



STATE OF IOWA

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC DEFENSE
IOWA HOMELAND SECURITY AND
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIVISION

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Historical and Architectural Reconnaissance Survey for 2008 Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant Project in Iowa City, Johnson County

HADB 52-059

Surveyors: Marlys Svendsen & Justine Zimmer

Date Submitted: January 16, 2009; Revised February 12, 2009

Iowa City, Johnson County

Reconnaissance Survey

Date: 1/16/2009; 2/12/2009

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& Justine Zimmer

i. Introduction and Purpose

On December 3, 2008, Zimmer and Svendsen completed a field inspection of a list of 248 properties in Iowa City that were pending 404 Hazard Mitigation Buy-Out projects or had not been determined for specific programs.¹ By the time this report was being prepared in early January 2009, the list of pending projects had narrowed to 40 properties with one additional NRHP property included though the owner decided not to participate. Photography of the NRHP property and two potentially NRHP eligible properties was completed by Zimmer in December 2008. The purpose of the December site visit was four fold:

- a. To determine whether the list appeared to include all pending properties.
- b. To determine whether or not any of the 40 addresses were part of a potential NRHP historic district.
- c. For potential mitigation purposes, to identify properties with a potential for architectural salvage.
- d. Also for mitigation purposes, to identify other potential measures that could be undertaken in the event a potential historic district was identified.

ii. Reconnaissance Survey

Zimmer and Svendsen completed a windshield survey of the properties, which were located in two areas. The **Park View Terrace Area** includes portions of the triangular-shaped multi-block Park View Addition and an adjoining cluster of houses to the southwest along an ox-bow section on the south side of the Iowa River along the west-central edge of Iowa City. The Area of Potential Effect (APE) evaluated for this area is bounded by the Iowa River, City Park, Beldon Avenue, and Park Road. The houses inspected in this area address off Park Road, Normandy Drive, Eastmoor Drive, Manor Drive, Granada Court and Park Place. The boundaries of the APE were identified so that potential districts could be evaluated.

The second area, **Taft Speedway Area**, is located on the north/east bank of the Iowa River immediately opposite City Park slightly downstream from the Park View Terrace Area. The APE for the Taft Speedway Area buildings was identified to include

¹From the 1763 Demolition Data Base as maintained by Kathy McCarty FEMA at the AFO Cedar Rapids, effective 12/3/2008. A reduced list of properties included in this report was identified on 1/16/2009.

property(ies) located between the river bank and Taft Speedway. There were no pre-1958 houses along the north side of Taft Speedway.

Individual Resources:

Three individual resources of interest were identified in the two areas evaluated. One located in the **Park View Addition Area** is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the other two are located in the **Taft Speedway Area**.

- The ***Ned Ashton House at 820 Park Road*** was built in 1947 by one of Iowa’s most prominent civil and structural engineers, Ned Ashton, as a private residence. The 1-story stone and concrete house is an early example of a Ranch Style house with Prairie School Style influence in the way the building is incorporated into its riverside location. The house includes a low-pitched hipped roof, deep eaves, multi-light casement windows, Chicago window groups, glass blocked openings, and an exposed basement level housing a garage. The riverside location of the house provided extraordinary vistas for both the main level and lower level of the house. The building is eligible for the NRHP under Criteria B and C.
- The ***Ocie A. and Janet E. Trimble House at 103 Taft Speedway*** was built in 1966 along the Iowa River during the wave of residential development that followed completion of the Coralville Dam upstream of Iowa City. The house is an example of a blend of a Split-Level and Ranch Style design. It was adapted for construction in a flood plain with the inclusion of garage space in the lower level with large multi-level decks on three sides. It has a low-pitched intersecting gabled roof with deep eaves, split-level living space, and an overall nautical profile.
- The ***House at 305 Taft Speedway*** was built in ca. 1930. It is a good example of a Colonial Revival Style single-family residence built in the Gambrel Cottage form. Prior to the flood it was set at ground level with a typical low-rise foundation. Following the flood, it is being elevated through the construction of a raised foundation. Because the impact of the alteration is debatable in terms of building integrity, it is being recommended for documentation though eligibility may be in question.

District Resources:

No potential NRHP eligible historic districts were identified in either the **Parkview Terrace Area** or **Taft Speedway Area**.

a. Area Descriptions

Both the Parkview Terrace Area and the Taft Speedway Area are located on the west central edge of Iowa City. The Parkview Terrace is a low-lying multi-block area immediately adjacent to the west/south bank of the Iowa River upstream of City Park. The area is accessed from the south on higher ground along Park Road south of the addition. This neighborhood contains a mix of 1 and 2-story frame and brick residences mostly from the late 1950s through the 1970s with infill completed in later decades. They are examples of various vernacular house forms from the latter half of the 20th century including Split-level houses, Ranch/Rambler forms, Neo-Colonial houses, and Minimal Traditional forms. Nearly all have been modified since their original construction with some reflecting general expansion and others reflecting changing preferences in exterior finishes and synthetic siding. Other alterations include the addition of newer wings, expanded garages, entrance changes, decks, and window changes.

The Taft Speedway Area is located downstream from the Parkview Terrace Area along the north/east bank of the Iowa River opposite City Park. Taft Speedway is an east-west road that connects to Dubuque Street and roughly paralleling portions of the river. The houses are contained on lots in the Idylwild Addition. A dozen houses line the south side of the street along a continuous block with no houses on the north side. A newer condominium development is located in the balance of the Idylwild Addition to the north between Taft Speedway and Foster Road. Buildings in the Taft Speedway area date mostly from the late 20th century with one exception dating from ca. 1930. They include examples of vernacular house forms including Minimal Traditional forms, Ranch/Rambler forms, split-level houses, and several contemporary designs. The ca. 1930 house at 305 Taft Speedway is an example of a Colonial Revival Style house built in the gambrel cottage form. Nearly all of the single-family residences in the neighborhood have been modified since their original construction and most have experienced loss of integrity through the addition of newer wings, attached garages, synthetic siding, entrance alterations, decks, and window changes. The gambrel cottage was largely intact prior to the flood but when the property was inspected in December 2008, the house was being elevated and foundation was being raised. Although this alteration may preclude NRHP eligibility for the house, the building is being considered potentially NRHP eligible because the impact of the foundation change remains unknown.

b. Historical Background

The history of residential development in the two neighborhoods evaluated began in the mid-20th century. The Parkview Terrace Area was one of several residential developments that took place in the 1950s and 1960s in response to growth of the University of Iowa, and in particular, its west campus. Following World War II, the university saw a surge in enrollment associated with the return of veterans, many of whom brought young families with them as they returned to student status in various undergraduate and graduate programs. University growth was accompanied by opening of the Veterans Administration Hospital on the west side of Iowa City in 1952.

At the same time that University growth was creating demand for housing sites, the decade-long construction of the Coralville Dam and Coralville Reservoir upstream of Coralville and Iowa City was nearing completion. Planning for the dam began during the 1930s and Congress authorized its construction as part of the Flood Control Act of 1938. World War II saw construction suspended until 1948 and interrupted by the Korean War. Ten years later in 1958, the dam's completion triggered a level of confidence about flood prevention downstream. A change in the platting of residential subdivisions followed.

Parkview Terrace was platted in 1960 on a low-lying parcel north of Park Road and adjacent to City Park. Other adjoining land was platted before and after Parkview Terrace. Ashton Place was laid out just upstream of Parkview Terrace by engineer Ned Ashton shortly after he joined the University's College of Engineering as a professor in 1943. Black's Park Addition was laid out between Parkview Terrace and Park Road in 1964. A large percentage of the families housed in these new additions included University faculty, administrative staff and students and VA and University Hospital employees.

Residential development in the Taft Speedway Area paralleled development in the Parkview Terrace Area for the most part. Houses along the street are on platted lots within the Idylwild Subdivision and portions of government lots or unplatted ground. Taft Speedway takes its unusual name from the visit that President Taft reportedly made to the country club property formerly located upstream some time during his presidency between 1909 and 1913. 70 years earlier in 1843 the area along Taft Speedway was just upstream of the dam and mill erected by Walter Terrell with authorization from the Iowa territorial legislature. The mill processed flour for local consumption. The mill changed hands several times before the flood of 1881 washed out the west section of the dam. According to Iowa City historian Irving Weber, approximately 71 acres of the former Terrell property on the west side of the river opposite Taft Speedway were sold to the City of Iowa City in 1906 and eventually became part of City Park.

Development along Taft Speedway appears to date from the establishment of the country club prior to ca. 1913 and the Elks Club at 422 Taft Speedway (nonextant) in ca. 1920. Residential development began with the construction of the houses at 305 Taft Speedway (1930, potentially NRHP eligible) and 205 Taft Speedway (1930, NRHP noneligible). Other nonextant houses may have been erected during the 1940s but only two or three other houses built prior to completion of the Coralville Dam in 1958 appear to survive. They include the houses at 125 Taft Speedway (1940, NRHP noneligible), 115 Taft Speedway (1950, NRHP noneligible), and 301 Taft Speedway (1955, NRHP noneligible). Platting of the Idylwild Addition that included lots at the east end of Taft Speedway took place sometime prior to 1959 or about the same time that the Coralville Dam was nearing completion. The Trimble House at 105 Taft Speedway was erected in 1966 as part of the post-dam development along this stretch of the river and is the only house from this period to survive with its original design and finishes intact.

c. Significance

In the opinion of the surveyors, there is only one individually eligible NRHP property in the Parkview Terrace Area, the Ned Ashton House (NRHP-listed) and two potentially significant individual resources in the Taft Speedway Area. The properties qualify under Criteria B and C with one property, the Trimble House built in 1966, which is near the 50-year cut-off for NRHP eligible properties.

d. Sources

“History of Coralville Dam.” U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Coralville Lake web site. Available online at <http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Coralville/History.htm>; accessed 1/16/2009.

Svendsen, Marlys. “Historic Resources of Iowa City MPS.” National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1994.

Svendsen, Marlys with Svendsen Tyler, Inc. *Iowa City Historic Preservation Plan and Appendices*. City of Iowa City, Iowa, 2008.

Svendsen, Marlys with Svendsen Tyler, Inc. *North District Reconnaissance Survey, Iowa City, Iowa*. City of Iowa City, Department of Planning and Community Development, July 27, 2000.

iii. Mitigation Recommendations

a. Salvage Potential

The Iowa City property list showed no properties with potential architectural salvage except the house at 305 Taft Speedway. It is unclear whether or not the house is going to be moved or elevated by the owner. If not, the opportunity to salvage the house through a whole-house move away from this location should be encouraged.

b. Intensive Surveys

Documentation of the Trimble House with recordation photographs and completion of an Iowa Site Inventory Form is recommended despite the fact that the house is not yet 50 years old. The house has a distinctive contemporary design that remains

virtually unchanged since it was constructed 43 years ago. Reconnaissance surveys of other riverfront homes in Iowa show this level of integrity to be rare, thus elevating the value of this house. Because the original owners continue to occupy the house an effort should be made to interview them and compile a first-person perspective on the story of the house.

c. Additional Mitigation

One of the houses identified in this evaluation is in the process of undergoing substantial change through the elevation of the foundation level. It is not clear whether or not the owner intends to complete the elevation process or abandon the effort. If it is continued, it is recommended that as an additional documentation measure, photographs recording this process be taken by the survey team and made part of the permanent record for this property.

iv. Property List for Iowa City, Johnson County – 1/16/2009

The property list on the following page for Iowa City contains the addresses of the 40 buildings reviewed for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, their date of construction of known, the surveyor's opinion of individual eligibility, the surveyor's opinion of district eligibility, the SHPO review status, the SHPO opinion of eligibility, and the FEMA program designation where applicable. No individual opinions regarding potential salvage of historic interior or exterior building elements are provided.

List of Hazard Mitigation Grant Project Properties Reviewed in Iowa City, Johnson County

Iowa Inventory Number	Street Number	Street	FEMA Program	SHPO Reviewed	SHPO DOE	Year Built	Surveyor Opinion - Individually Eligible	Surveyor Opinion - District Eligible	Surveyor Opinion District Status - Contributing or Noncontributing	Potential Salvage
-	820	Eastmoor Drive	404	No	-	1976	No	No	-	-
-	821	Eastmoor Drive	404	No	-	1976	No	No	-	-
-	825	Eastmoor Drive	404	No	-	1976	No	No	-	-
-	539	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1989	No	No	-	-
-	601	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1963	No	No	-	-
-	609	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1960	No	No	-	-
-	613	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1962	No	No	-	-
-	703	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1965	No	No	-	-
-	713	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1969	No	No	-	-
-	729	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1975	No	No	-	-
-	801	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1969	No	No	-	-
-	809	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1969	No	No	-	-
-	812	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1973	No	No	-	-
-	813	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	2000	No	No	-	-
-	816	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1973	No	No	-	-
-	817	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1970	No	No	-	-
-	820	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1974	No	No	-	-
-	821	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1971	No	No	-	-
-	824	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1974	No	No	-	-
-	825	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1972	No	No	-	-
-	828	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1974	No	No	-	-
-	829	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1969	No	No	-	-
-	837	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1976	No	No	-	-

Iowa Inventory Number	Street Number	Street	FEMA Program	SHPO Reviewed	SHPO DOE	Year Built	Surveyor Opinion - Individually Eligible	Surveyor Opinion - District Eligible	Surveyor Opinion District Status - Contributing or Noncontributing	Potential Salvage
-	839	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1974	No	No	-	-
-	840	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1974	No	No	-	-
-	841	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1980	No	No	-	-
-	845	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1979	No	No	-	-
-	849	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1979	No	No	-	-
-	853	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1974	No	No	-	-
-	857	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1974	No	No	-	-
-	861	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1974	No	No	-	-
-	865	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1976	No	No	-	-
-	869	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1976	No	No	-	-
-	877	Normandy Drive	404	No	-	1976	No	No	-	-
52-02514	820	Park Road	None	No	NRHP-listed	1947	Yes	No	-	-
-	930	Park Road	404	No	-	1968	No	No	-	-
-	103	Taft Speedway	404	No	-	1966	Yes	No	-	-
-	119	Taft Speedway	404	No	-	1959	No	No	-	-
-	301	Taft Speedway	404	No	-	1955	No	No	-	-
-	305	Taft Speedway	404	No	-	1930	Yes	No	-	-