

RESOLUTION/ FINDINGS OF FACT

Village of Oak Park
Historic Preservation Commission
Nomination for Historic Landmark Status
400 North Kenilworth Avenue

WHEREAS, the property owner (hereinafter referred to as “applicant”) filed a Nomination for Landmark Status on February 12, 2018 for the ***John J. Schmidt House*** with the Historic Preservation Commission, (hereinafter referred to as “Commission”) the property being located at **400 North Kenilworth Avenue**, Oak Park, Illinois; and

WHEREAS, Christopher Payne, Chair of the Historic Preservation Commission scheduled the nomination for preliminary review at the regularly scheduled Historic Preservation Commission meeting of March 8, 2018; and

WHEREAS, at that regularly scheduled meeting the Historic Preservation Commission, it was unanimously determined that there was a likelihood that the nominated property would meet one or more of the criteria for designation contained in the Historic Preservation Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, Christopher Payne, Chair of the Historic Preservation Commission, set Thursday evening, April 12, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. as the date and time of a public hearing held at Oak Park Village Hall, 123 Madison Street, to take testimony on the question as to whether the ***John J. Schmidt House*** should be recommended for Nomination as an Oak Park Landmark; and

WHEREAS, notice of the time and place of said public hearing was duly published on March 28, 2018 in the Wednesday Journal, a newspaper of general circulation in the Village of Oak Park, and letters were also mailed to property owners within 250 feet of the subject property, advising them of the application and the public hearing to be held thereon; and

WHEREAS, on April 12, 2018 this Commission did have a quorum of members present; and

WHEREAS, this Commission having fully heard and considered the testimony of the applicant and others present at the hearing and materials submitted prior to and during the hearing, does hereby find the following:

1. The John J. Schmidt House was constructed c. 1872 in the Italianate style of architecture.
2. The house is a two-story frame structure with a front gable. The house is clad with wood clapboard siding and has moderately overhanging eaves, paired windows in the attic-level gable, and relatively tall, narrow, second-floor windows with curved caps and ornate casing or framing. The current single story front porch is particularly evocative of the Italianate style due to its narrow Doric support columns, which appear paired from western and north/south vantage points (though in fact they are triple columns), and its wide overhanging eaves supported by paired brackets.

3. The current front porch and the northern six feet (including the current front door) are additions that were constructed in 1908 and designed by architect Eben E. Roberts.
4. The house at 400 North Kenilworth Avenue is significant in the way it thoroughly encapsulates Oak Park's long history, illustrates the progressiveness of Oak Park's turn-of-the-century citizens, and exemplifies Oak Park's broad contributions to American residential architecture. The original 1872 house typifies the early development of Oak Park because it was built in the Italianate style during the aftermath of the Great Chicago Fire for a commuting Chicago manufacturing executive on land purchased from Joseph Kettlestrings. Like much of Oak Park, the original one-acre property was subdivided by its owner in the 1880s to make room for three more residences as the area transitioned from wide country estates to a more populated suburban neighborhood.
5. That thanks to its 1908 expansion and interior renovation by local architect Eben Ezra Roberts, the Schmidt House illustrates how unusually progressive the citizens of Oak Park were, including Dr. David Hare, the home's sixth owner (1908-1952), who commissioned E.E. Roberts. Evidently, Dr. Hare at once appreciated the traditional European-inspired exterior while also desiring a modern interior in the style of many of his more radical Wright-designed neighbors. The harmonious integration of the Prairie style interior remodeling work within the predominantly Italianate exterior exemplifies E.E. Roberts's unique ability to make progressive architecture palatable to a wider audience. While less responsible for the direction of the Prairie style than his contemporaries such as Frank Lloyd Wright, architect E.E. Roberts had a greater impact on the spread of its ideas.
6. That the house is over 50 years old and possesses a high degree of physical integrity in terms of its historic location, siting, massing and character-defining exterior forms, details and materials.
7. That the evidence presented showed that the property meets the following criteria under section 7-9-5 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance "Criteria for Designation of Historic Landmarks and Interior Historic Landmarks":
 - (1) *Significance as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic or social development or heritage of the Village of Oak Park;*
 - (3) *Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the architectural, cultural, economic, historic or social heritage, or other aspect, of the Village of Oak Park, the State of Illinois, or the United States;*
 - (5) *Embodiment of those distinguishing characteristics of a significant architectural type, or style, or engineering specimen;*
 - (6) *Identification as the work of a builder, designer, architect, craftsperson, engineer or landscape architect whose individual work is significant in the development of the Village of Oak Park, the State of Illinois, or the United States.*

Now, therefore, be it and it is hereby resolved that this Historic Preservation Commission, acting under and by virtue of the authority conferred upon it by the Ordinance of the Village of Oak Park, does hereby recommend to the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Oak Park that the property located at **400 North Kenilworth Avenue** and known as the **John J. Schmidt House** be designated an Oak Park Historic Landmark under the provisions of the Oak Park Historic Preservation Ordinance.

Thursday, April 12, 2018