
604 W. Pecan KIR231

Documented buildings on North Poplar Street include:

401 N. Poplar KIR241
403 N. Poplar KIR240

West Main Street - North Springer Street Neighborhood Preservation District

T-shaped District extending along the north side 600 - 800 blocks of W. Main Street and turning up North Springer Street to encompass the 100 - 400 blocks, both sides of the street

This is an important linkage to the West Walnut Street [National Register] Historic District, and represents some significant older housing, much of which has been converted to office use along W. Main Street. The insensitive rehabilitations of these older houses should be discontinued and signage along the W. Main Street corridor should be better regulated.

Documented buildings on West Main Street include:

700 W. Main KIR364

Documented buildings on North Springer Street include:

Renfro Residence, 102N. Springer KIR344
103 N. Springer KIR339
104 N. Springer KIR343
105 N. Springer KIR338
106 N. Springer KIR342
107 N. Springer KIR337
Vauple Residence, 109 N. Springer KIR336
Carbondale Community High School, 200 N. Springer KIR330
201 N. Springer KIR335
203 N. Springer KIR334

Documented buildings on North Springer Street, continued:

Nooner Residence, 207 N. Springer KIR332
Bridge Apartments, 209 N. Springer KIR331
School District #165 Office, 300 N. Springer KIR290
306 N. Springer KIR287
Dillow Home, 402 N. Springer KIR228
404 N. Springer KIR229
406 N. Springer KIR223
408 N. Springer KIR224

South Springer Street Neighborhood Preservation District

Despite these properties being included in the boundaries of the West Walnut Street Historic District (National Register), the lack of architectural integrity is now overwhelming.

Documented buildings on South Springer Street include:

103 S. Springer KIR394 (KIR-LHD) 109 S. Springer KIR397 (KIR-LHD)
104 S. Springer KIR393 (KIR-LHD) 110 S. Springer KIR391 (KIR-LHD)
105 S. Springer KIR395 (KIR-LHD) 111 S. Springer KIR398 (KIR-LHD)
107 S. Springer KIR396 (KIR-LHD) 112 S. Springer KIR390 (KIR-LHD)
108 S. Springer KIR392 (KIR-LHD) 209 S. Springer KIR399 (KIR-LHD)

West Sycamore Street Neighborhood Preservation District

500 block West Sycamore, both sides of the street

Documented buildings on West Sycamore Street include:

503 W. Sycamore KIR219
505 W. Sycamore KIR220
507 W. Sycamore KIR221

South Forest Street Neighborhood Preservation District

Between West Main and West Walnut streets, including the house at the southwest corner of Forest and West Main (which is 100 South Forest, despite appearing to face West Main Street)

This is a collection of late 19th century vernacular properties at the edge of the West Walnut Street Historic District (National Register).

800 block West Walnut Street Neighborhood Preservation District

Both sides of the street, from Forest Street to S. Oakland Avenue

Although outside of the West Walnut Street Historic District (National Register), these properties represent a significant concentration of vernacular housing.

West Monroe Street Neighborhood Preservation District

Encompassing the entire 300 and 400 blocks of W. Monroe Street, 201 S. Poplar Street, and 203 S. Poplar Street

Located one block south of W. Main Street, this two-block area generally includes a good representation of late nineteenth and early twentieth century vernacular building types with modest stylistic influence, but building condition is fair-to-poor. The residential setting, just west of the downtown, is important to maintain.

Documented buildings on West Monroe Street include:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 313 W. Monroe KIR328 | 413 W. Monroe KIR434 |
| 401 W. Monroe KIR429 | 415 W. Monroe KIR435 |
| 403 W. Monroe KIR430 | 417 W. Monroe KIR436 |
| 407 W. Monroe KIR431 | Honeymoon Apartments, 418 W. Monroe KIR 425 |
| 409 W. Monroe KIR432 | 423 W. Monroe KIR438 |
| 411 W. Monroe KIR433 | Brush Administration Center and other buildings |

Documented buildings on South Poplar Street include:

- 201 S. Poplar
- 203 S. Poplar KIR440

300 block West Walnut Street Neighborhood Preservation District

From S. Beveridge Avenue east to 309 on the south side and from Poplar Avenue east to 308 on the north side ending one building west of the Christian Science Church

Documented buildings on the 300 block of West Walnut Street include:

- Bradley Residence, 308 W. Walnut KIR452 (KIR-LL)
- Marcus Ogden House, 323 W. Walnut KIR473 (KIR-NR/LL)

200 block East Main Street Neighborhood Preservation District

A nice grouping of historic commercial buildings, which generally suffers from storefront and other alterations, except for the Hundley Building at 209, which retains significant features of its original storefront.

Documented buildings on East Main Street include:

- 209 E. Main KIR112, THO112 (KIR-LHD)
- 213 E. Main KIR111, THO111 (KIR-LHD)
- 215 E. Main KIR110 (KIR-LHD)
- 217 E. Main KIR109, THO109 (KIR-LHD)

South Illinois Avenue Neighborhood Preservation District

Approximately from West Grand Avenue north through part of the 300 block

This historic linkage between the campus of Southern Illinois University and Carbondale's historic downtown is an important aspect of the community. In recent years, modern construction has sometimes been incompatible with the remaining older building stock. Neighborhood Preservation District status would provide some much needed design regulation for new construction and changes to existing buildings.