

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE
REPORT FOR THE ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
AUGUST 28, 2008 AGENDA

SUBJECT:	TYPE:	SUBMITTED BY:
ADRB-01-08 5256 Carpenter Street	Designation of a Historic Landmark	Stan Popovich, AICP Planner

REQUEST

The petitioner is requesting her property at 5256 Carpenter Street be designated a landmark based on the criteria that the house identifies with Mr. Donald Drew, a person who significantly contributed to the development of music in Downers Grove.

NOTICE

The application has been filed in conformance with applicable procedural and public notice requirements.

GENERAL INFORMATION

OWNER: Mildred L. Drew
5256 Carpenter Street
Downers Grove, IL 60515

APPLICANT: Herbert J. Bell, Attorney
P.O. Box 206
Downers Grove, IL 60515

Susan Estall
5512 Main Street
Downers Grove, IL 60515

PROPERTY INFORMATION

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Gothic Revival
BUILDING DATE: 1888
HISTORICAL BUILDING USE: Single Family Residence
EXISTING BUILDING USE: Single Family Residence
PROPERTY SIZE: 15,333 square feet (0.352 acres)
PIN: 09-08-309-003

ANALYSIS

SUBMITTALS

This report is based on the following documents, which are on file with the Department of Community Development:

1. Application/Petition for Public Hearing
2. Project Summary
3. Owner Consent Form
4. Certificate of Acknowledgement Form
5. Significant Architectural Features Form
6. Photographs
7. Wyman, Dimis. 1999. Downers Grove Choral Society: Celebrating 40 Years, 1959-1999.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The petition is to designate the property at 5256 Carpenter Street a historic landmark under criteria 12.400(b) of the Historic Preservation Ordinance: identification with a person who significantly contributed to the development of the community. The house at 5256 Carpenter Street was home to Mr. Donald Drew, a founding father of the Downers Grove Oratorio Society, now known as the Downers Grove Choral Society¹. Mr. Drew and his sister Mildred Drew resided at 5256 Carpenter Street during their childhoods and adult lives. Ms. Drew continues to live at the residence.

The two-story Gothic Revival house with a basement was designed by the Drews' grandfather and completed in 1888. The house is built on a stone foundation. A cellar door is located on the rear of the house. The house is currently clad with vinyl siding, but wood clapboard is visible in places underneath the modern siding. A brick chimney with a concrete chimney cap on the south façade runs from the foundation through the roof.

The roof is a cross-gable with a steep front gable. The original window openings remain, but modern one-over-one, double-hung windows have been installed. The house includes two front doors on the east front façade. The southern door is an original three-panel, wood double door with a transom. The northern door has since been replaced. There are three porches on the house. There are two front porches on either side of the cross gable and one rear porch on the northwest corner of the house. The capitals of the porch posts are ornamented.

A detached garage is located in the rear yard. Although the exact age of the garage has not been determined, based on discussions with Ms. Drew, the one-story, two-car garage is estimated to be over fifty years old. The 24-panel wood garage doors remain, although the exterior has been clad with modern siding.

COMPLIANCE WITH HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

The petitioner has outlined the request in the attached narrative letter and photographs. The petitioner will further address the proposal and justification to support the requested landmark designation at the public hearing.

Landmark designations require evaluation based on Section 12.400 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, *Landmark Designation Criteria*. Nominations have to meet at least one of the criteria to apply for landmark status. Staff believes the request complies with *Landmark Designation Criteria a, b, e and h* as described below.

¹ Wyman, Dimis. 1999. Downers Grove Choral Society: Celebrating 40 years, 1959-1999.

a. Significant value as part of the historic, heritage or cultural characteristics of the community, county, State or Nation;

The house has significant cultural value in the Village as Mr. Drew's childhood and adult home. The property was home to an individual who enhanced the musical culture of the Village. Staff believes this criteria has been met.

b. Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the community, county, State or Nation;

Staff believes the house is historic based on its association with Mr. Donald Drew who significantly contributed to the development of music in Downers Grove. The following historical background is based on Downers Grove Choral Society: Celebrating 40 years, 1959-1999 by Dimis Wyman, published in 1999.

Mr. Drew was born in Downers Grove on August 2, 1904 and studied piano as a child. He received a Bachelor's and Master's degree in music from the Chicago Piano College where he continued to teach piano and music theory. In 1925, Mr. Drew began serving as the organist at the First Congregational Church of Downers Grove and held that post for 48 years. He was an active member of many community musical associations, including the Downers Grove Music Club, Downers Grove Concert Association and the Downers Grove Oratorio Society of which he was a founding father.

Mr. Drew composed many forms of music throughout his life. In 1932, Mr. Drew played his *Three Nature Pieces* for piano at the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago. Beginning in 1935, Mr. Drew began accompanying the Methodist Church choir in their annual performance of Handel's *Messiah*. *Messiah* was performed annually from the early 20th century through 1953 when the First Congregational Church began hosting the event. In 1959, the Reverend Edgar Cook of the First Congregational Church suggested an independent organization be formed to continue performing *Messiah*.

A formal meeting was held in Hummer Park with all interested Village choirs, and the Downers Grove Oratorio Society (DGOS) was formed. At the meeting, Mr. Drew urged that the new society be named the Oratorio Society so that other choral works could be performed. The society appointed Mr. Drew Accompanist and performed *Messiah* at its first concert on December 6, 1959. Over the years, the society continued to perform concerts and added works from Bach, Brahms, Vivaldi and Poulenc.

Mr. Drew continued to compose and perform with the DGOS. Mr. Drew's compositions included *The Coming of Arthur*; *Heroic Elegy* for piano and orchestra; *Four Bliss Carman Songs* for soprano; *A Love Song* for violin, cello and piano. In addition to these works, Mr. Drew composed numerous anthems and other sacred and secular songs. His compositions included solos for a variety of instruments including piano, organ, viola, cellos, flute, oboe, clarinet and trumpet.

In 1993, the Downers Grove Oratorio Society changed its name to the Downers Grove Choral Society (DGCS) and honored Mr. Drew with performances of his *Four Dances in Ancient Style* for flute, strings, and harpsichord and *White Clouds A-Floating* for alto flute and piano. In 1998, the Downers Grove Music Club performed an evening of Mr. Drew's music. In 1999, the DGCS celebrated 40 years by publishing a history of the Society. In this book the Society noted that Mr. Drew "has been one of the most important contributors to the formation and growth of the Society."

In celebration of Mr. Drew's 100th birthday, the Downers Grove Choral Society and Downers Grove Music Club presented a special concert of Mr. Drew's work on September 26, 2004. The Village of

Downers Grove honored Mr. Drew by proclaiming the day Donald J. Drew Day in the Village. Mr. Drew passed away in August of 2006.

c. Representative of the distinguishing characteristics of architecture inherently valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction or use of indigenous materials;

Staff does not believe this criteria applies.

d. Notable work of a master builder, designer, architect or artist whose individual work has influenced the development of the community, county, State or Nation;

Staff does not believe this criteria applies.

e. Unique location or singular physical characteristics that make it an established or familiar visual feature;

A unique architectural feature of the house is its steep gable on the front elevation which makes the house unique in this neighborhood where significant redevelopment is occurring. The property itself is one of the larger single pieces of land within the surrounding neighborhood. Staff believes the house meets this criterion.

f. Character as a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian structure, including but not limited to farmhouses, gas stations, or other commercial structures, with a high level of integrity or architectural significance;

Staff does not believe this criterion applies.

g. Area that has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Staff does not believe this criterion applies.

h. A source of civic pride or identity for the community.

Mr. Drew was a founding father and prominent member of the DGCS and contributed to the expansion of music in Downers Grove. Staff believes the house is a source of civic pride.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENT

Staff has not received any written neighborhood comment regarding the proposal at this time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff believes the proposal complies with criteria a, b, e and h for Landmark Designation listed above. Given Mr. Drew's involvement as a founding member of a community organization, his well-respected compositions and his contributions to the expansion of music in Downers Grove staff, believes the house at 5256 Carpenter Street should be designated a historic landmark.

Based on the findings above, staff recommends the Architectural Design Review Board make a positive recommendation to the Village Council for landmark status of 5256 Carpenter Street.

Staff Report Approved By:

Tom Dabareiner, AICP
Director of Community Development

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5256 Carpenter Street Location Map



May 12, 2008----

Dear Members of the Board,

As a friend of Mildred Drew for the last decade, I am assisting with her request for her home at 5256 Carpenter Street to not be torn down and to be preserved. We believe it should be designated as a landmark for historic preservation for several reasons. First, the house was built in 1888, as assessor records say, which matches the family oral history. Second, the house was said to be designed by Mildred Drew's grandfather, who wanted it to have a tall, narrow front gable, which makes it a unique and a one of a kind house in Downers Grove.

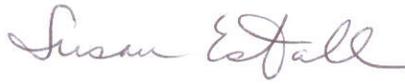
The house has remained in the family since 1888, so for one hundred and twenty years, and has been the home for Millie and her brother, Don Drew for almost all their lives. As a well respected musician, Don Drew was known for his musical compositions, many of which were written after he retired. You may recall when Don Drew was 100 years old, a local concert of his work was held in his honor. At that event the Village of Downers Grove designated September 26th as Don Drew Day, in honor of him and with respect to his achievements in music. All this gives the house cultural, as well as architectural and historical significance, and is the third reason for supporting its preservation.

Another unusual aspect to Mildred Drew's home and property are two very old oak trees to the south and west of the house. In my consulting with the Morton Arboretum and their chart to date old trees, and in measuring their "Millennium Tree" for Illinois, which is close to 200 years old and at the Arboretum, we have concluded the two oaks next to Millie's house are from the early 1800s. Tearing the house down would not only mean losing an important house for Downers Grove heritage, but it would put two remarkable oak trees at risk, and thus is the fourth reason to preserve the home. One note of interest is that Don Drew wrote a musical composition with respect to those specific oak trees.

Preserving the Drew home not only helps to preserve some of the oldest trees in lovely residential Downers Grove, but preserves the architectural and cultural history created by Millie's grandfather and by the Drew family, and continued by Mildred Drew. It is an honor to assist Millie Drew in this application process and we hope you will see the value of this house so to preserve it as the first preservation landmark of Downers Grove.

Sincerely,


Mildred Drew


Susan Estall

May 17, 2008

To Whom It May Concern,

I, Mildred Drew, do give my permission for Susan Estall to handle the paperwork and other required work and/or presentation in order for my house at 5256 Carpenter St. in Downers Grove to be considered for preservation by the Village of Downers Grove. It is my wish for house to not be torn down and to be preserved.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mildred Drew".

Mildred Drew

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Donald J. Drew was born in Downers Grove on August 2, 1904, and has lived his entire lifetime in our community; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Drew has enjoyed a long musical career as pianist, organist, teacher, theorist, composer, and music consultant; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Drew assisted in founding the Downers Grove Oratorio Society (now Choral Society) and served as its accompanist and musicologist for 25 years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Drew began serving as organist at the First Congregational Church of Downers Grove in 1925, a position he held for 48 years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Drew has been an active participant in all phases of musical activity in the community, including the Downers Grove Music Club; Downers Grove Concert Association, and the Downers Grove Choral Society; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Drew has written music in many forms and his compositions have been performed frequently through the years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Drew continues to compose and to perform as a pianist and accompanist; and

WHEREAS, through his work at Chicago music houses, generations of Midwest musicians have relied upon Mr. Drew's advice in the selection, interpretation and performance of their music; and

WHEREAS, a special concert of Mr. Drew's music will be presented jointly by the Downers Grove Choral Society and Downers Grove Music Club on September 26, 2004, in celebration of his 100th birthday;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Brian J. Krajewski, Mayor of the Village of Downers Grove, do hereby proclaim September 26, 2004, as **DONALD J. DREW DAY** in the Village of Downers Grove and congratulate Mr. Drew on his birthday, his lifetime achievements, and his contributions to the musical life of our community.

Dated this 21st day of September 2004 at Downers Grove, Illinois.

Mayor

Pictures for 5256 Carpenter



Photo #1 – East Elevation



Photo #2– West Elevation

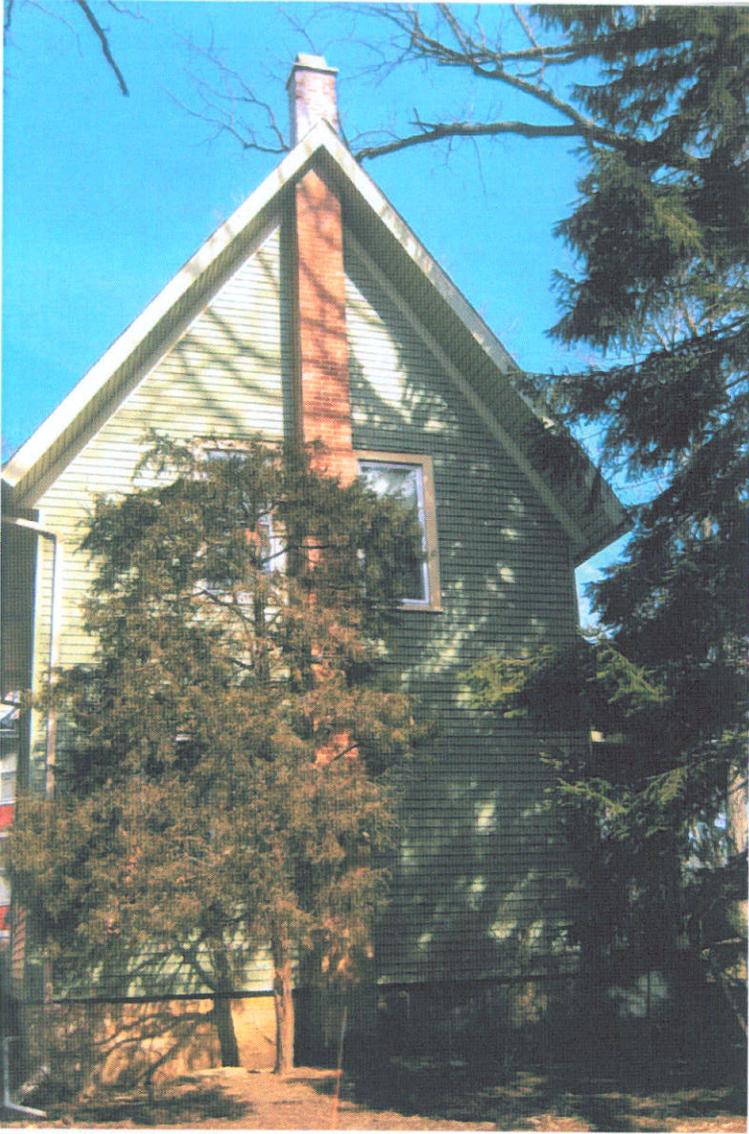


Photo #3 – South Elevation



Photo #4 – North Elevation



Photo #5 – East Elevation – Double door



Photo #6 – East Elevation - Garage