Grosse Pointe Historic District Study Committee

January 13, 2021
Types of Historic Designation

National Register of Historic Places – primarily honorific, does not impose regulation or design review, allows owners of income producing properties to apply for a federal historic rehabilitation tax credit.

State Register of Historic Sites – only used in conjunction with the Michigan Historical Marker Program.

Local Historic Districts – protects properties by requiring review and approval of any exterior changes.
Benefits of a local historic district

• Protection of irreplaceable historic properties that tell the story of Grosse Pointe and its residents
• Protection of investments made in rehabilitating historic properties
• Review of any exterior changes to the buildings or land within the district by a local historic district commission – including demolitions and new construction
• Ensures any changes within the district are in keeping with The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation
• Michigan Local Historic Districts Act, Act 169 of 1970 is the state enabling legislation that governs district creation and administration
How to Create a Local Historic District

Local legislative body adopts a resolution to approve a historic district study

Local legislative body appoints a Historic District Study Committee

Study Committee performs photographic inventory and research

Study Committee evaluates resources using National Register of Historic Places criteria

Study committee prepares a preliminary historic district study committee report according to Section 3 of PA 169

Study Committee officially transmits report to local planning board, SHPO, Michigan Historical Commission and State Review Board

At least 60 days after the official transmittal of the report the Study Committee holds a public hearing

Study Committee has up to 1 year after the public hearing to submit a final report to the local legislative body

Local legislative body votes to approve or reject the proposed historic district

A historic district ordinance must be adopted and a historic district commission appointed at the time the historic district is approved

Property owners apply to Commission for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) before undertaking work in the historic district
Historic District Study Committee

• Appointed by City Council
• A majority of members must have a clearly demonstrated interest in or knowledge of historic preservation, and shall contain representation from 1 or more duly organized local historic preservation organizations
• Committee conducts a **photographic inventory, historic research, and evaluation of study area** – results in a study committee report that will eventually be submitted to Council with Committee’s recommendation – Council makes final decision
• Professional assistance with the inventory and research, as well evaluation of the potential districts is allowed
Historic District Study Committee

• Evaluation of study area – Committee makes recommendations to Council on:
  • If there is a district and if so, what are the borders?
  • The significance and period of significance for the district
  • Which properties are contributing, and which are non-contributing
  • The name of the district

• [https://www.miplace.org/historic-preservation/programs-and-services/local-historic-districts/](https://www.miplace.org/historic-preservation/programs-and-services/local-historic-districts/) - various documents to guide the work

Anticipated timeline and process

January - first study committee meeting, receive information and assignments

February – review draft preliminary study committee report – possibly adopt, start 60 day waiting process, submit report to SHPO and Planning Commission for comments

April – hold public hearing, review draft final report

May – possibly adopt final report, transmit recommendations back to City Council

NOTE: this is a tentative timeline and may need to be adjusted
Survey/study area designated by City Council
Intensive Level Survey Review

- General history of Grosse Pointe and more detailed history of the survey area
- Exterior photos of all the buildings in the survey area
- History of individual properties in the survey area – date of construction, architect, original owners, owners of note
- Survey forms for every property
- Report with recommendations on possible districts
Intensive Level Survey Results Review

- Proposed district boundaries shown on map
- 102 properties surveyed, 92 properties in proposed district – 56 contributing, 36 non-contributing
- Period of significance 1898-1940
- Meets National Register criteria A, B, and C
The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

The proposed district is significant under criteria A for its association with the early development of Grosse Pointe and the residences constructed when the city was being developed as a suburb of Detroit.

The proposed district is significant under criteria B for its association with a number of the early residents of the district who were important to the history of Grosse Pointe, Detroit, and southeast Michigan. Many of the original owners constructed large architect designed homes that served the needs of their families and affluent lifestyles.

The proposed district is significant under criteria C for its association with prominent Detroit architects. At least thirty-four of the contributing resources were designed by noted architects including George Mason; Albert Kahn; Smith, Hinchman & Grylls; and Robert Derrick among others. While perhaps not the most notable designs by these architects the collection of so many architect designed houses in the proposed district points to the importance of the original owners and defines the built environment of the proposed district. The architectural styles represented are the popular styles in the period of significance and include Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Prairie, and Neo-Classical.
Assistance Requested from Study Committee Members

• Careful review of information on survey sheets, survey report, and draft study committee reports
• Brief biography – 2 to 3 sentences, emphasizing your interest in historic preservation
• Survey report pages 22-25 and Resource List – any information to add? Any information on houses original owners or architects that you have that is missing? Any past owners that have association with Grosse Pointe community or politics?
• Brick walls – estate walls – any information and documentation?
• 203 and 243 Lakeland – some confusion – need clarification – see separate slide
• 333 Washington – difference in historic photographs
Brick walls

Any maps or other documentation showing the age and significance of these walls that are primarily along E. Jefferson but may exist in other parts of the proposed district.
203 and 243 Lakeland

ARTISTIC HOME WITH GLASS ENCLOSED PORCHES IS BUILT IN GROSSE POINTE

RESIDENCE FOR DANIEL T. CROWLEY.

The glass-enclosed porches of the first floor, featuring Lake St. Clair, with two sweeping porches, make this one of the few homes in the area. The house is being constructed on the west side of Lake St. Clair, near the site of the former house of Daniel T. Crowley, mayor of Crowle.

Katherine C. Travis, Crowle’s executive

Katherine Crowle Travis has been described as a woman with a mind of her own. She took free-lance and theatrical writing jobs in New York and acted in little theater groups in New York and Detroit.

And while she came from a well-to-do family, graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Vassar College, had lived and traveled extensively in Europe, and was married to a prominent attorney, she worked for thirty years during World War II as the advertising department of a local retail store.

Mrs. Travis died Monday in her home in Grosse Pointe. She was 83.

She moved into the executive world at a time when it was unusual for a woman to do so,” said Joseph Keys, Mrs. Travis’ nephew.

Born Katherine Jane Crowle, she graduated from Vassar in 1916, became an avid golfer, and met Detroit’s Norman Travis at a championship golf tournament in Flint; they were married in 1924. She was the eldest of three sisters and the only one to work as an executive in the family store.

Before she became vice president of Crowle’s, Mrs. Travis worked at the store as an advertising copywriter, assistant merchandise manager, personal director, research director and public relations director. She retired in 1960.

Mrs. Travis is listed in Who’s Who of American Women and was a member of the League of Women Voters, Detroit Foundation of Women’s Clubs, Women’s City Club, Vassar Club and Women Writers Club.

She was survived by her brother-in-law, David G. Standert; two sisters, Patricia Standert Marries and Joan Standert; and two stepchildren, Richard Starrett Keys and Joseph Crowley Jr.

243 Lakeland was home to Katherine Crowle Travis until her death in 1981. She was the daughter of Joseph J. Crowle, of the Crowley’s Department Stores where she worked until her retirement in 1960. She was married to prominent attorney Delltull Norman Travis. Later the house was owned by Lorenzo “Red” Browning, the president of his family’s companies, T.T. Browning Steamship Company and Bobbi Island. He served on the Grosse Pointe City Council from 1970, and mayor of the city from 1983, until his death in 1994.
333 Washington

Roofline drastically different – anyone know what might have happened? Non-contributing?
Questions and discussion