

SURVEY FOR THE CREATION OF AN  
OLD ORLAND PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT  
OF "LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE"

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## Old Orland Park Historic District

### History:

The present village of Orland Park was established in 1880 immediately after completion of the Wabash, St. Louis and Pacific Railroad (now the Norfolk and Southern) which had been begun in the previous year. Originally named Sedgwick by the railroad, the community's name was changed to Orland (the name of the township) in 1881 at the request of its first residents and subsequently to Orland Park.

The first subdivision to be platted was given the name Sedgwick in deference to the name of the depot and extended from West Avenue to just east of Beacon Avenue between 143rd and south of 144th streets. Several months later, a parcel slightly smaller in size to this first subdivision was platted immediately to the south by John Humphrey extending the southern boundary of the platted area to an east-west line midway between 144th Place and 145th Street. It is within the boundaries of these subdivisions that most of urban Orland Park developed before World War II, hence it is only within this area and adjoining property that an Orland Park historic district may be defined. Although 1934 (fifty years ago) would be the appropriate chronological cut off point for the district if only the standards of the National Register of Historic Places were to be used, 1940 seems like a more appropriate cut off point, because it is the last year in which Orland Park could still have been regarded as an isolated rural community. In the years that followed, beginning with the advent of World War II, Orland Park would slowly take on the identity of a Chicago suburb.

Although it is the purpose of this survey to define such a district, it should be noted that there are in the surrounding area a number of groups of farm buildings that might also be worth defining as historic districts.

### Criteria for Establishing a Historic District:

A historic district as defined in the legislation establishing the National Register of Historic Places is,

". . . a geographically definable area, urban or rural, possessing a significant concentration, linkage or continuity of sites, buildings, structures or objects that are united by past events or aesthetically by place or physical development. A district may also comprise individual elements that are separated geographically but are linked by association or history."

The criteria for placing such a district on the National Register require that significant events have taken place there or that the structures within the district are of significant aesthetic value.

In the case of Orland Park it is our opinion that the area in question does not meet the first criterion, because significant historic events have not taken place there. In the case of the second criterion only the Methodist Church, because of its peculiar towers, could be regarded as having sufficient aesthetic

value to justify being considered for inclusion in the Register.

The predominance of buildings of frame construction of which a significant number preserve their original features does, however, give the area a clearly definable character which is of local significance and therefore makes the area worthy of being protected through the provisions of a local historic district designation.

#### Methodology for Establishing a Local Orland Park Historic District:

The deciding factor in determining the boundaries of any historic district based on primarily aesthetic rather than historic considerations is the extent to which visual and historic continuity can be established between individual structures, between structures and their surrounding landscape and between individual landscape elements.

In order to determine whether such continuity exists, one must first determine what are the significant landscape elements that will make up that continuity.

All of the structures in the area under consideration belong to one of two groups: those that were built before 1940 and retain sufficient architectural integrity (almost all of their original characteristics remain intact) or those that were built after 1940 or if built before have totally lost their architectural integrity. For the purposes of establishing a historic district that stresses the evolution of Orland Park before 1940, only structures belonging to the former group are significant.

In preparing the accompanying catalog of structures belonging to this group, it became evident that these structures themselves fell into two distinct classes:

Structures of Primary Significance: These are structures built before 1940 that are within the context of the district particularly noteworthy from an architectural or historical point of view.

Structures of Secondary Significance: These are structures built before 1940 that are not particularly noteworthy but nevertheless retain sufficient integrity to provide a clear visual link to the period that the district represents. These structures often provide important visual linkages between the more important structures and maintain or carry through the physical ambiance of the district.

It should be noted that several of the structures of primary significance have lost some of their architectural integrity, and it is therefore our recommendation that the owners of these structures should be encouraged to restore them. The buildings of secondary importance on the other hand could continue to exist in their present condition without harming the integrity of the district as a whole. Further alterations to any of these structures should be discouraged.

Future alterations to other structures in the district should only be made in a manner that is visually compatible with the structures of both primary and secondary significance. Future alterations to the residence at 14406 Second Avenue, for example, have a serious negative impact on both the appearance of the triangular intersection at 144th Street and First Avenue and upon the

residence at 14420 Second Avenue which is the oldest building in the community, if adequate controls are not exerted.

Structures of Primary Significance



14420 Second Avenue

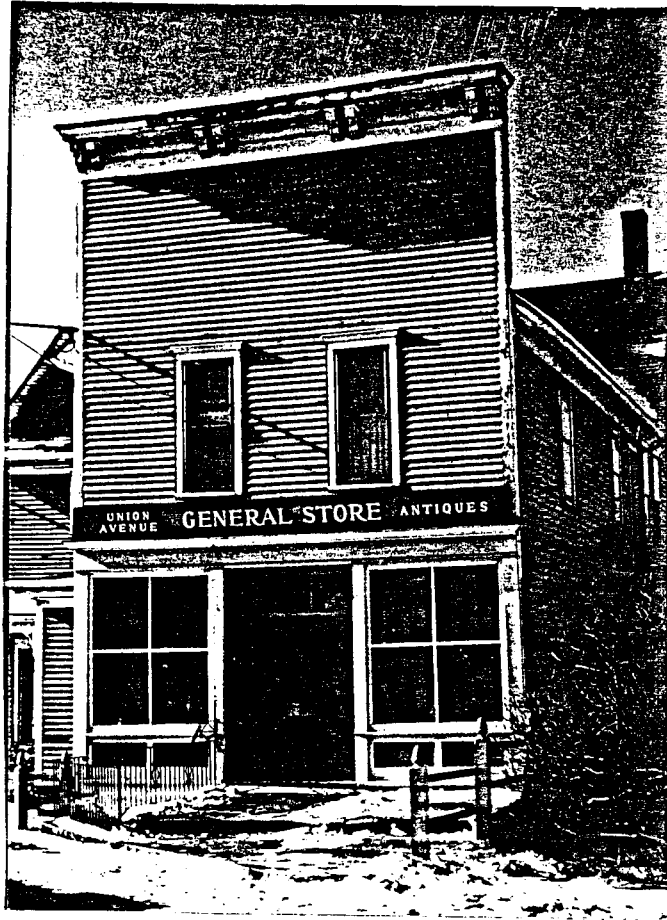
Having been constructed in 1880, this is apparently the first residence to have been erected in Orland Park. The bay windows and the roof which joins them appears to be additions from the turn of the century.



14306 Union Avenue

An early photograph identifies this frame commercial building as originally having been the Orland Park Hotel. Its ornate Italianate trim would seem to date it to the early 1880s. Although it has been resided and the fenestration of the first floor has been rebuilt, it is still the most ornate early structure in Orland Park.





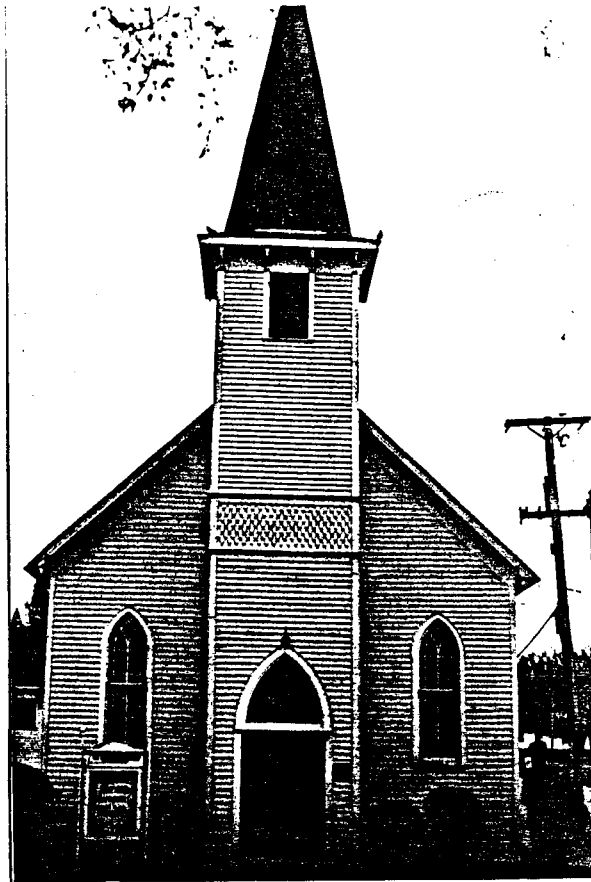
14414 Union Avenue

This appears to be a series of buildings that were added onto each other. Most of them appear to date from the early 1880s to mid-1890s. The front is particularly well preserved.



9960 143rd Street

This gymnasium addition to the Orland Park School was erected in 1940. It was designed by a local architect named Pomeroy. Its Joliet stone walls with a simple treatment of the fenestration is impressive. This building is the most substantial of the buildings in the Old Orland area.



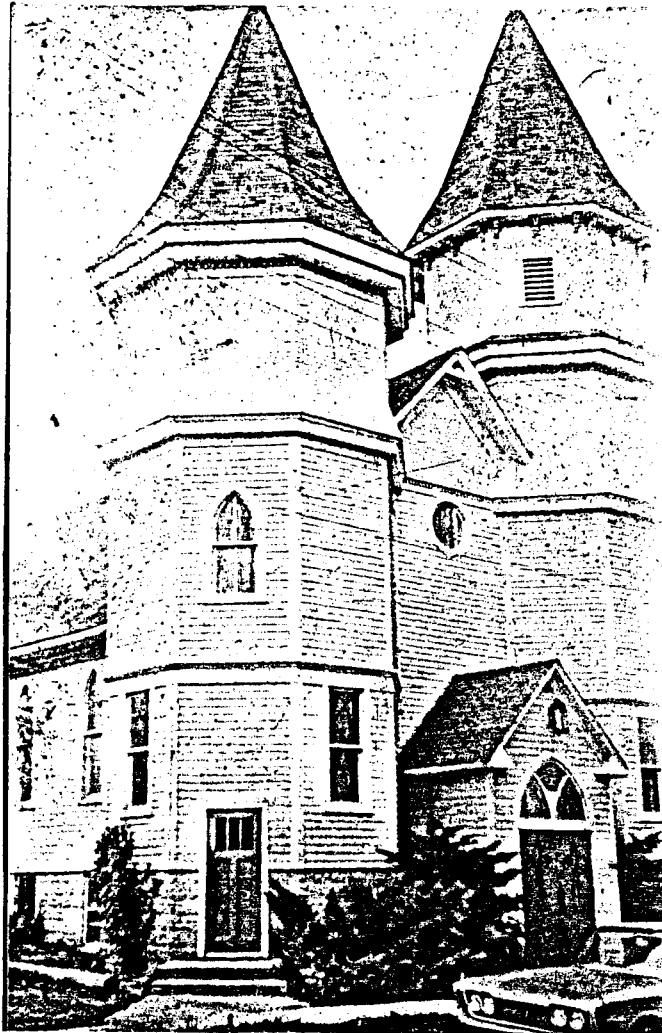
SE corner 143rd Street & West Avenue

Erected in 1898 as Christ Lutheran Church (now Presbyterian Church of Orland Park) it is typical of many Gothic Revival rural frame churches of the period. It has not been altered significantly.



9952 144th Street

This large two story Queen Anne residence is the most ornate in the district. Although it preserves much of its original outline, it has been resided.



9967 144th Street

The Orland Methodist Church was erected in 1898. In 1919, the building was raised up to permit the removal of the original stone foundation and the installation of a concrete block basement story. In 1942, a new central entrance was constructed and the original corner entrances were reworked. A residence that originally stood to the west of the church and had subsequently been reworked as a parish hall was relocated as an addition to the rear of the church when the present sanctuary was constructed. In spite of all these changes, the building preserves most of its original character. The two basically Queen Anne towers are somewhat unusual.



9830 144th Place

This two story Italianate frame residence was erected in 1880 by John Humphrey and is probably the second oldest building in Orland Park. Although the present iron columns on the front porch are stylistically compatible with the building, they are not original. The originals were most likely the same as those on the side porches.

Structures of Secondary Significance



14300 Beacon Avenue

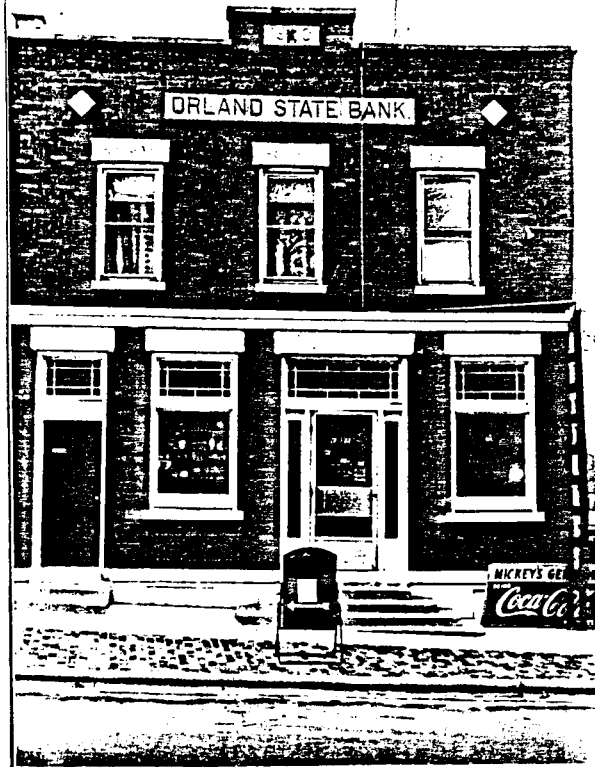
This simple commercial building was apparently constructed in the 1920s as an automobile sales building. The only major alteration appears to be the small false mansard roof.





14315 Beacon Avenue

This two story residence was most likely built in the 1890s. The siding has been redone. A similar arrangement of porch and bays is at 9883 144th Place.



14316 Beacon Avenue

Erected in 1910 as the Orland State Bank, this well preserved brick building is a late example of the basically Italianate commercial buildings that were common in rural America in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.



14329 Beacon Avenue

This two story frame residence appears to date from the early 1900s. The use of four evenly spaced Tuscan columns on the porch was unusual for the time. The "picture window" is a later addition and other windows appear to have been reworked.



14330 Beacon Avenue

This well preserved frame cottage was most likely erected in the late 1880s or early 1890s. The patterned shingles are a motif from the Queen Anne style. The Xs in the balustrade are not original.



14339 Beacon Avenue

This frame cottage was most likely built in the late 1880s or early 1890s. The combination of a bay window and porch is rather unique.



14407 Beacon Avenue

This frame bungalow was most likely built in the late 1910s or 1920s. The porch appears likely to have been enclosed shortly thereafter. The canopy is of later date.



14435 Beacon Avenue

This badly vandalized residence appears to date from the 1890s. Although it has been resided, the original siding is believed to be under the later work.



14414 First Avenue

This crame cottage was probably built in the late 1880s or early 1890s. The sides have been resided, and the porch has been enclosed.





14420 First Avenue

This two story frame residence appears to have been built in the early 1890s. The combination of a porch and bay window like that on the smaller house at 14339 Beacon Avenue is rather unique.



Rear of 14420 Second Avenue

This barn at the rear of the oldest house in Orland Park appears to have been built in the 1910s.



14438 Second Avenue

This exceptionally small building looks as if it may have originally served as an office. It appears to have been built in the 1890s.



West Avenue S. of 143rd Street

This building was erected in 1922 as a school for the Christ Lutheran Church (now owned by the Presbyterian Church of Orland Park). It is typical of small frame schools of the time. The interior was damaged by fire in 1974 and has since been remodeled.



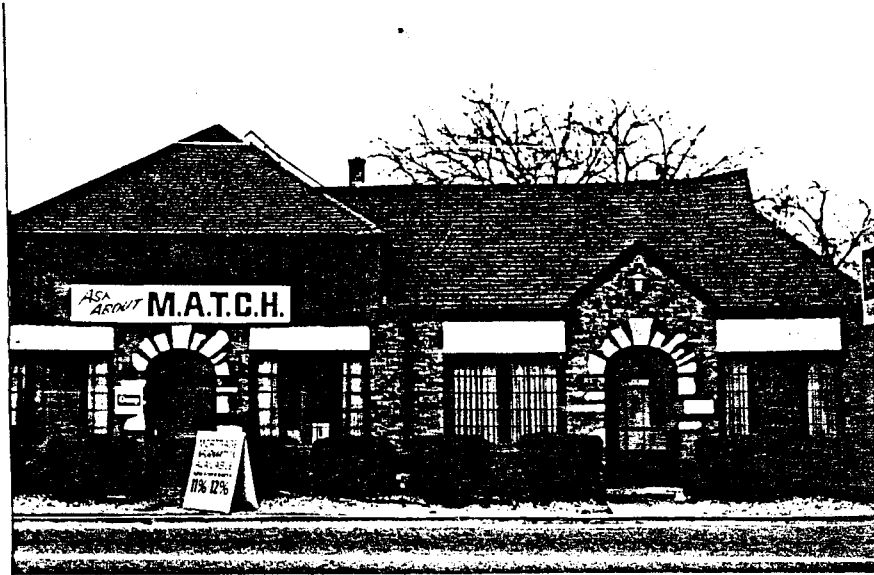
9875 143rd Street

This two story brick commercial building is typical of many constructed in the Chicago area during the 1920s. Alterations have been made to the fenestration without changing the openings.



9911 143rd Street

This non-discript commercial building appears to date from around 1910. Except for the paint now covering the brick, it does not appear to have been significantly altered.



9917 143rd Street .

This was a restaurant building that was remodeled into its present appearance in 1937. Of only minor architectural interest, it is nevertheless typical of restaurant architecture of the period.



9925 143rd Street

Except for later residing, this Italianate residence of the early 1880s appears to have had no significant alterations.





9953 143rd Street

This small frame cottage was apparently built in the late 1890s or early 1900s. With the exception of the addition of a projecting sign, it does not seem to have been altered.



9960 143rd Street

This two story brick building is the oldest structure in the school complex. It was designed by architect Alfred E. Pashley and erected in 1922. Although the design was intended to convey a Georgian feeling, the large areas of glass are essentially incompatible with that style.



9975 143rd Street

This two story frame residence was built in the late 1890s or early 1900s as a parsonage for the adjoining Christ Lutheran Church (now Presbyterian Church of Orland Park). Except for the addition of an exit stair at the side of the building, it does not appear to have been altered.



9911 143rd Place

This two story building and its one story addition apparently date from the 1880s. Although its appearance has been severely altered, its original form is well documented in photographs.



9825 144th Street

The barn with its board and batten siding appears to date from the turn of the century. The concrete block out building with its unique vernacular ornamentation appears to date from the 1920s or 30s.



9855 144th Street

This frame residence was most likely built in the late 1890s or early 1900s. The one story wing appears to be an addition.



9955 144th Street

This frame bungalow is the parsonage of the Orland Methodist Church. It is of a type common in the 1910s and 20s. The front porch has been altered.



9833 144th Place

This two story frame residence of naive Queen Anne inspiration probably dates from the 1890s. The first floor at the front has been severely altered.





9852 144th Place

The bay at the front of this frame residence is rather elegant and seems to suggest that the building was erected in the 1880s. It has unfortunately been altered.



9853 144th Place

This frame bungalow was probably constructed in the 1920s. The porch appears to have been enclosed at a later date.



9856 144th Place

This frame cottage was most likely built in the late 1880s or early 1890s. The oriel window at the side is unique for such structures. The porch was enclosed later.



9883 144th Place

This tall and narrow two story residence appears to date from the 1880s. The similarity of the attached bays and porch (the latter was probably originally open) to those at 14315 Beacon Street seems to suggest that these are additions of roughly a decade later.



9909 144th Place

This frame residence was probably built in the 1890s. The balcony and sliding window at the front of the second floor are not original.



9876 145th Street

This brick residence appears to have been constructed in the 1920s or early 1930s. The stone quoins are particularly unusual as is the bay window at the side, a feature found on several earlier Orland Park residences such as those at 9855 144th Street and 9856 144th Place.



The two residences fronting on the east side of West Avenue, immediately south of 145th Place, were both apparently erected around 1920. They have preserved sufficient integrity to be part of the district.

Significant Landscape Elements:

There are two particularly significant areas of landscape within the district that should be preserved or enhanced. These are:

1. The grounds of John Humphrey's residence which take up the southern roughly two thirds of the block bounded by Third and Beacon avenues, 144th Street and 144th Place. The gently sloping site provides a beautiful setting for this handsome and historic Italianate residence. Only the large and relatively recent garage building facing Beacon Avenue detracts from the appearance of the site.
2. The triangular intersection of 144th Street and First Avenue and adjoining open spaces. This area in the future might be more attractively landscaped to form an attractive landscape feature at the center of the district. The present railroad viaduct which forms the visual western boundary of the space is, however, unsightly and of obviously inexpensive construction. An effort should be made to encourage the railroad to improve the appearance of the present viaduct so as to make it appear more substantial or construct a more substantial new viaduct.

Boundaries of the District:

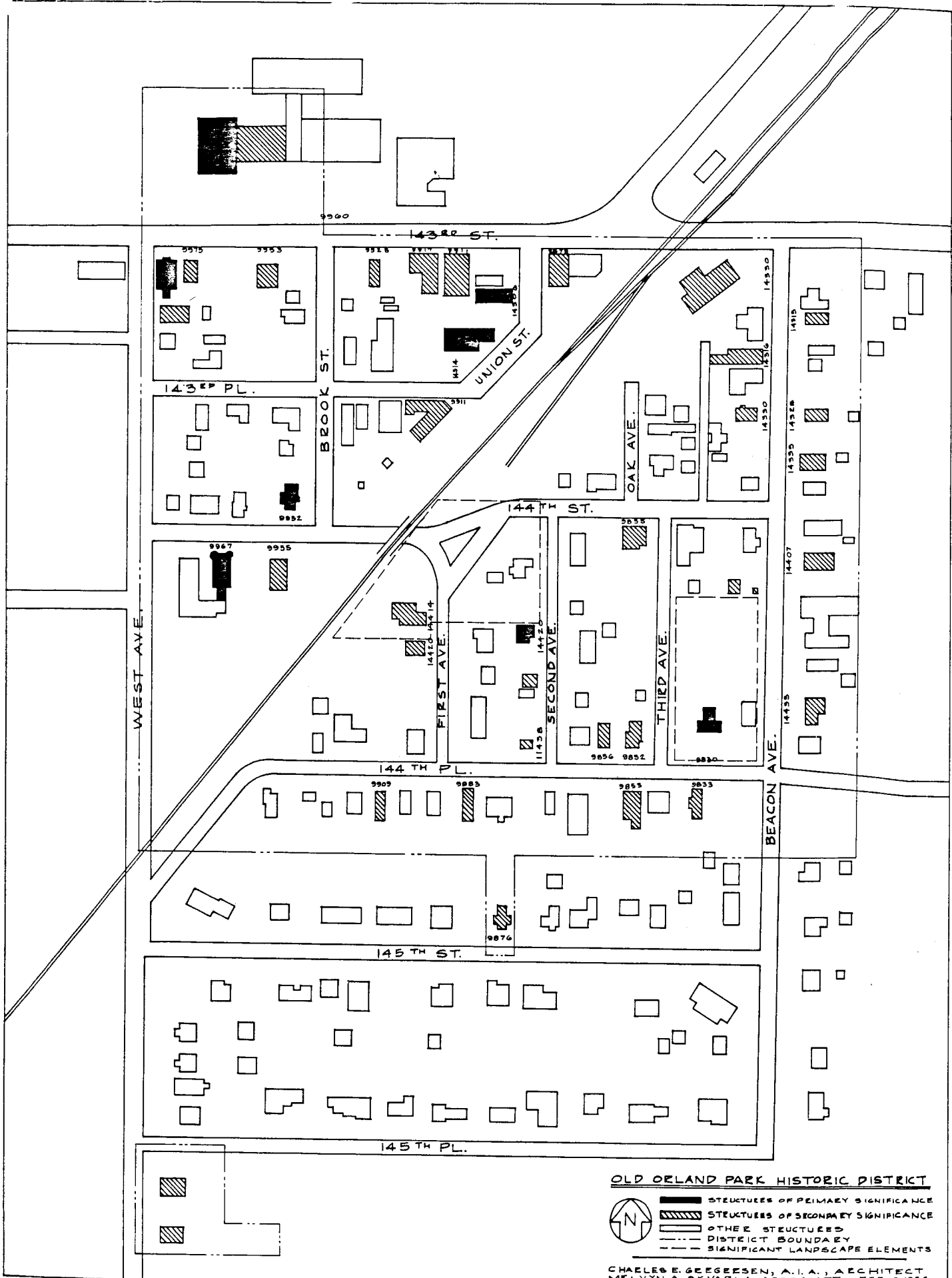
Examination of the accompanying map on which all of the structures and landscape elements previously cited have been located reveals that the proposed district consists logically of two separate areas. These areas contain the following parcels of land:

Area 1: Sedgwick, a subdivision recorded on May 6, 1880; Humphrey's subdivision recorded on August 27, 1880; that part of the right-of-way of the Wabash, St. Louis and Pacific Railroad (now the Norfolk and Southern) lying within the extended outer boundaries of the two previously cited subdivisions; Lot 10 in Gee's Second Addition to Orland Park recorded on March 19, 1925, and the two acres of "School Property" in the S.W. corner of the S.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 4-36-12.






Area 2: The two lots fronting on West Avenue immediately south of 145th Place recorded under tax numbers 27-19-218-016 and 27-19-218-002.

Note that the descriptions of the cited parcels of land are based upon material supplied to us. These descriptions should be verified by a licensed surveyor.





**OLD OELAND PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT**

-  STRUCTURES OF PRIMARY SIGNIFICANCE
-  STRUCTURES OF SECONDARY SIGNIFICANCE
-  OTHER STRUCTURES
-  DISTRICT BOUNDARY
-  SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

CHARLES E. GEEGESEN, A.I.A., ARCHITECT  
MELVYN A. SKVARLA, ASSOCIATE FEB. 12, 1984

Charles E. Gregersen, Architect, A. I. A.

Mr. Gregersen received his Bachelor of Architecture degree from the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1966. Following an apprenticeship in various architectural, engineering and contracting firms both in the United States and in Europe, he entered private practice as a registered architect in Illinois in 1972. A year later he received a license to practice architecture in Wisconsin.

Although he has designed a number of new buildings, among them the C & N W R R depot for the Village of Lombard, his professional work has been primarily in the restoration and documentation of historic buildings. He has served as the architect for the restoration of five National Registry properties as well as having provided consultation services for numerous other historic preservation projects. He has documented historic structures for the National Trust, the Historic American Building Survey (HABS), the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), the National Museum of History and Technology and the Commission on Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks. He is the author of The Chicago Auditorium, A History and Description to be published by HABS and manuscripts on architects Dankmar Adler and Solon S. Beman.

Melvyn A. Skvarla

Mr. Skvarla received his Bachelor of Science degree in Architecture and Urban Studies from the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1964, and he has taken graduate courses in City Management, Urban Studies and City Planning at the University of Chicago.

During his professional career, he has worked for among others the General Services Administration, the Illinois Building Authority and Northeastern Illinois University. For these organizations he has been responsible for master planning for development, space programming, facility layout and contract and budget preparation and administration. He has as an independent consultant also provided services on funding for historic preservation projects.

He has served as vice president of the Chicago Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians from 1970 to 1974 and president of that organization from 1974 to 1981. Since 1975 he has taught the History of Chicago Architecture at Northeastern Illinois University, William Rainey Harper Community College and Discovery Center. He is a member of the national board of directors of Preservation Action and has served on the boards of several local preservation organizations.