



**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING**

Thursday, March 23, 2023 – 7:00 PM
Village Hall – 400 Park Avenue – River Forest, IL 60305
First Floor Community Room

AGENDA

Public comments sent in advance of the meeting are shared with the Commission. You may submit your written public comments via email in advance of the meeting to: lmaseila@vrf.us . You may listen to the meeting by participating in a Zoom conference call as follows:

Zoom Conference Call: Dial-in number: 312-626-6799 with meeting ID: 864 8668 3669

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86486683669>

The agenda is as follows:

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of Meeting Minutes – January 26, 2022
- III. Public Comment
- IV. Discussion of Contributing or Noteworthy Properties to Consider for Significant Property Status
- V. Discussion Regarding Promotion of River Forest Architecture and History
 - a. Martin Braun and the Auvergne Neighborhood
- VI. Discussion of Additional Ways to Protect Significant Properties
- VII. Other Business
- VIII. Adjournment

VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

January 26, 2023

A meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held on January 26, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the First Floor Community Room at the River Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue.

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Chairman Franek, Commissioners Krusinski, Muhr, Graham-White, Saeger and Raino-Ogden. Commissioner Forehand arrived at 7:15.

Absent: Commissioner Muhr.

Also Present: Interim Village Administrator Matt Walsh, Management Analyst/Deputy Clerk Luke Masella

Administrator Walsh explained some of the staff transition in the Village. Deputy Clerk Luke Masella introduced himself to the group.

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – DECEMBER 15, 2022

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Raino-Ogden and SECONDED by Commissioner Saeger to approve the meeting minutes for December 15, 2022 as presented.

AYES: Chairman Franek, Commissioners Krusinski, Graham-White, Saeger, Raino-Ogden, Forehand

NAYS: None.

Motion Passes.

III. PUBLIC TESTIMONY

No public testimony was heard.

IV. DISCUSSION REGARDING PROMOTION OF RIVER FOREST ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORY

a. Presentation of updated Significant Property Map

Administrator Walsh share the progress that Commissioner Muhr made on the interactive map. The group praised the progress and expressed interest in using it as a tool for promotion. Suggestions were made to post links to specific homes each month in Village newsletters.

Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes
January 26, 2023

V. DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL WAYS TO PROTECT SIGNIFICANT PROPERTIES

a. Discussion of Process for Designating Additional Significant Properties

Administrator Walsh shared his conversations with the Village Attorney regarding the topic. Walsh stated that his recommendation is the Commission hold preliminary discussions about adding properties, then bring the suggestion to the Village Board before formal approvals and notifications are sent.

Chairman Franek asked Commissioner Saeger to present information on the contributing and notable properties at the next meeting.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Saeger mentioned an article from the Village of Oak Park regarding painting historic masonry homes. Sager suggested the Village share similar information.

Chairman Franek shared the results of his discussions with Frank Lipo regarding Martin Braun. Franek confirmed there were no known concerns about Braun and mentioned an article from the Wednesday Journal in 1994.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Raino-Ogden and SECONDED by Commissioner Graham White to adjourn the January 26, 2023 meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission at 7:45 p.m.

AYES: Chairman Franek, Commissioners Krusinski, Graham-White, Forehand and Raino-Ogden.

NAYS: None.

Motion Passes.

Respectfully submitted:

Matt Walsh
Assistant to the Village Administrator

Approved:

David Franek, Chairman
Historic Preservation Commission

Date

Village-Wide Architectural and Historical Survey Modification 527 Thatcher

The Historic Preservation Commission has completed an architectural and historical survey of the community. The Commission welcomes any additional information or corrections to the survey. Please fill out the form below and return to Village Hall (400 Park Ave) or email to jpape@vrf.us for consideration by the Commission.

Contact Information

Janet Saeger

Name of Contact Person

(847)226-0628

Phone Number

jhsaeger435@gmail.com

E-Mail Address

435 William, 801, River Forest

Address

Proposed Survey Modifications

Address of Property: Broughton House #1 527 Thatcher (old number 256)

Original Property Owner: John W. and Hattie H Broughton

Date of Construction: 1891

Architect: H. G Hodgkins news article Jan. 25, 1891 Chicago Daily Tribune.

Other:

John W. – Village Trustee 1893, 1894. First President when River Forest State Bank was organized 1912, remained President until death 1929.. Hired Spencer and Powers to design 530 Keystone on family property owned since 1876. Hattie – Charter life member of Women's Club and past president-1900.

Source of Information:

OPRF Museum Research Center; Board VP and researcher Kurt Etchingham found no evidence of another John/Hattie Broughton house prior to 1891.

Chicago Daily Tribune Jan. 25, 1891

Oak Park Vindicator Feb. 14, 1891

1891, 1892, 1893 Various Oak Park Reporter John and Hattie moving to new house

History of River Forest by Hall 1938

Reflections: A History of River Forest by Harriet Hausman

General Information Evaluation Architectural Descriptions Research Information

Preparer:

Nick Kalogeresis, The Lakota Group

Survey Date:

September 13, 2012

Photo 1

Photo 2

Photo 3 / Historic Photo

Survey Information Notes

Street Number:

527

Street:

Thatcher Avenue

PIN Number(s):

15-11-209-020-0000

Construction Date/Other Year:

1899

Architect:

Current Function/Category:

Single Family Residential Building

Historic Function:

Single Family Residential Building

Listing in Existing Survey:

Illinois Historic Structures Survey

Historic Name:

Current Name:

Construction Cost:

Architect 1 Information:

Architect 2 Information:

Contractor Information:

Developer Information:

Research/Archival Information:

Permit:

Subdivision:

Landscape/Streetscape:

Architectural Classification/Style:

Queen Anne

Ornamentation:

Number of Stories:

2 ½

Current Wall Material 1:

Wood clapboard

Current Wall Material 2:

Wood clapboard

Original Wall Material 1:

Wood clapboard

Original Wall Material 2:

Storefront Material:

Roof Type:

Roof Material:

Foundation Material/Form:

Porch:

Window Type:

Window Configuration:

Window Material:

Significant Features:

Alterations:

Building Form:

Windows on west elevation may have been replaced; shingle work added on first story a later remodeling.

Wall Detailing/Ornamentation:

Shingles/Shingle Pattern

Roof Ornamentation:

Door Detailing:

Dormers:

Window Storms:

Condition:

Excellent

Integrity:

Excellent

Secondary Structure:

Garage

Secondary Structure Condition:

Excellent

Secondary Structure Integrity:

Good

Contributing to a

National Register District:

Yes

Potentially Contributing to a

National Register District:

National Register Criterion:

Reason for Significance:

Landmark/National Register:

No

Significant:

No

Noteworthy Buildings

Less Than 50 Years Old

Village-Wide Architectural and Historical Survey Modification 535 Keystone

The Historic Preservation Commission has completed an architectural and historical survey of the community. The Commission welcomes any additional information or corrections to the survey. Please fill out the form below and return to Village Hall (400 Park Ave) or email to jpape@vrf.us for consideration by the Commission.

Contact Information

Janet Saeger

Name of Contact Person

(847)226-02628

Phone Number

Jhsaeger435@gmail.com

E-Mail Address

435 William, 801, River Forest

Address

Proposed Survey Modifications

Address of Property: 535 Keystone

Original Property Owner: Hiram and Mary Odell

Date of Construction: 1870-1871

Architect: Unknown.

Other:

Among first founders of Methodist Church in River Forest. Related to Sol Thatcher, Sr. family through marriage.

Source of Information:

Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest research center for annual house walk 2022 and Sidewalk tour.

Street Number:

535

Street:

Keystone Avenue

PIN Number(s):

15-12-107-016-0000

Construction Date/Other Year:

1862

Architect:

Current Function/Category:

Single Family Residential Building

Historic Function:

Single Family Residential Building

Listing in Existing Survey:

Illinois Historic Structures Surveys

Historic Name:

Current Name:

Construction Cost:

Architect 1 Information:

Architect 2 Information:

Contractor Information:

Developer Information:

Research/Archival Information:

Permit:

Subdivision:

Landscape/Streetscape:

Architectural Classification/Style:

Italianate

Ornamentation:

Number of Stories:

2 ½

Current Wall Material 1:

Vinyl Siding

Current Wall Material 2:

Original Wall Material 1:

Wood clapboard

Original Wall Material 2:

Storefront Material:

Roof Type:

Roof Material:

Foundation Material/Form:

Porch:

Window Type:

Window Configuration:

Window Material:

Significant Features:

Alterations:

Building Form:

Gable-EL

Cross gabled

Asphalt Shingle

Double-Hung

Multi-Paned

Wood

This house has lost some detailing and original entrance may have been enclosed. Addition on east elevation.

Wall Detailing/Ornamentation:

Roof Ornamentation:

Door Detailing:

Transom

Dormers:

Window Storms:

Yes

Not sure if this has retained it's significance architecturally.

Condition:

Excellent

Integrity:

Good

Secondary Structure:

Garage

Secondary Structure Condition:

Excellent

Secondary Structure Integrity:

Good

Contributing to a

National Register District:

Yes

Potentially Contributing to a

National Register District:

National Register Criterion:

C

Reason for Significance:

One of few remaining Gothic Revival homes in River Forest. This house retains a good level of integrity.

Landmark/National Register:

No

Significant:

No

Noteworthy Buildings

Less Than 50 Years Old:

Village-Wide Architectural and Historical Survey Modification 544 Thatcher

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Contact Information

Janet Saeger

Name of Contact Person

(847)226-0628

Phone Number

Jhsaeger435@gmail.com

E-Mail Address

435 William, 801, River Forest

Address

Proposed Survey Modifications

Address of Property: 544 Thatcher

Original Property Owner: Martha Broughton Prouty

Date of Construction: 1895

Architect: Two-flat Commissioned by George L. Thatcher for widowed mother-in-law to occupy and rent 2nd flat as a source of independent income. Architect unknown, builder most likely brother David A. Thatcher

Other:

Other notable residents or owners Mary E. Wessels, opened Hephzibah House, Oak Park. Nena Badenoch who worked w/ William Drummond 555 Edgewood

Source of Information:

Research by Kurt Etchingham, Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest for River Forest Sidewalk Tour and Historical Society Annual Housewalk Tales Our Houses Tell 2022

Architectural Descriptions Research Information

Preparer:

Nick Kalogeresis, The Lakota Group

Survey Date:

September 23, 2012

Photo 1

Photo 2

Photo 3 / Historic Photo

Survey Information Notes

Street Number:

544

Former Street Number

273

Street:

Thatcher Avenue

PIN Number(s):

15-11-208-032-0000

Construction Date/Other Year:

1900s

Architect:

Current Function/Category:

Single Family Residential Building

Historic Function:

Single Family Residential Building

Listing in Existing Survey:

Historic Name:

Current Name:

Construction Cost:

Architect 1 Information:

Architect 2 Information:

Contractor Information:

Developer Information:

Research/Archival Information:

Permit:

Subdivision:

Landscape/Streetscape:

Architectural Classification/Style:

Queen Anne

Ornamentation:

Number of Stories:

2 ½

Current Wall Material 1:

Wood clapboard

Current Wall Material 2:

Wood Shingles

Original Wall Material 1:

Original Wall Material 2:

Storefront Material:

Roof Type:

Roof Material:

Foundation Material/Form:

Porch:

Window Type:

Window Configuration:

Window Material:

Significant Features:

Alterations:

Building Form:

First and second floor porch railings may not be original.

Wall Detailing/Ornamentation:

Shingles/Shingle Pattern

Roof Ornamentation:

Towers/Turrets

Door Detailing:

Dormers:

Window Storms:

Condition:

Good

Integrity:

Good

Secondary Structure:

Secondary Structure Condition:

Secondary Structure Integrity:

Contributing to a

National Register District:

Yes

Potentially Contributing to a

National Register District:

National Register Criterion:

Reason for Significance:

Landmark/National Register:

Significant:

No

Noteworthy Buildings

Less Than 50 Years Old:

Original Building Owner:

Window Details

Village-Wide Architectural and Historical Survey Modification 629 Thatcher

The Historic Preservation Commission has completed an architectural and historical survey of the community. The Commission welcomes any additional information or corrections to the survey. Please fill out the form below and return to Village Hall (400 Park Ave) or email to jpape@vrf.us for consideration by the Commission.

Contact Information

Janet Saeger
Name of Contact Person
(847)226-0628
Phone Number
jhsaeger435@gmail.com
E-Mail Address
435 William, 801, River Forest
Address

Proposed Survey Modifications

Address of Property: 629 Thatcher
Original Property Owner: P H and Helen Sullivan
Date of Construction: 1911
Architect: Harry H Mahler
Other:
P H Sullivan Village Trustee 1916,'17'18'19. Helen 2nd daughter of T. M Jackson, past Village President.
Data not found to support RF Searchable Database topic "Alterations: This house may have been an earlier Queen Anne remodeled with Craftsman elements".

Source of Information:

Research by Kurt Etchingham and Jan Saeger, Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest
River Forest Village Hall 1911 Permit for T. M. Jackson
Reflections, A River Forest History by Hausman - P H Sullivan, Village Trustee. T. M. Jackson, Village President. H H Mahler, Village Trustee and noted Architect

Steiner Index – Entries referring to Mahler as architect for structure in RF

Mrs. Thomas Sullivan	2-story frame and stucco	Sept. 23, 1911, p. 19 Constr. News
T.M. Jackson	2-story stucco, excavating	Oct. 21, 1911, p. 25 Constr. News
Mrs. Thomas Sullivan	excavating	Nov. 4, 1911, p. 16 Constr. News
Mrs. Thomas Sullivan	roofed	Jan. 13, 1912, P. 13 Constr. News

A newspaper clipping with the text: "Ground has been broken for the new home of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Sullivan, on Thatcher avenue just north of the home of Mr. and Mrs. T. M. Jackson. The River Forest Golf club will be". The name "Henry Sullivan" is highlighted in yellow.

Forest Leaves Oct. 21, 1911 pg 26

General Information Evaluation Architectural Descriptions Research Information

Preparer:

Nick Kalogeresis, The Lakota Group

Survey Date:

September 12, 2012

Photo 1

Photo 2

Photo 3 / Historic Photo

Survey Information

Notes

Street Number:

629

Street:

Thatcher Avenue

PIN Number(s):

15-11-209-028-0000

Construction Date/Other Year:

1911

Architect:

Current Function/Category:

Single Family Residential Building

Historic Function:

Single Family Residential Building

Listing in Existing Survey:

Historic Name:

Current Name:

Construction Cost:

Architect 1 Information:

Architect 2 Information:

Contractor Information:

Developer Information:

Research/Archival Information:

Permit:

Subdivision:

Landscape/Streetscape:

Architectural Classification/Style:

Prairie

Ornamentation:

Number of Stories:

2 1/2

Current Wall Material 1:

Stucco

Current Wall Material 2:

Original Wall Material 1:

Original Wall Material 2:

Storefront Material:

Roof Type:

Roof Material:

Foundation Material/Form:

Porch:

Window Type:

Window Configuration:

Window Material:

Significant Features:

Alterations:

Building Form:

This house may have been an earlier Queen Anne remodeled with Craftsman elements.

Wall Detailing/Ornamentation:

Roof Ornamentation:

Door Detailing:

Dormers:

Window Storms:

Condition:

Excellent

Integrity:

Good

Secondary Structure:

Garage

Secondary Structure Condition:

Good

Secondary Structure Integrity:

Excellent

Contributing to a

National Register District:

Yes

Potentially Contributing to a

National Register District:

National Register Criterion:

Reason for Significance:

Landmark/National Register:

Significant:

No

Noteworthy Buildings

Less Than 50 Years Old:

Village-Wide Architectural and Historical Survey Modification Form 936 Franklin

The Historic Preservation Commission has completed an architectural and historical survey of the community. The Commission welcomes any additional information or corrections to the survey. Please fill out the form below and return to Village Hall (400 Park Ave) or email to jpape@vrf.us for consideration by the Commission.

Contact Information

Janet Saeger_____

Name of Contact Person

(847)226-0628_____

Phone Number

jhsaeger435@gmail.com_____

E-Mail Address

435 William, 801, River Forest_____

Address

Proposed Survey Modifications

Address of Property: 936 Franklin_____

Original Property Owner: Dr. Samuel A Libert 943 Park Ave_____

Date of Construction: Cert. of Occupancy Feb, 1968_____

Architect: Carl Wasserman & Assoc. **Builder:** G&M Builders Maywood, IL_____

Other:

Est. Cost \$100,000_____

Source of Information:

Village of River Forest response to FOIA request. __ Sheet 82-Permit. Sheet 58 Occupancy Cert._____

General Information
Evaluation
Architectural Descriptions
Research Information

Preparer:

Nick Kalogeresis, The Lakota Group

Survey Date:

August 19, 2012

Photo 1

Photo 2

Photo 3 / Historic Photo

Survey Information
Notes

Street Number:

936

Street:

Franklin Avenue

PIN Number(s):

15-01-315-030-0000

Construction Date/Other Year:

1970

Architect:

Current Function/Category:

Single Family Residential Building

Historic Function:

Listing in Existing Survey:

Historic Name:

Current Name:

Construction Cost:

Architect 1 Information:

Architect 2 Information:

Contractor Information:

Developer Information:

Research/Archival Information:

Permit:

Subdivision:

Landscape/Streetscape:

Architectural Classification/Style:

Late Modern Eclectic

Ornamentation:

Number of Stories:

2

Current Wall Material 1:

Brick

Current Wall Material 2:

Original Wall Material 1:

Original Wall Material 2:

Storefront Material:

Roof Type:

Roof Material:

Foundation Material/Form:

Porch:

Window Type:

Window Configuration:

Window Material:

Significant Features:

Alterations:

Building Form:

Wall Detailing/Ornamentation:

Roof Ornamentation:

Door Detailing:

Dormers:

Window Storms:

This house should be reevaluated for significance when it reaches the 50 years thresho

**NOTEWORTHY BUILDINGS LESS THAN 50
YEARS OF AGE** – added data from Searchable Database

- 304 Ashland Avenue 1957 “Late Modern Eclectic”
- 533 Ashland Avenue 1960s St. Luke’s Convent
- 820 Ashland Avenue 1972 “Late Modern Eclectic”
- 1407 Ashland Avenue 1965 “Mid-Century Modern. Accardo House”
- 7400 Augusta Street, Concordia University, Gross Hall **Demolished**
- 7400 Augusta Street, Concordia University, Koehneke Community Center
- 7400 Augusta Street, Concordia University, Chapel and Werner Auditorium
- 7400 Augusta Street, Concordia University, Kretzmann Hall
- 7900 Division Street - Dominican University, Rebecca Crown Library
- 302 Franklin Avenue 1902 ? “Late Modern Eclectic. Completely remodeled”
- 312 Franklin Avenue 2005 “Arch. Carlos Concepcion, Intern’l Style”
- 414 Franklin Avenue 1988 “Multi-unit Later Modern Eclectic”
- 800 Franklin Avenue 1964 “Architect John Schraw. Mid-Century Modern. Owner Dr. Edw Mase”
- 935 Franklin Avenue **Demolished**
- 936 Franklin Avenue 1970 Research in Progress “Late Mod. Eclectic”
- 336 Gale Avenue 1965 “Mid-Century Modern”
- 203 Keystone Avenue 2000 “Neo Revival”
- 1202 Lathrop Avenue 1969 “Mid-Century Modern”
- 7620 Madison Street ?? **Demolished**
- 1518 Monroe Avenue 1969 “Late Modern Eclectic”
- 7301 North Avenue 1964 “Arch: Petrungaro. Mid-Century Modern”
- 7360 Oak Avenue 1970s “Neo-Prairie”
- 321 Park Avenue 1970s (1920s)? “Vernacular: Bungalow”
- 547 Park Avenue 2011 “Late Modern Eclectic”

J O U R N A L

HOMEFRONT

The real estate marketplace for Oak Park & River Forest

Homeowners get in the spirit of Halloween season

By KEN TRAINOR

A sudden epidemic of cobwebs has Oak Park and River Forest in its sticky grasp. Either we're the setting for the sequel to "Attack of the Giant Spiders" or Halloween decorating has reached a new level.

Some homeowners, of course, put a lot of effort into this annual rite of ghoulish conversion, but no one does more than Jim Dakof at 1134 S. Wesley Ave. Dakof is an electrician by trade, which is convenient since his display is wired for sound and light.

A skeleton dangles from the flagpole overhead. In the front window, a spotlight hand reaches above the window sill. A "Happy Halloween" doormat on the front steps sets off a blood-thickening scream when stepped on.

On the front lawn, a witch bends over an enormous cauldron of floating skulls. Cottony filaments of faux cobwebs coat the fenceposts. Haunting laughter emits from the craggy face of an old pirate. A large scarecrow with jack-o-lantern bucket head stands next to the sprawled victim of a guillotine. An open casket reveals an inflated skeleton, while other skull faced creatures lurk in the bushes behind.

The parkway has been transformed into boot hill with tombstones marking the demise of several unsavory characters: "Cheated at cards, cheated at dice, cheated on wife, no more life—Dead Willy." Except for the two hands poking up through the grass, all seem to be resting in peace.

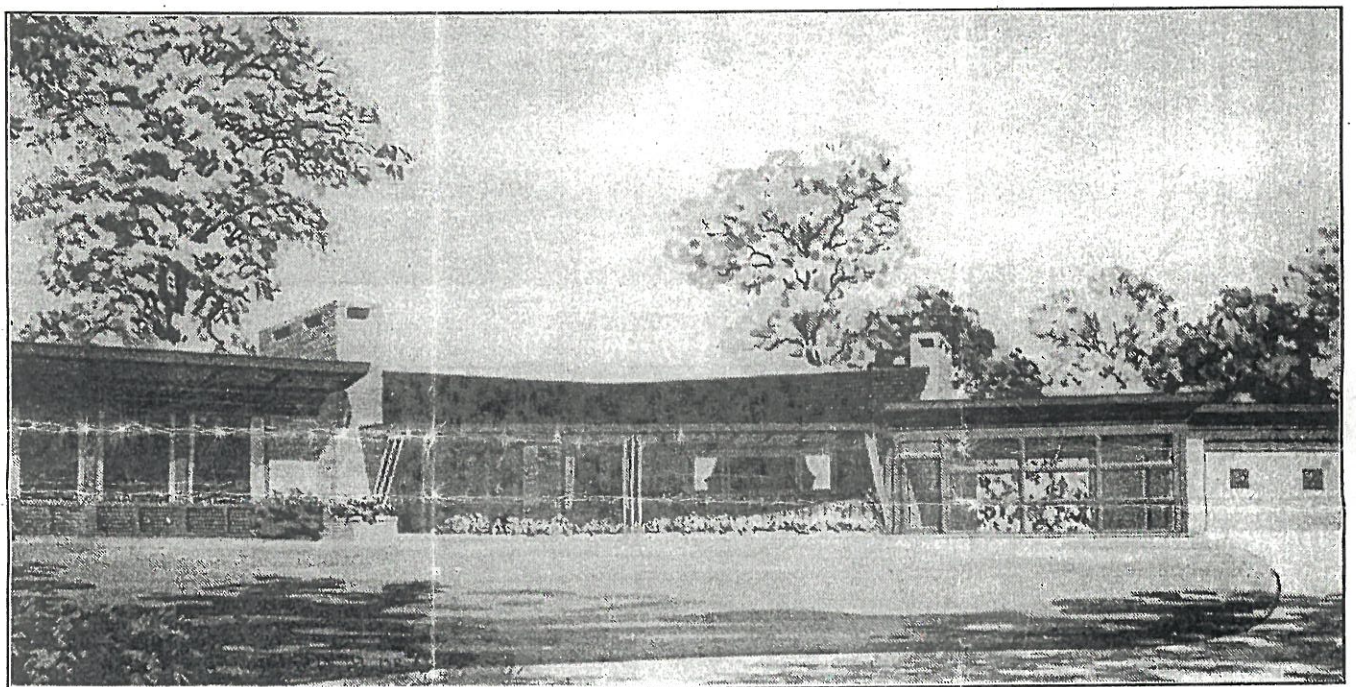
Overhead, three carved pumpkins sit on the roof, grinning hideously and a ghost hangs above the sidewalk, suspended from a rope, tied between the house and the street-light.

Dakof says it takes about a week to assemble his house of horrors. He's been doing it for about 10 years now. His youngest child is a junior in high school, but he keeps it up for the neighborhood kids and because, "It's a good feeling to know they appreciate it. That's what it's all about."

Those kids come by every day, he says, to ask, "What have you added today?" Cars stop on a regular basis at night and some even ring his doorbell to ask about the display. Little by little, Dakof has added to it over the years. He built the guillotine and the coffin himself, and buys the rest in a variety of places (like Walgreens and Razzle Dazzle). He and his family are constantly

Continued on page 86

Enclave charts River Forest's growth from pioneer outpost to a quintessential suburb



Martin Henry Braun designed this ranch home for himself at 544 River Oaks in River Forest in 1940s.

WELCOME TO SUBURBIA



ARCHITECTURE
JEANETTE
FIELDS

There's a unique enclave of houses on Auvergne Place, off Lake Street, backing up the Des Plaines River, that historically chronicles River Forest's past. It's a place that has housed local pioneers, served as a site for the work of America's greatest architect and still serves as an early example of the modern American suburban subdivision.

In the late 1880s, Edward C. Waller, a pioneer entrepreneur, built his 24-room gabled mansion in a six-acre plot tucked into the wooded riverside. Designed by John W. Root, the house had a bowling alley and ballroom connected to the main house by a glass passageway. In 1899, Waller commissioned Frank Lloyd Wright to remodel some of the rooms and to add stables and a chicken house with eight-

foot high copper ventilation towers, as well as a gardener's cottage.

Waller sold part of the property to his friend, William Winslow, owner of the Winslow Brothers Ironwork Company, fabricators of the curved iron front for Carson Pirie Scott in downtown Chicago. Waller introduced Winslow to Frank Lloyd Wright, and Winslow commissioned the 26-year-old architect to design him a new house.

He designed a masterpiece that quickly created a sensation. The famed Winslow house at 515 Auvergne Place, completed in 1894, was considered Wright's first independent commission after leaving Adler and Sullivan. The massive rectangular house of Roman tapestry brick, with its upper band of tinted Sullivanesque plaster ornament under a low hip roof, is a strong quiet presence. The house was purchased by June and Bill Walker in 1957, and they

Continued on page 84

Subdivision

Continued from page 71

have worked tirelessly to preserve the landmark.

The Waller complex was razed in 1939 and the only remainder is the Waller Gates fronting Lake Street, which were designed by Wright about 1901 to form a portal to Auvergne Place. In 1986, the deteriorated gates were almost destroyed when the village planned to widen and resurface Auvergne Place. The action was stopped by a group of preservationists, aided by restoration architect John Thorpe, who mounted a campaign to restore the gates and replace the original lanterns.

About 1947, an architect named Martin Henry Braun bought the rest of the Waller land with plans to build about 13 houses. He laid out plans for the streets and the total subdivision. One-story ranch houses were in vogue, and Braun stipulated that all 13 of the houses were to be in that style; moreover, they would not overshadow the Winslow house.

Later, another three houses were added by other architects, making the total, with the Winslow house, 17 homes.

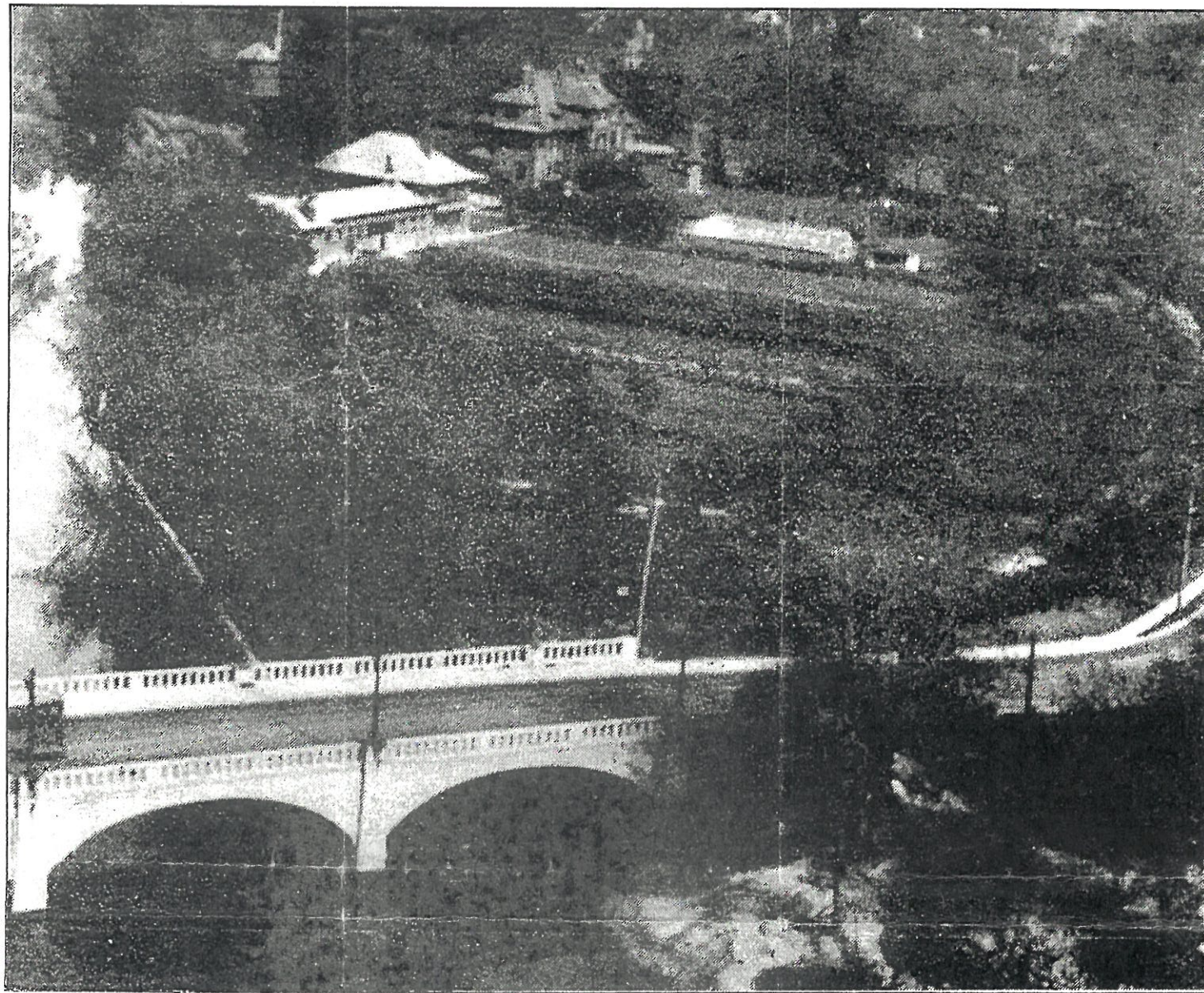
German-born Braun came to America with his family when he was 2-years-old, moving directly to Chicago. Here he attended Lane Tech High School, the Armour Institute (now ITT) and the University of Illinois at Champaign, where he graduated from the School of Architecture in 1931. One of his first jobs was as resident architect for the Civic Opera where he re-designed commercial space. While working with the contracting firm of Fred J. Walsh in Chicago, Braun met Dorothy Thompson, who was a bookkeeper for the firm. Married in 1937, they were given a row house, which Braun had designed at 76th Street and Euclid Avenue in South Shore, as a wedding gift from Walsh. During this period, Braun did the House of the Week for the Herald American and was one of the founders of the Metropolitan Home Builders Association.

Dorothy Braun, the architect's widow, who now lives in Elmhurst's Beacon Hill, said, "When Martin started to design apartments, about 1941, we lived on Washington in Oak Park to get a feel for apartment living. We moved to Galewood when he was designing duplex and single family houses in the area, many on Oak Park Avenue south of the Mars factory.

"When he was just starting out, the Edward Hines Company in Chicago helped him get going," says Mrs. Braun. "His partners were Earl Carrothers and Carey DeButts. The firm built all over, in LaGrange Park, Galewood, Maywood and in Oak Park. They specialized in four- and nine-flat apartments. He also did the duplexes on the south side of Lake Street, from Edgewood to the Des Plaines River, in



Developer Martin Henry Braun



Overview: An aerial view of the Waller property in the late 19th Century. Martin Henry Braun bought the property in 1947 and designed a subdivision of ranch houses in the enclave, also home to Frank Lloyd Wright's Winslow House.

River Forest. In 1947, Martin was in business for himself, designing hundreds of homes—lots of ranch and split-levels—throughout the western suburbs—Darien, Wheaton, Orland Park and Westchester.

"During the war, you couldn't build, so he did some investing in real estate," Mrs. Braun continued. We had purchased a lot on East Avenue to build our own house. But when we changed plans and decided to build on Auvergne Place, we sold the lot to Percy Julian, the famous chemist. Martin bought the Waller land in 1947 or 1948 and proceeded with plans to build. I had met Judith Waller, daughter of Edward Waller when I was working at the University of Chicago. She was in educational radio at NBC.

"Martin laid out all the plots and designed the streets. There was a great variety of trees, many had been planted by Waller," explains Dorothy Braun. "The first house at 544 River Oaks was our own house. It was a large house, with four bedrooms and three-and-a-half baths on an acre of land. It was also an

experimental house. We were testing for Commonwealth Edison with the heating on the ceiling.

The heat was very expensive though, and not completely satisfactory and ultimately changed. We also experimented with cork floors, rubber tiles and slate in the entry. We had two children before we moved in, and another born in the house."

The other houses, all custom built, sold quite rapidly with prices from \$75,000 to \$90,000. All were finished between 1948 and 1955. Earl Marquardt, with a savings and loan firm in Forest Park, built just west of the Brauns and was followed by Gus Frank, who insisted on a glorified Cape Cod that was one-and-a-half stories. Dr. Marcusson, who had offices at Lake Street and Ridgeland Avenue, followed.

Dorothy Chatterton, original owner who still lives at 531 River Oaks Drive, recalls that Mrs. Braun used to hold "coffee" for the new owners. "Originally my husband, who was from the South, wanted a house with pillars. But Braun wouldn't allow it. All the houses had to be one-storied ranch, but each was different. Later, a two-story red brick house was built for Dr. Vincenti."

The Chatterton house backs up to the Des Plaines River. "We didn't even think about possible flooding at the time we built," says Mrs. Chatterton, "because it had never happened before. But the disaster that is supposed to happen once in a hundred years hap-

pened two years in a row. The first flood was in 1987 and we lost all the furniture in our finished basement plus lots of damage, totaling about \$50,000. ServiceMaster came and used an outside pump. But the second time, they couldn't find a pump and the water came up five feet in the recreation room. We hope the flooding problem has been solved."

The land south of the Winslow house was purchased by Phil and Daisy Clarkson about 1954 from the Atwoods, who had purchased the house from the Winslows. "We had become good friends with the Atwoods," said Daisy Clarkson, who still lives in the house at 505 Auvergne Place. "We bought 130 feet and Atwood kept 130 feet. It's about 200 feet deep so we each had about half an acre."

Their architect was Jack Barclay, who now has his office on north Grove Avenue in Oak Park. "Phil Clarkson was a naval officer and Daisy was a home economics teacher. They were friends of my parents and my wife and I used to baby-sit for them," Barclay recalls. "At that time, I had been licensed as an architect only for a few years, but had already built several houses in the community."

The last house built went up in the '70s, according to Mrs. Braun. Three of the original owners are still there: Dorothy Chatterton, Daisy Clarkson and Beatrice Hall. "It's an unusual community," says Phillip Goodwin who lives in the former Marquardt property. "We have the best of all possible worlds—the beauty of the forest preserve, the Des Plaines River, and, with a turn of the head, the eloquent architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright!"