

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Prospect Park Residential Historic District
Name of Property Hennepin County, MN
County and State N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION

- LATE VICTORIAN: Queen Anne
- LATE VICTORIAN: Stick/Eastlake
- LATE VICTORIAN: Shingle Style
- LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival
- LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival
- LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS: Tudor Revival
- LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS: Late Gothic Revival
- LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS: Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival
- LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Commercial Style
- LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Bungalow/Craftsman
- LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Prairie School
- MODERN MOVEMENT: International Style
- OTHER
- MIXED
- NO STYLE

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Prospect Park Residential Historic District is located in Southeast Minneapolis, adjoining the western border of Saint Paul. It is set apart from the surrounding area by virtue of its topography and its geography. The Prospect Park Water Tower is at the crest of Tower Hill Park off University Avenue (both NRHP, 1997) and dominates the skyline. Because of its irregular hilly topography, much of the historic district is laid out with a curvilinear street plan with named streets that have their own numbering system, rather than the strict rectangular grid that characterizes much of the city. The district also includes the Malcolm and Nancy Willey House (NRHP, 1984). The district is bounded by University Avenue on the north; Emerald Street, the boundary line with Saint Paul and Ramsey County, on the east; the sound barrier wall that separates the historic district from Interstate 94 on the south; and portions of Arthur Avenue, Williams Avenue, and Malcolm Avenue on the west.

The Prospect Park Residential Historic District is residential in character with related resources such as three churches, one school, and three small-scale commercial buildings that reinforce the architectural character and history of the area. The majority of the residences were built as single-family dwellings. Two-family duplexes, which are similar in form and style to the single-family dwellings (many have been converted from single-family houses), and small-scale multiple dwellings are also significant resources in the district. Many of the residences were built with small barns (later converted to garages) or garages that adjoin alleys or driveways. In some cases, barns were moved to new sites within the district and converted to houses during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Many of the multiple dwellings were also built with garages.

The district has major landscape features that arise from the topography and the curvilinear street plan. In addition to Tower Hill Park, these include planted triangles at the intersections of streets, stone

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Prospect Park Residential Historic District
Name of Property
Hennepin County, MN
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 2

and concrete retaining walls, and street trees. These features contribute to the district.

Residential Buildings of Prospect Park

Single-family and two-family dwellings

The historic district contains 540 buildings in this category. They range in date from 1884 (the year after the area was initially platted) to 2011, although the period of significance ends in 1968. Stylistically, they represent the major architectural styles seen in the residential areas of Minneapolis during these years, ranging from the Queen Anne to the modern and contemporary. Rather than rising from the relatively flat landscape and rectilinear grid that characterizes so much of the city, the residential architecture of the district has been adapted to the varied topography and irregularly sized lots of the district plats. The size and shape of the lots, the relation of the houses to each other, and their relation to the street are determined largely by the topography. For example, on lots with steep slopes, houses are set well back from the street. Where the lot width is narrow, houses are generally set close together, unless the original owner or developer acquired more than one lot to create space around the dwelling. On the blocks at the south end of the district, the land slopes are not as extreme, the lots are more regular in shape, and the houses tend to be set closer to the street.

Multiple dwellings

Twenty-five small-scale multiple dwellings are located throughout the district. They range in date from ca. 1910 to the 1970s. Most were built with four, six, or eight units and are compatible in height, width, and materials to the other residential buildings in the district. Although more symmetrical in form, they often employ the same range of architectural styles as the houses, including Colonial Revival, Craftsman, Prairie School, Tudor Revival, and Mission. Most are placed on more than one lot. They usually have similar setbacks to the houses. Because of the topographic challenges, most of the multiple dwellings are built on lots that are relatively flat or have gentle slopes.

Architectural Styles and Construction Techniques

The residential Queen Anne style can be seen throughout the district. Notable examples are located on Arthur, Clarence, and Malcolm Avenues. Buildings in this style were built between the early 1880s and mid-1890s. The Queen Anne style is characterized by its richly ornamented, asymmetrical composition based on an irregular plan and massing and contrasting textures and materials. Characteristic features included steeply pitched multi-planed roofs, towers with conical roofs, pedimented dormers, projecting gables with recessed surfaces, carved panels, open porches, projecting bays, and wood shingles applied in patterns. A variant, known as the Shingle Style, is characterized by smooth, curvilinear surfaces covered with wood shingles. Some of these houses were designed by architects, but many were built by local contractors or builders using designs from plan books.

In the district, the Colonial Revival style falls into two eras, approximately 1890 to 1905 and 1920 to 1940, and is one of the most prevalent styles in the Prospect Park neighborhood. Houses from both periods are characterized by their regular, rectangular plans, surmounted by gabled roofs. In the earlier period, the gable end usually fronts the street, while in the second period, the gables are at the ends

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Prospect Park Residential Historic District

Name of Property

Hennepin County, MN

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 3

with the front roof slope pierced by dormers. Wood clapboard and shingle siding are the typical facing materials during both periods. In the first period, houses are often fronted by one- or two-story porches with fluted columns and Corinthian capitals. Porches may be enclosed with screens and/or storm windows. Fanlights or pediments and sidelights often mark the doorways. In the earlier period, the classically inspired details that are the hallmark of the style are interpreted in a rather fanciful way, while in the second period the style is a more accurate reproduction of the colonial prototypes. A subcategory of the Colonial Revival style, referred to as “Dutch,” incorporates a gambrel roof. Some of these houses are architect-designed, but the symmetrical forms and easily duplicated details made the style popular with builders and contractors.

Many residences were constructed in traditional form types, based on overall plan and roof shapes, but do not adhere to a particular style overall. These and many foursquare residences are found throughout the district and range in date from the mid-1880s to about 1920. While simple in design, Queen Anne vernacular houses reference that popular style. Most have front gables and are one and one half or two stories in height. Others, though, may have intersecting gables and be one story tall. The foursquare residence is cube-shaped and incorporates four rooms on the main floor, with a hipped or cross-gable roof, wide unsupported eaves, a simple front porch, often enclosed with screens and/or storm windows, and little ornamentation. Many of these houses have been altered with additions and replacement siding, such as asbestos-cement shingles, stucco, or more recent replacement materials. Ornamental detail may have been altered or removed.

The Craftsman style (derived from the Arts and Crafts movement) was very popular throughout Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and the surrounding communities between 1905 and 1925.¹ The Prospect Park neighborhood was no exception. The style in residential architecture emphasizes low horizontal massing, open interior floor plans, and contrasting combinations of materials such as stucco, brick and/or stone veneers, wood clapboards, and wood shingles. Characteristic features include low-pitched roofs, wide eaves, exposed roof rafters, horizontally grouped windows, front porches (often enclosed with screens and/or storm windows), and sun porches. The Craftsman style acquired its name from the early-twentieth-century magazine of that name that popularized it. One-story houses in the style are often called bungalows. A variation called the English Cottage style appeared between 1920 and 1935. Usually asymmetric in plan, houses in the style are faced with stucco with fieldstone trim and often have steep, sloping roofs. Plans for Craftsman houses were widely disseminated in books and magazines and readily available to contractors and builders.

Related to the Craftsman style is the Prairie or Prairie School style, popularized by Frank Lloyd Wright and a group of architects working with and around him in Chicago in the early twentieth century. Two of that group who had worked with Louis Sullivan, William Gray Purcell and George Grant Elmslie, established an architectural firm, along with George Feick, in Minneapolis in 1910. Although there are no houses by the firm in Prospect Park, their work was important in disseminating the style. As the style is interpreted in Prospect Park, the houses are often cubical in form, faced in stucco, and have hipped roofs with wide eaves. The style was also used for a number of multiple dwellings in the district.

¹ For a discussion of the sources and impact of the Arts and Crafts movement in Minneapolis see Patty Dean, “It is Here We Live’: Minneapolis Homes and the Arts and Crafts Movement,” *Minnesota History* 57 (Spring 2001): 245–262.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Prospect Park Residential Historic District

Name of Property

Hennepin County, MN

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 4

Also related to the Craftsman style is the Swiss Chalet style, notable for its prominent roof forms and intricate exterior wood detailing, including projecting eaves, porches, and balconies.

In addition to the Colonial Revival, other period Revival styles were popular in the Prospect Park neighborhood between 1900 and 1940. They include the Tudor Revival and the Mission and Spanish Eclectic or Spanish Revival. Tudor Revival houses are often faced with stucco and brick and have applied half-timbering, set below intersecting gabled roofs. Similar details can be found on some of the multiple dwellings. Mission and Spanish Eclectic houses are faced with stucco and brick veneer and incorporate bold ornamental detail. Roofs can be hipped or gabled and sometimes covered with tiles. The style was also used for multiple dwellings. Because the designs were less easily duplicated, many of the buildings in these styles in the district were designed by architects, rather than contractors or builders. Examples of buildings in these styles can be found on Barton, Clarence, Malcolm, and Seymour Avenues.

Prospect Park stands apart from many neighborhoods in Minneapolis in its concentration of architect-designed modern houses, as well as a scattering of house types and styles popular with mid-twentieth-century builders such as the Cape Cod (a variation of the earlier Colonial Revival style), the Ranch, and the Rambler. Modern residential designs disdain ornamentation and tend to favor low-pitched or flat roofs, cantilevered overhangs, and extended, smooth wall surfaces, often of glass. The house that Frank Lloyd Wright designed in 1934 for Malcolm and Nancy Willey, 255 Bedford Street (NRHP, 1984), is a precursor to his Usonian style. Across the street is the modern International Style house designed in 1938 by Winston Close and Elizabeth Scheu (Close) for Willem Luyten. The house was expanded in 1940 for Benjamin and Gertrude Lippincott. While these two houses predate World War II, most of the modern examples were constructed from the late 1940s onward, on sites that had not been built on previously. Many of the sites have steep slopes, and the houses are ingeniously adapted to their conditions. Roy Thorshov, Robert Cerny, and Carl Graffunder are other architects who designed modern houses in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. See Section 8 for more detailed information on these architects. A small number of contemporary residences were built after the period of significance.

Almost all the buildings in the district, including the multiple dwellings, are of wood-frame construction. In the houses, the wood structure is covered with wood clapboard or wood shingles or a combination or brick veneer. The use of stucco facing over a wood-frame structure for both houses and multiple dwellings began to gain popularity for new construction in about 1915. In addition, stucco began to be used as a replacement material for wood siding, whether to simplify maintenance, provide an up-to-date appearance, or both. In Prospect Park this often occurred when buildings were moved from one site to another or relocated on an existing lot, or when single-family houses were remodeled into duplexes. Calvin Schmid, in his extensive study of Minneapolis and Saint Paul (published in 1937), discussed the popularity of stucco as a building material, as compared to its use as a building material in cities of comparable size elsewhere in the United States. He does not discuss why it became so popular, but its ready adaptability to the popular Craftsman style is probably an important factor. In some areas of the country, stucco is applied over walls of fireproof terra-cotta tile. In the Prospect Park district, fireproof terra-cotta tile was occasionally used for early garages where fear of fire was a factor.²

² Calvin F. Schmid, *Social Saga of the Twin Cities: An Ecological and Statistical Study of Social Trends in Minneapolis and St.*

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Prospect Park Residential Historic District

Name of Property

Hennepin County, MN

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 5

Other materials that have been used as replacements for wood siding include asbestos-cement shingles, which began to be used in the 1920s, and aluminum and vinyl siding, both products of the mid- to late twentieth century. These materials were intended to imitate the wood elements they replaced. Sometimes the wood siding and details were removed; in other cases, the new material was placed over the existing wood. An increasing appreciation of original character has led some property owners in the district to restore the original wood siding.³

The type of material used for the foundation can be an important indicator of a building's date. Until about 1900, buildings were constructed on foundations of locally quarried limestone that was readily available from nearby sites. The rough-cut limestone blocks are in shades of gray and beige and are relatively soft and subject to spalling. Rusticated concrete blocks began to become popular in the early twentieth century and were widely used until about 1920. Most were manufactured by local firms and marketed as economical substitutes for stone.⁴ Advances in the technology of concrete manufacture led to the use of poured concrete foundations in the 1920s, often coupled with stucco facades that extended almost to ground level. By the 1930s the standardized, smooth-faced, concrete blocks that were readily available had become the preferred alternative. Older houses that were moved to new locations from the 1920s on, are generally set on concrete-block foundations. Garages from the 1920s were often constructed entirely of concrete blocks.

Other Historic Resources

Barns and garages

Small barns were frequently built in conjunction with houses constructed during Prospect Park's first three decades, before the widespread adoption of the automobile. Depending on the financial resources of the owner, the barn might house a cow to provide milk for the household, chickens for meat and eggs, or a horse to draw the family carriage. In the twentieth century, barns that survived were converted to other uses, such as garages for motorcars, and sometimes remodeled as

Paul (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Council of Social Agencies, Bureau of Social Research, 1937), 194–197. Anne Grimmer, *Preservation Briefs 22: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1990), provides some historic background on the use of stucco, as well as its physical composition, in the United States.

³ With time, asbestos-cement shingles have been judged as historic materials that deserve careful analysis before they are replaced. For more information, see National Park Service Technical Preservation Services, "From Asbestos to Zinc: Roofing for Historic Buildings," <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/roofingexhibit/introduction.htm>; Erin M. Tobin, "When the Imitation Becomes Real: Attitudes Toward Asphalt and Asbestos-Cement Roofing and Siding," *APT Bulletin* 31 (2000): 34–37; Amy Lamb Woods, "Keeping a Lid on It: Asbestos-Cement Building Materials. In *Preserving the Recent Past 2*, ed. Deborah Slaton and William G. Foulks (Washington, D.C.: Historic Preservation Education Foundation, Association for Preservation Technology, and National Park Service, 2000).

⁴ The manufacture of concrete blocks became practical after Harmon S. Palmer invented a machine that allowed for the easy molding of hollow concrete blocks. The Miracle Company of Minneapolis was a prominent local maker of concrete blocks and the machines that formed them. See Pamela H. Simpson, *Cheap, Quick, and Easy: Imitative Architectural Materials, 1870–1930* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), 11–16, 21–27. The Minneapolis Collection of the Minneapolis Central Library has trade catalogs from the Miracle Pressed Stone Company, including "Miracle Concrete" and "Miracle Wonder Face Down Machine for Making Concrete Building Blocks." See "List of Trade Catalogs Available in the Minneapolis Collection," 1997, Minneapolis Central Library.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Prospect Park Residential Historic District

Name of Property

Hennepin County, MN

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 6

residences. Some examples can be discerned from their gabled form and materials, typically wood siding, as well as such features as hayloft openings in the gable ends. These are best seen by strolling along the alleys of the neighborhood. Former barns are identified in the table in this section.

With the increasing popularity of automobiles, garages began to be built along with houses or were built later on the same lots, behind the houses, either adjacent to alleys or adjacent to driveways from the street. On some particularly steep sites, garages were built at the base of the slopes, close to the street. The historic garages are usually gable-roof or hipped-roof wood-frame structures with wood siding, large enough for one or two cars. Some of the earlier garages were constructed of rock-faced concrete blocks, which enhanced their fireproof qualities. Garages that are at least fifty years old are identified as historic in the table in this section.

Approximately 400 freestanding garages and converted barns are located in the district; 161 have been identified as historic.

Changes in building codes allowed for the construction of attached garages or tuck-under basement-level garages beginning in the 1920s. Most of the modern and contemporary houses in the district were built with attached garages. Attached and basement-level garages are also identified in the table in this section but are not counted as separate buildings.

Churches and school

Prospect Park Methodist Episcopal Church (now Prospect Park United Methodist Church), 22 Orlin Street, at the intersection of Malcolm Avenue (Photograph 4). The picturesque Tudor Revival church building was built in 1914, replacing a small church building of 1902. Designed by Edward Roy Ludwig, the wood-frame building with brick and stucco cladding is sited to take advantage of its corner location. A gabled entrance wing with a low gabled entrance porch is flanked by intersecting gabled-roof wings that contain the auditorium and the church hall. The overhanging roof eaves are outlined by bargeboards. A cross rises from the ridge of the front gable.

Saint Timothy's Episcopal Mission (now Korean Seventh-day Adventist Church), 21 Clarence Avenue (Photograph 13). This Late Gothic Revival church building was built in 1911 and designed by Long, Lamoreaux, and Long. Located on a steep site opposite Tower Hill Park, it has been modified over time to accommodate the needs of changing congregations and the adjacent property owners. The gable-roof main building is marked by buttresses at the front and rear and is fronted by a gable-roof enclosed front entrance porch. Both roofs have overhanging eaves outlined by bargeboards. The entrance porch and the main building have pointed-arch window openings.

Prospect Park Lutheran Church (now Saint Panteleimon Russian Orthodox Church), 138–140 Emerald Street. This Classical Revival style building, built in 1906, became the Prospect Park Norwegian Lutheran Church when it was moved to this site in 1912.⁵ The building was later modified by two successive congregations, Prospect Park Community Baptist Church and the present Saint Panteleimon congregation, which added the onion domes over the main section, the entrance porch,

⁵ "First Service Tonight in New Lutheran Church," *Minneapolis Journal*, June 30, 1912.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Prospect Park Residential Historic District

Name of Property

Hennepin County, MN

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 7

and the wing, apparently in several stages between 1973 and 1985.⁶ The wood-frame building is faced with stucco. It has a gable-roof main section and gable-roof entrance porch supported by columns. A continuous cornice creates pediments in the gable ends. Round-arched windows light the main section of the building. Greek crosses rise from the roof ridge and the onion domes.

Sidney Pratt School, 66 Malcolm Avenue at Orlin Avenue (Photograph 3). This Georgian-inspired Colonial Revival style school building is located at a prominent intersection at the base of Tower Hill Park and across from Prospect Park United Methodist Church. The first section of the building was built in 1898; it was enlarged in 1906 and again in 1926 as the number of pupils increased. Edward S. Stebbins, the architect to the Minneapolis Board of Education between 1897 and 1907, was the architect for the first two sections. The building is of cream-colored brick above a limestone base. It originally was built with the entrance facing Sidney Place. The current pedimented entrance bay rises above a double flight of steps. The windows with multi-pane sash are set below rusticated stone lintels. When built, the school had a prominent hipped roof with overhanging eaves that was surmounted by a copper-clad cupola. As the building was expanded, the roof was largely concealed by parapet walls, now coped by a stylized cornice, and the cupola was relocated. The entrance was reoriented to Orlin Avenue. The building was renovated in 1999 under the direction of Gar Hargens, Close Associates. At the same time, a landscaped play area with a pergola was created along the Malcolm Avenue side of the building.⁷

Commercial buildings

Store Building, 50 Bedford Street (Photograph 14). This commercial-style store building was constructed for Michael Zipoy in 1912 by architects Haley and Johnson to serve as a neighborhood grocery store. For many years it was known as Tower Grocery. It is close to the intersection of Bedford Street and University Avenue, which was a streetcar stop. The one-story brick building has a prominent storefront of glazed white, green, and brown brick with large show windows and a cornice set on stylized brackets. The building was rehabilitated in 2007–2008 to restore much of its original character.

Prospect Park Pharmacy (now Schneider Drug), 3400 University Avenue. This two-story brick building was constructed in 1908 by F. F. Lindsay as a store building with flats above. It occupies a prominent location at the intersection of Bedford Street and University Avenue, which was a streetcar stop. The building has retained some original architectural detail at the upper story in the overhanging cornice and window surrounds. The first-story storefront has been modified by the replacement of the original show windows with stuccoed infill. A chiropractic clinic and a barbershop are located in the storefronts

⁶ The church is pictured without onion domes in Ann Wick, "Prospect Park One-of-a-Kind Neighborhood," *Hennepin County History* 32 (Spring 1973): 13. "Centuries-old Traditions Is Kept at St. Panteleimon's," *Minneapolis Tribune*, December 7, 1980, cites a "small, gold-colored onion-shaped cupola . . . on the building's roof." *Southeast*, February 1985, pictures the onion-domed bell tower on the wing.

⁷ See E. S. Stebbins Papers (N74), Northwest Architectural Archives, Elmer L. Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. A photograph of the building as built is in "Minneapolis Public Schools Historic Context Study," 2005, report by Landscape Research for the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission, 12. See also "Pioneers of Pratt School Will Open \$95,000 Addition," *Minneapolis Journal*, February 7, 1927; Prospect Park History Committee, *Under the Witch's Hat: A Prospect Park East River Road Neighborhood History*, ed. Dean E. Abrahamson (Minneapolis: Prospect Park East River Road Improvement Association, 2003), 62–64.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Prospect Park Residential Historic District

Name of Property

Hennepin County, MN

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 8

to the west of the drugstore. The upper story is still apartments, and a one-story extension has been added along Bedford Street.

Store and Flats (now Signature Cafe), 130 Warwick Avenue. This two-story building was constructed in 1922 for Joseph Pehoushek by W. A. Batdorf and Son as a grocery store building with flats above. It is located in the middle of an otherwise residential block. The walls are faced with stucco and terminate in a curving cornice. The ground-floor storefront consists of two show windows above bulkheads with a center doorway. The window openings at the second story, which still houses an apartment, have been modified.

Public works

Prospect Park Water Tower and Tower Hill Park, 55 Malcolm Avenue (NRHP, 1997) (Photograph 11). The water tower, which stands at one of the highest topographical points (917 feet) in the city of Minneapolis and at the center of Tower Hill Park, is the signature piece of the neighborhood. Designed by city engineer F. W. Cappelen, it was constructed in 1913–1914 to improve the local water pressure. The circular form of the tower, with its walls of reinforced concrete and brick (now covered in shotcrete), is surmounted by an open loggia and a distinctive conical roof (nicknamed the “witch’s hat”) clad in terra-cotta tiles. A brick pump house, built at the same time and part of the site at the base of the hill on Malcolm Avenue, has a tiered hipped roof.⁸

Landscape features and topography

Landscape patterns and topography are the most important features that set Prospect Park apart from other communities of Minneapolis and help to define its essential character. The underlying geology was formed by two ice sheets. The Keewatin glacier extended down from Canada through what are now the Red River and Minnesota River valleys and into eastern Minnesota. The gray drift moraine from this ice sheet partially covered the red drift moraine that was carried from the northeast by the Patrician glacier. The result was a series of roughly rolling hills formed of granite and quartzite boulders known as “hardheads.” These hills extend from the Saint Anthony Park area of Saint Paul into the Prospect Park area of Minneapolis, dropping off into sand dune tracts close to the Mississippi River. The summit of this moraine comprises Tower Hill Park, approximately 917 feet above sea level at its peak. Prior to settlement, these hills were covered by deciduous hardwood trees, primarily ash and oak. A significant number of oak trees remain in Tower Hill Park and elsewhere in the neighborhood. Tower Hill Park is the most prominent landscape feature of the community by virtue of its size, 4.7 acres, and its location on University Avenue, the major artery that traverses the area on the north.⁹

Other landscape features are derived from the street patterns. The intersections of the curvilinear

⁸ For an extensive discussion of the water tower and the park, see Christine A. Curran and Charlene K. Roise, “Prospect Park Water Tower and Tower Hill Park,” June 1997, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, available at the State Historic Preservation Office, Minnesota Historical Society, Saint Paul.

⁹ Curran and Roise, “Prospect Park Water Tower and Tower Hill Park,” 7–6; George M. Schwarz, *The Geology of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1936), 86–87; Daniel E. Willard, *The Story of the North Star State* (Saint Paul: Webb Publishing Co., 1922), 56–59, 316.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Prospect Park Residential Historic District
Name of Property Hennepin County, MN
County and State N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 9

streets have resulted in the creation of spaces that have allowed for the insertion of landscaped triangles, bounded by concrete curbs. The triangle at the intersection of Malcolm Avenue and University Avenue contains a freestanding boulder inscribed with the name “Prospect Park” and plantings. The triangle at the intersection of Clarence Avenue and University Avenue contains plantings, as does the triangle at the intersection of Clarence Avenue and Seymour Avenue (Photograph 13). These three triangles are adjacent to Tower Hill Park, although they are not located on park property. Photographic evidence suggests that at least the triangle by Malcolm and University was in place by 1925. That triangle, as well as the triangles by Clarence and University and Clarence and Seymour, is visible in a 1937 aerial photograph. The Prospect Park boulder along University Avenue is illustrated in a 1936 photograph.¹⁰

Other landscaped triangles are located at the intersection of Arthur and Orlin Avenues (Photograph 2), the intersection of Orlin and Melbourne Avenues (Photograph 22), and the intersection of Barton and Malcolm Avenues. The latter two are mapped parkland acquired by the Minneapolis Board of Park Commissioners in 1915. Three other mapped triangles, Clarence Avenue at Bedford Street, Bedford Street at Orlin Avenue, and Bedford Street at University Avenue have been removed to improve traffic flow. Consequently, the Bedford-University triangle is now noncontributing. A curvilinear landscaped island is situated on Franklin Avenue, west of Bedford Street. This island, sometimes called the Franklin Oval (Photograph 33), was created when the route of the street, originally named Hamline Avenue, was straightened in conjunction with the construction of the Cappelen Memorial Bridge between 1919 and 1923.¹¹

The construction of Interstate 94 in the 1960s required the removal of houses and produced several dead-end streets. It also resulted in the creation of two small parks, one at the west end of Melbourne Avenue that serves as a right-of-way for the Department of Public Works and the other at the intersection of Arthur, Sharon, and Seymour Avenues, named Chergosky Park (Photograph 39). These are considered noncontributing to the district because houses were removed from the sites, even though they fall within the period of significance. Chergosky Park is also noncontributing because it was first designed as a park in 1982, after the period of significance.

It is likely that the landscaped triangles were created in conjunction with the tree-planting program in Prospect Park. The streets are still enhanced by trees along the sidewalks. Many of the elms first planted by the Board of Park Commissioners survive. Those that succumbed to Dutch elm disease have been replaced by more resistant species of trees.

¹⁰ The 1925 photograph is looking toward University Avenue from the water tower; Minnesota Historical Society, location no. MH5.9 MP1i p21, neg. no. 1495-B. The 1936 photograph is Minnesota Historical Society, MH5.9 MP4.1 r17, neg. no. 2395-A. The 1937 aerial photograph was taken on July 1, 1937, and is available at the John R. Borchert Map Library, O. Meredith Wilson Library University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

¹¹ C. Ben Wright, “Minneapolis Parks and Recreation: A History of the Park and Recreation Board Since World War II” [1980], unpublished typescript prepared for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Appendix II; *Hudson’s Dictionary of Minneapolis: A Guide and Handbook* (Minneapolis: Hudson Company, 1925), 120–124. All five triangles owned by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board are still depicted on official plat maps, even though two of the triangles have been removed. The other triangles and the Franklin Oval are under the jurisdiction of the Minneapolis Department of Public Works; they are not depicted on official plat maps.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Prospect Park Residential Historic District
Name of Property Hennepin County, MN
County and State N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 10

The cast-iron lamp standards that line the streets are based on a historic design that was adopted by the City of Minneapolis for installation throughout the city. The Prospect Park streetlights were installed in 2000.¹²

The boundaries of the historic district encompass an area that displays a variety of elevations and topographical features. The north section of the district, bounded on the south by Franklin Avenue, is hilly, with the highest point at Tower Hill Park. In response to the topography, most streets are curvilinear, even in the flatter sections around the perimeter, and most blocks and lots are irregularly shaped.¹³

South of Franklin Avenue, the streets are platted in a traditional grid pattern. The land slopes gently from north to south and east to west, as it approaches the valley of the Mississippi River to the southwest. The southern two blocks of Bedford (Photograph 43) and Emerald Street are on flat terrain, creating streetscapes with long, uninterrupted views.

Builders took advantage of the terrain, incorporating terracing and picturesque masonry or concrete retaining walls into the overall landscaping. Some houses occupy elevated sites, with lawns that slope towards the street (Photographs 24 and 35). Many of the pre-existing oak trees were retained, which further enhances the area’s naturalistic setting.¹⁴

Evaluation of Contributing Properties

To be contributing to the historic district, a property must date from the period of significance (1884–1968) and have been built to serve one of the listed historic functions. Additionally, the property must retain most, if not all, of the seven aspects of integrity—location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The assessment of integrity is guided by the section “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property” in *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. The *Bulletin* outlines four steps to evaluate integrity:

- Define the essential physical features that must be present for a property to represent its significance;
- Determine whether the essential physical features are visible enough to convey their significance;
- Determine whether the property needs to be compared with similar properties; and,
- Determine, based on the significance and essential physical features, which aspects of integrity are particularly vital to the property being nominated and if they are present.

¹² The funds for the streetlights were partially assessed against property owners and partially provided by Neighborhood Revitalization Program money. See Prospect Park History Committee, *Under the Witch’s Hat*, 108–109.

¹³ This change in elevation can be seen in Photograph 6. Houses on the west side of Arthur Avenue (left) on the exterior side of the district are on flat terrain, while properties on the opposite side of the street are on raised lots that accommodate the change in the terrain. This is also seen in Photograph 18, which shows Bedford Street at the east boundary of the district, and Photograph 17, the incline of Clarence Avenue from a similar vantage point.

¹⁴ Significant landscape and site features are listed in the table in this section.

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Prospect Park Residential Historic District
Name of Property
Hennepin County, MN
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 11

Defining the Essential Physical Features

The *Bulletin* explains that for Criterion A, “a property that is significant for its historic association is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that made up its character or appearance during the period of its association with the important event, historical pattern, or person(s).” A property in a historic district cannot be considered contributing if:

- it has been substantially altered since the period of the district's significance, or
- it does not share the historic associations of the district.

Section 8 of this nomination summarizes the historic district’s significance: “The Prospect Park neighborhood is both representative and unique. Its cohesive sense of community was a pioneering model for Minneapolis neighborhoods, qualifying the district for the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Social History.” Given this significance, the integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association are the most critical; materials and workmanship, while also important, are less essential for conveying the social history that the district represents.

Because most of the properties in the historic district have been continuously occupied since their time of the construction—a necessity for perpetuating the district’s sense of community—most of the properties have received alterations in some form. Changes made during the period of significance reflect historic trends and are significant in their own right. For example, porches that were originally open have been enclosed, a typical modification to increase interior living space and provide protection against the climate. More living space was also created through additions. As the availability of automobiles increased and reliance on the streetcar system decreased, homeowners built attached or tuck-under garages. The application of new siding materials, particularly stucco, reflected a desire to keep up with popular housing styles and eliminate the maintenance associated with wood siding.

Landscapes are inherently subject to change over time. Like buildings, landscape features are considered contributing if they attained their current form during the period of significance.

The district has a number of buildings that were moved from other sites in the vicinity, usually because of commercial development or road improvements. If Prospect Park buildings were moved during the period of significance, they have integrity of location. If they sufficiently retain other aspects of integrity from that period, they are considered contributing to the district.

Visibility of Physical Features

The *Bulletin* explains that properties “must not only retain their essential physical features, but the features must be visible enough to convey their significance.” It adds, however, that “if the historic exterior building material is covered by non-historic material (such as modern siding), the property can still be eligible if the significant form, features, and detailing are not obscured.” This is particularly relevant in Prospect Park, where buildings with exterior siding of aluminum or vinyl are considered to be contributing if they retain their massing and historic window and door configurations as viewed from the street. If modern siding does not resemble the historic siding and is unsympathetic to the building’s character, it detracts from the historic integrity and the property is considered non-contributing.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Prospect Park Residential Historic District
Name of Property Hennepin County, MN
County and State N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 12

Additions dating from after the period of significance that are set back from the main massing and are not readily seen from the street usually do not affect a building’s integrity; the assessment of the contributing status of properties with later additions has been made on a case-by-case basis.¹⁵

Comparing Similar Properties

Since Prospect Park is a unique neighborhood, this assessment is not particularly relevant beyond common-sense comparisons. The replacement of worn-out roofing materials is inevitable for any structure, for example, and does not impair integrity unless the original materials were a characteristic feature of the property.

Determining the Relevant Aspects of Integrity

Although changes after the period of significance have affected the integrity of individual properties, the district as a whole retains its historic character, with well-preserved residences displaying a spectrum of architectural styles lining narrow, tree-lined streets that wind through a hilly landscape. *Bulletin 15* states that “a basic integrity test for a property associated with an important event or person is whether a historical contemporary would recognize the property as it exists today.” In the Prospect Park Residential Historic District, a resident from the mid-twentieth century returning to the neighborhood today would feel very much at home.

Conclusion

The *Bulletin* notes that “ultimately, the question of integrity is answered by whether or not the property retains the identity for which it is significant.” Given the integrity assessment above, the properties in Prospect Park retain sufficient integrity to represent the “cohesive sense of community” that makes the historic district eligible for National Register designation.

Table of Properties

The following table lists and briefly describes all properties within the boundaries of the historic district. Each property is assigned a number. The table is organized numerically and alphabetically by address. Each property listing identifies the primary building or site by name and gives its status as contributing or noncontributing. If a house was built by or for its first occupant(s), the house is given that name. Each entry also lists property style, dates, description, architect (if any), and garage, gives its status as contributing or noncontributing, and identifies landscape and site features.

¹⁵ An example of this is 102 Arthur Avenue SE (Photograph 5). Although the property seems to maintain its historic window and door openings, the vertical clapboard provides an inappropriate rustic appearance on what was probably a Colonial Revival Style house, rendering it non-contributing.