

LANDMARKS ILLINOIS

2008-2009 CHICAGOLAND WATCHLIST

Tel: 312-922-1742
www.Landmarks.org

Castle Car Wash
3801 W. Ogden Ave., Chicago
(Architect unknown, 1925)

Significance: Castle Car Wash was built in 1925 and is the last intact historic gas station structure on Route 66 (Ogden Avenue) in the city limits. Chicago was the eastern terminus of Route 66. Originally Murphy's Filling Station, the building stopped functioning as a filling station in 1966 and later became a car wash. The Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program of the National Park Service recognizes this building, with its unique castle design, as one-of-a-kind along the roadway and in April of 2005, the building was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Current Condition and/or Status: Castle Car Wash is currently owned by a towing company and is vacant and minimally maintained. In early 2008, due to safety violations, the owner removed the distinctive crenellation at the top of the tower. Castle Car Wash is indicative of a disappearing building type – the uniquely designed early-20th century filling station.

Potential Threat: Interested buyers have approached the owner but have received no response. Community organizations have noted that the building's size, location, and history are ideal for conversion to a visitor center that would highlight the history of the neighborhood and Route 66. In the meantime, the building continues to deteriorate.

What You Can Do: Contact 24th Ward Alderman Sharon Denise Dixon and request that she work with interested organizations to preserve and re-use this unique Route 66 property.

- Alderman Sharon Denise Dixon, Office of the 24th Ward, 2100 S. Marshall Blvd., Ste. 801 Chicago, IL 60623 (773-522-2430) (773-522-2437 fax)
Sharon.Dixon@cityofchicago.org

Other Contacts:

The North Lawndale Office of Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS), the Lawndale Business and Local Development Corp. (LBLDC) and Route 66 Historian and Author Dave Clark are all interested in preserving Castle Car Wash and would like to see it converted to a new use that may benefit the community.

- Charles Leeks: NHS, 773-522-4637; cleeks@nhschicago.org
- Eric Strickland: LBLDC, 773-265-8500; eus@lbldc.org
- Dave Clark: 312-432-1284; dave@windycityroadwarrior.com

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Fine Arts Building Annex
421 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago
(Andrew Rebori, architect, 1924)

Significance: This narrow six-story building was built to house the heating plant to the Fine Arts Building at 410 S. Michigan Ave. and to provide studio space for musicians and artists. Designed by noted architect Andrew Rebori, the building is identified as having “community significance” (OR-rated) in the *Chicago Historic Resources Survey*. The lower floors are clad in verde antique marble while the upper levels are yellow-and-green terra cotta. Floors two through six of the facade feature a single Chicago window with a patterned cast iron spandrel and the fourth floor has an iron balconette. The building exemplifies Rebori’s ability to meet client needs while making a significant architectural statement.

Current Condition and/or Status: The owner of the Fine Arts Building installed a new boiler system in-house in 2007, discontinuing the need to link to the Annex. Roosevelt University purchased the building in the same year. Tenants have been relocated to the Fine Arts Building and the building is vacant.

Potential Threat: Roosevelt University is working with developer John Buck on development plans for the building site, as well as for the site to the north. Roosevelt has been informed by city officials that the Fine Arts Annex is significant and the building should be evaluated for re-use. However, the Roosevelt plan is a large-scale dormitory project and no plans have been publicly shown.

What You Can Do: Contact 2nd Ward Alderman Robert Fioretti and Roosevelt University to encourage the institution to preserve the building and include it in redevelopment plans of the site.

- Alderman Fioretti, Office of the 2nd Ward, 429 South Dearborn St., Chicago, Illinois 60605 (312-263-9273) (312-786-1736 fax)
- President Chuck Middleton, Roosevelt University, 430 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60605, cmiddleton@roosevelt.edu

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Harper Theater Buildings

Harper Avenue and 53rd Street, Chicago
(H.R. Wilson and Co., architect, 1913)

Significance: The Harper Theater buildings are included in the Hyde Park-Kenwood Historic District, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The buildings also were identified as having “community significance” (OR-rated) in the *Chicago Historic Resources Survey*. The theater was built as a 1,200-seat vaudeville house and was converted to a movie theater in 1935. Its entrance was changed from 53rd Street to Harper Avenue in the 1930s, prompting the addition of the blue tile entry. The storefronts and offices of the commercial building are mostly original, but the theater underwent a renovation in the 1960s that altered the interior. The theater and two-story commercial facades are of a distinctive red brick with white terra cotta trim.

Current Condition and/or Status: The commercial and theater buildings have been owned by the University of Chicago (U of C) since 2002. In 2006, U of C contracted with Baum Realty and Brinshore Development to redevelop the site. Instead of demolishing the buildings, Baum and Brinshore created a preservation plan that would have adaptively reused the Harper Theater buildings as a mixed-use retail/restaurant/office complex taking advantage of historic tax credits. However, the U of C terminated the project. The commercial and theater buildings now stand vacant.

Potential Threat: U of C owns the adjoining properties, which could result in a large-scale demolition to create a single redevelopment site, which is located in the 53rd Street Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District.

What You Can Do: Contact 4th Ward Alderman Toni Preckwinkle and urge her to work with U of C officials to redevelop the block reusing these distinctive historic buildings.

- Alderman Toni Preckwinkle, Office of the 4th Ward, 4659 S. Cottage Grove Avenue, Suite 203, Chicago, IL 60653 (773-536-8103) (773-536-7296 fax)
tpreckwinkle@cityofchicago.org

Other Contacts: Hyde Park Historical Society, Jack Spicer 773-324-5476.
jackspicer@earthlink.net

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Prentice Women's Hospital
333 E. Superior St., Chicago
(Bertrand Goldberg, architect, 1974-1975)

Significance: Of all of modernist architect Bertrand Goldberg's numerous hospital commissions, Prentice Women's Hospital is the best known. Completed in 1975, it exhibits Goldberg's noted use of circular forms for four linked towers atop a five-story glass-and-steel podium. "Goldberg's architecture is highly sculptural," said Heather Barrow, formally of the Art Institute of Chicago. "His work is meant to be seen in the round, from more than one direction." (*Bertrand Goldberg Collection, the Art Institute of Chicago, 2007*)

Current Condition and/or Status: Northwestern Memorial Hospital opened a new Prentice facility a block west, at 250 E. Superior, in October, 2007. Northwestern Memorial Hospital still owns the building and the Stone Institute of Psychiatry occupies the base, but the clover shaped towers are now vacant.

Potential Threat: In a few years, ownership of the building is scheduled to revert to Northwestern University which plans to develop the site for a new research facility for the Feinberg School of Medicine. Reuse of the building will be considered, a NWU spokesman told the *Chicago Tribune*, (April 15, 08), but "we don't have any decision or inclination one way or the other." Demolition is an option.

What You Can Do: Contact 42nd Ward Alderman Brendan Reilly and request that the building be evaluated by the City's Landmarks Division for potential Chicago Landmark designation.

- Alderman Brendan Reilly, Office of the 42nd Ward, 311 West Superior, Suite 212 Chicago, IL 60610 (312-642-4242) (312-642-0420 fax)
office@reillyforchicago.com

Other Contacts: SOAR (Streeterville Organization of Active Residents) To date, the organization has not stated a position on the future of the former Prentice Hospital building.

- 244 East Pearson Street, Suite 101, Chicago, IL 60611-2310 (312-280-2596) (312-280-4631 fax) www.soarchicago.org

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YWCA

830 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago
(John Van Osdel II, architect, 1894)

Significance: Built in 1894, the YWCA Building is one of the oldest buildings in the *Historic Michigan Boulevard District*, a City of Chicago Landmark. It was designed as safe and affordable housing to young women following the 1893 World's Fair. Located near the Illinois Central railroad station and within a reasonable distance to the heart of the Loop, it was the first YWCA built in Chicago. The building was designed to take advantage of views along Michigan Avenue and the lake, with projecting triangular bay windows on the top floors and a Renaissance inspired loggia on the second floor

Current Condition and/or Status: While redevelopment proposals have been discussed for the site, there is no current plan for the building itself which has been vacant for nearly 30 years. The building was last used as a hotel in the 1970s, until it was purchased by the Johnson Publishing Company. The building was recently acquired by Renaissance Development Group, LLC. The building is believed to be in poor structural condition and will require substantial rehabilitation.

Potential Threat: Without a redevelopment plan, the building will continue to deteriorate. The City of Chicago is currently in building court with the owner regarding code and safety violations.

What You Can Do: Contact 2nd Ward Alderman Robert Fioretti regarding the importance of this building.

- Alderman Robert Fioretti, Office of the 2nd Ward, 429 South Dearborn St., Chicago, Illinois 60605 (312-263-9273) (312-786-1736 fax)

Other Contacts: A community organization, South Loop Neighbors, supports the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the YWCA Building as part of the Historic Michigan Boulevard District. Contact: Dennis McClendon: (312) 322-0900, development@southloopneighbors.org

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David C. Cook Publishing Company
850 N. Grove Ave., Elgin
(David E. Postle, architect, 1901)

Significance: This Classical Revival style complex was built in 1901 to house David C. Cook's growing religious publication business. It consists of a prominent, central building distinguished by a large portico and two sprawling wings that housed the company's nearly 300 employees. The building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Current Condition and/or Status: In 1994, the company moved part of its operations to Colorado and the central building has been vacant since 1995. The building is secure and has been maintained. Only warehousing and distribution operations currently remain in the rear buildings. The entire nine-acre complex was under a purchase agreement to a private developer for a reported \$7 million in 2005, but the deal failed. A local historic district, including original company worker housing and a park, was designated in 2007, but the D.C. Cook Building was not included due to owner opposition.

Potential Threat: The City of Elgin is pushing for redevelopment of this and other sites along the Fox River. Residents fear that a private developer will opt to demolish the historic building rather than incorporate it into a redevelopment plan.

What You Can Do: Contact Elgin city officials to encourage a redevelopment plan that includes reuse of the building, as well as landmark protection for the building.

- Mayor Ed Schock: mayor@cityofelgin.org
- City Manager - Olufemi Folarin: (847-931-5590) (847-931-5610 fax)
roder_n@cityofelgin.org
- Interested buyers should contact the corporate office of David C. Cook:
Cris Doornbos, President & CEO - 4050 Lee Vance View,
Colorado Springs, CO 80918, (800) 708-5550 or (719) 536-0100

Other Contacts: A local neighborhood organization, the Northeast Neighborhood Association (NENA), is calling for adaptive-use instead of demolition. The group has commissioned an adaptive-use study for single-family residential unit conversion of the building.

- Kerin Kelly, NENA, 847-903-0647, www.nenaofelgin.org
- Betsy Couture, ARCHES (Advocate to Revitalize Cultural & Historic Elgin Sites), 847-741-9361, betsycouture@yahoo.com

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Elgin Mental Health Center Buildings

750 S. State St., Elgin

(Bertrand Goldberg, architect, 1966-1967) (Unknown builder, 1890s barn)

Significance: Two now-vacant buildings at Elgin Mental Health Center were designed by noted modernist architect Bertrand Goldberg and built between 1966 and 1967: a distinctive Laundry Facility and circular Medical Surgical Building. A vacant brick horse barn was built by the hospital in the 1890s and is thought to be the oldest masonry barn in Kane County. Elgin Mental Health Center was opened as the Northern Illinois Hospital and Asylum for the Insane in 1872.

Current Condition and/or Status: The laundry building was closed in 2000 for possible asbestos abatement and was part of the 2002 property sale. The Medical Building is still owned by the Health Center but is now vacant. It is structurally sound, but heating and ventilation upgrades and repairs from deferred maintenance are needed. Public access to the grounds is limited and many other historic buildings have already been demolished. In later years the hospital used the barn for storage until the sale of the property in 2002. It is structurally solid and appears to be in good condition.

Potential Threat: The laundry building and masonry barn are located on the northern portion of the hospital campus, which was sold in 2002 to John B. Sanfilippo and Sons. The company planned to consolidate its nut processing operations on the site, but now plans to sell the property, which is zoned for industrial/research uses. It is assumed that the two historic buildings will be demolished when the lots are redeveloped. The Hospital has not stated a future use for the Medical Building.

What You Can Do: Contact Elgin city officials to encourage their support to include the 19th century barn in an expansion plan of the adjacent, city-owned sports complex to Elgin Shores Park, a Kane County Forest Preserve. Community advocates have proposed that the barn could serve as a possible comfort station or point of interest to a proposed bicycle trail. The Laundry Building should be studied for industrial re-use. Urge that all of the buildings be evaluated by the Elgin Historic Preservation Commission for possible local landmark designation.

- Mayor Edward Schock: mayor@cityofelgin.org
- David Kaptain, Council Member, kaptain_d@cityofelgin.org
- City Manager - Olufemi Folarin: (847-931-5590) (847-931-5610 fax)
roder_n@cityofelgin.org
- Bill Briska, Chair, Elgin Historic Preservation Commission (847-421-4022)
BillBriska@cs.com

Other Contacts: ARCHES (Advocate to Revitalize Cultural & Historic Elgin Sites) is a local group that advocates the sustainable value of Elgin's rich past.

- Lucy Elliott, (847) 742-2857, laelliott@ameritech.net

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Charles Gates Dawes House
225 Greenwood St., Evanston
(Henry Edwards-Ficken, architect, 1894)

Significance: This 1894 French Chateaux-style mansion was the home of Charles Gates Dawes, Vice President of the United States under Calvin Coolidge. It is considered to have one of the most intact 19th century interiors in the Chicagoland area, featuring original furniture, Tiffany lamps, carved mantels, paneled cherry-wood walls and finely articulated plaster-coffered ceilings. In 1942, General Dawes gave his house to Northwestern University, while stipulating that he and his wife would live in the home until their deaths. The house then was to be used as a museum or to be open to the public to highlight local history in some capacity. Northwestern took full possession of the property in 1957 after General Dawes' wife passed away. In 1960 the Evanston History Society moved in as a tenant.

Current Condition and/or Status: On April 16, the Dawes House was closed to the public by Northwestern, citing safety violations found by the Evanston Fire Chief and stating the museum's lease would not be renewed. Northwestern recently extended the museum's lease until June 30, 2009 and the city has said the lower floors could reopen to the public this fall pending safety improvements. The university has stated an additional \$4 million in repairs is needed before the home can fully re-open but has not stated what its intentions for the property are after next June.

Potential Threat: The Dawes Mansion is an Evanston Landmark and a National Historic Landmark. However, neither designation protects the interior which may be at risk if the building is adapted for non-museum uses.

What You Can Do: Contact Northwestern University regarding the importance of the building to Evanston and as a National Historic Landmark. Urge the city to pursue landmark designation of the interior and urge the university to implement a plan for the building that will be sensitive to its historic integrity.

- President Henry Bienen, Northwestern University. Northwestern University, Rebecca Crown Center, 633 Clark St., Evanston, IL 60208-1106.
hsbienen@northwestern.edu

Other Contacts: A local preservation campaign effort is under way; see www.generaldawesreturns.org For information on the house go to www.evanstonhistorical.org

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William F. Ross House
1027 Meadow Rd., Glencoe
(Frank Lloyd Wright, architect, 1915)

Significance: The residence is one of six in Ravine Bluffs, a development designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1915 and commissioned by Wright's attorney, Sherman Booth. Five of the homes, including this one, were designed as rental properties and are variations of Wright's famed "fireproof house for \$5,000" which was published in *Ladies Home Journal* in 1907. The entire development is listed on Glencoe's honorary Heritage List and the state's historic survey.

Current Condition and/or Status: The house has been vacant for two years and has fallen into disrepair. Last winter, the heating pipes burst which has caused further damage.

Potential Threat: The property is for sale and is being marketed for the house "as is" or the land, which is less than a quarter-acre site. If torn down, it would be the first intact Wright house to be demolished in the United States in over 30 years. The listing on the Glencoe Heritage List only imposes a 90-day delay if a new owner seeks a demolition permit.

What You Can Do: Urge Glencoe officials to work with potential buyers on a potential renovation plan and to give assistance in whatever way possible, including encouraging local landmark designation and use of the state Property Tax Freeze Program for rehabilitation.

- Village President - Scott M. Feldman, (847) 835-4188 ext. 702, scottfeldman@goglencoe.com
- Village Manager - Paul Harlow, (847) 835-4114, paulh@goglencoe.com
- Village Historic Preservation Commission Chair – Lesa Rizzolo, c/o peters@goglencoe.com

Other Contacts: Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy, Ron Scherubel: 847-800-4812, rscherubel@savewright.org Interested buyers should contact: (847) 432-0500.

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The Park Subdivision Park Drive, Glenview (Various architects, 1893-1903)

Significance: In the 1890s, a religious group called the Swedenborgian Church of New Jerusalem settled in Glenview, purchasing a 40-acre tract north of Glenview Road. The congregation built a church and a small pond on 10 acres with home sites for congregants surrounding it in a circular plan designed by landscape architect Swain Nelson, who helped design Chicago's Lincoln Park. Since its development, the neighborhood has been known as the "Park."

Hugh Burnham, nephew of Daniel H. Burnham and the first mayor of Glenview, built a Queen Anne home in the Park in 1894. N.D. Pendleton, the founding pastor of the Swedenborgian Church built a home, later called the Original Manse, which was passed down through subsequent pastors for 50 years. The landscape architect, Swain Nelson, also built an Arts & Crafts, Shingle Style house here.

Current Condition and/or Status: While the Burnham residence has been altered, architectural historians believe the Park neighborhood is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Glenview has a local preservation ordinance, but city officials are unlikely to support local landmark designation of the area without the church's consent. One of the original homes, at 59 Park Drive, was demolished in 2005 and replaced by a new house.

Potential Threat: The Burnham, Nelson and Manse houses are owned by the church and are among the potential properties it may demolish. The church has stated it can not afford the taxes on these homes, all of which are leased to tenants. Demolition would reduce the taxes paid. The church would then sell the Burnham and Manse house sites to developers and use the site of the Nelson house for a playing field for its school, the Midwest Academy.

What You Can Do: Contact Glenview officials to urge support for National Register or local landmark designation of the Park.

- Village Board President Kerry Cummings: (847-729-6809)
cummingsvillage@ameritech.net
- Glenview Preservation Commission Chairman David Silver: (847-272-8632)
dpsilver@comcast.net

Church officials have stated a willingness to sell the Burnham House if moved. To inquire, contact: Ken Cole, President, Park Dwellings, Incorp., (847-729-3265)

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Yunker School
14299 S. Wolf Rd., Orland Township
(Architect Unknown, 1910)

Significance: Located in unincorporated, south suburban Cook County, this one-room schoolhouse went through interior renovations, converting it into rental space for commercial use, but has maintained its historic character on the exterior. The school was built with rusticated concrete block walls, a two-columned entrance portico and a school bell housed in a cupola. The front of the building is marked 1910 and the door lintel is carved "School District 134." The land upon which the school was built had been bought from William Yunker, a local farmer. The school closed in 1957 after consolidation with School District 135 and was used for storage until the current owner purchased it in 1987.

Current Condition and/or Status: The Yunker School is one of two one-room school houses remaining in Orland Township and one of a handful in Cook County. It was for sale in May of 2008 and many inquiries were made to the realtor about demolishing the schoolhouse for commercial development. The property was taken off the market after the owner decided to continue leasing it for office use instead of selling.

Potential Threat: Surrounding development continues to threaten the schoolhouse. It is located in an area of strip malls and vast commercial growth. Discussions continue between local and Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) officials regarding a future widening of 143rd Street (State Route 7), which would bring the road within a few feet from the school's front steps. Because the school building is located on a site that is part of Orland Township, the Village of Orland Park has no legal jurisdiction to designate the building a local landmark. Orland Township does not have a preservation ordinance.

What You Can Do: Encourage Orland Park and Orland Township officials to work with the current owner toward developing a preservation plan for the building. Encourage the local legislator, Representative Kevin McCarthy, to work with IDOT to assure a state road widening project will not threaten the property.

- Board of Trustees, Orland Township: 15100 S. 94th St., Orland Park, IL 60462, www.Orlandtwp.org
- Daniel McLaughlin, Village President/Mayor and the Board of Trustees: Village of Orland Park, 14700, Ravinia Avenue, Orland Park, IL 60642 (708-403-6100) officials@orland-park.il.us
- IL State Rep. Kevin A. McCarthy (D-37), 8951 West 151st Street, Orland Park, IL 60462 Phone: (708) 226-1999 Fax: (708) 226-9068 kmccarthy@housedem.state.il.us
- Richard Riley, owner: (312) 953-5664, rcriley@siting-advisors.com

Other Contacts: For more information on the history of the building and its significance to the community, contact: Rosemary Estand, Chairman, Orland Park Preservation Commission, (708) 349-7548.

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Hangar 1, Chicago Executive Airport (Palwaukee Airport)

1120 S. Milwaukee Ave., Wheeling
(Architect unknown, 1929)

Significance: This hangar is one of the oldest airport buildings in the Chicago region and one of a handful of 1920s hangars remaining in Illinois. In the 1950s, Guthier's Flying Field was transformed from "a quiet grass-and-gravel strip airfield" into the fully modern Palwaukee Airport. (*A Historical Consideration of Hangar #1.* Heritage Research, Ltd., Nov. 5, 2007). In 1986, the airport was sold to the villages of Wheeling and Prospect Heights which gave it its current name. Hangar 1 is the only remaining structure associated with the entire history and development of the airport.

Current Condition and/or Status: The structure is in good condition and adaptable due to its large, open floor plate. Its last occupant, Palwaukee Flyers, a flying school and maintenance company was relocated to another building in July 2008. The hangar has been vacant since that time.

Potential Threat: Airport officials plan to demolish the hangar and replace it in the same location with a new multi-hangar structure with a restaurant, offices and exhibition space to display the airport's history. The new four-hangar structure is to be designed in a retro Art Deco style. A developer has been selected for the project, but because the building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and public agency approvals are required, the state historic preservation office (Illinois Historic Preservation Agency) must review the project's impact on the historic building.

What You Can Do: To voice concern about the proposed demolition of the hangar and to voice support for the study of its adaptive re-use, contact:

- Dennis Rouleau, Airport Director, Chicago Executive Airport, 1020 South Plant Road, Wheeling, Illinois 60090 (847.537.2580) (847.537.8183 Fax)
- Terrence Schaddel, Airport Planning Engineer & Environmental Officer, IDOT, (217-785-5177), terrence.schaddel@illinois.gov

Other Contacts: Anne Haaker, Deputy State Historic Preservation officer, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (217-785-5027), anne.haaker@illinois.gov

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Vanishing Neon

Significance: Large-scale neon signs have been a staple of the nocturnal American commercial landscape since the 1940s. The principal purpose was advertisement for auto-oriented uses, including restaurants, motels, shopping centers, car dealerships and small businesses. However, the designs of the signs themselves—including bright lights, colors, and geometric forms—are a testament to the art of the neon sign maker as well as to the spirit of their times.

Current Condition and/or Status: Unlike buildings—which can often find new uses—the design of these signs are directly related to their original function. When a business closes, the built-in obsolescence of the sign becomes obvious. Furthermore, their ongoing maintenance can be expensive. Few signs have any official landmark protection and, yet, their contribution to a community’s sense of place often can be quite high. Several Chicago neon signs are protected, but only because they are an integral part of a designated landmark, such as the Allerton Hotel, the Chicago Theatre or Wrigley Field.

Potential Threat: Some memorable large-scale neon signs in the Chicago region have been lost in recent years, including the monumental Magikist “red lips” that adorned various area expressways, the highly ornamental signs lining commercial strips, and numerous smaller-scale signs for area businesses. Several large-scale neon signs in Chicago are currently at risk, including the “Z Frank” auto dealer sign (Western and Peterson) and the “Stars Motel” sign (Lincoln and Kedzie), both of whose businesses have recently closed.

What You Can Do: A few communities have given landmark protection or restoration grants to their most artistic neon, including the Northgate Shopping Center sign (1956) in Aurora, Ill.; a Lincoln Highway commercial business sign in DeKalb, IL; a neon sign district in Portland, Ore.; and a series of neon signs along Route 66 in New Mexico. Preservationists also can urge their local officials to save the “best of the best” signs, based on local sign surveys.