

# CITY OF LA CROSSE ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORICAL INTENSIVE SURVEY



1950 to 1975



# City of La Crosse Architectural/Historical Intensive Survey

1950 TO 1975

Prepared for

The City of La Crosse – Planning and Zoning Department  
La Crosse County, Wisconsin

Prepared by

Barbara Kooiman, M.A., Architectural Historian/Historian,  
Principal Investigator

and

Carol Ahlgren, M.A., Architectural Historian/Historian

2018

**Photo on cover – La Crosse City Hall, 400 La Crosse St., 1972**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

City of La Crosse

Mayor Tim Kabat

City Planning Department

Tim Acklin, AICP Senior Planner – Heritage Preservation

Heritage Preservation Commission

Jessica Olson (chair)

Charles Clemence

Terrence Collins

Christine Kahlow

David Manke

David Riel

Marcus Zettler

La Crosse Public Library Archives

Anita Doering, Senior Archivist/Archives Manager

Scott Brouwer, Archivist

David Kranz, Archivist

Funding

City Development Block Grant through the City Planning Department



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1 – Methodology.....	1
Chapter 2 - Historical Overview .....	3
Chapter 3 – Commerce .....	7
Chapter 4 – Education .....	12
Chapter 5 - Government/Social Services .....	21
Chapter 6 - Industry .....	31
Chapter 7 - Recreation .....	37
Chapter 8 - Religion .....	44
Chapter 9 - Residential .....	63
Chapter 10 - Significant Architects, Builders & Developers .....	73
Chapter 11 - Significant Persons .....	77
Chapter 12 – Bibliography .....	79
Chapter 13 – Recommendations .....	83

## APPENDICES

- Appendix A - Tables of Potential National Register Eligible Properties
- Appendix B - City of La Crosse Historic Preservation Ordinance





## ABSTRACT

The *City of La Crosse Architectural/Historical Intensive Survey – 1950 to 1975* was conducted between 2016 and 2018. The survey is adding to data and history of the city’s buildings, sites, structures and objects. Two previous surveys had been conducted, one in 1984, and another in 1996, both by architectural historian Joan Rausch. In this survey architectural historians/historians Barbara Kooiman and Carol Ahlgren found that 3,259 properties had been previously surveyed in the city of La Crosse, with 66 of those noted as “demolished” in the Wisconsin Historical Society’s Architectural History Inventory (AHI) database. Kooiman and Ahlgren added 235 new properties to the database, but found that of the previously surveyed properties, 256 more had been demolished since the 1996 report. During the current survey 13 properties were found to be individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, and two (2) historic districts were identified which met National Register criteria.



### CHAPTER 1 – METHODOLOGY

The contract for this project was signed by the City of La Crosse, City Planning Department and the consultant, Barbara Kooiman, in November 2016. Funding for the project came through City Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds which are administered through the City of La Crosse. The La Crosse Heritage Preservation Commission was the city commission which was tasked with reviewing the project, with the assistance of Senior Planner Tim Acklin. Barbara Kooiman, architectural historian, was the Principal Investigator for the project, and she partnered with Carol Ahlgren, architectural historian/historian, for assistance.

Early in the process, November 2016, Joseph DeRose, survey coordinator for the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) at the Wisconsin Historical Society came to a public meeting held during the normal meeting time of the Heritage Preservation Commission, to explain the procedures which the Wisconsin SHPO prefers for their historic building inventories and reports. Barbara Kooiman and Carol Ahlgren were also present, to explain their methodology for completing the survey and report.

Barbara Kooiman, because she lives in La Crosse, did the field survey. Methodology for the field survey included taking detailed city maps into the field to look at all buildings which were previously surveyed and entered into the Architectural History Inventory (AHI) database maintained by the Wisconsin SHPO. Additionally, Ms. Kooiman was looking for properties to add to the survey database which met Wisconsin SHPO survey criteria. For this project, that meant looking at properties which were built between 1950 and 1975, in order to update the previous surveys, the most recent which had been prepared by Joan Rausch and Carol Cartwright in 1993. By bringing the cut-off date for this survey at 1975, the city is ensuring that the survey will be a number of years ahead of the standard National Register criteria of resources being at least 50 years old.

Ms. Kooiman followed survey criteria for new surveyed properties in determining that the property's construction date fell into the projects focus dates (1950 to 1975), that the building appeared substantially like it did when originally built, and additionally, for houses, which were by far the most abundant of any property type, she often looked at whether or not the garage door was original or replaced. Because garages on houses from this era were frequently

## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

attached and an integrated part of the house, and because they were frequently a large part of the primary façade of the house, a replaced garage door that did not match the original style would often be the reason to not inventory the building.

Ms. Kooiman, using the maps, previous surveyed properties identified on the maps, and assessor information on the construction dates of many of the city's properties, drove each street, starting in the northernmost part of the city, and updating photos and information on previously surveyed properties (noting physical changes or whether or not they were extant) and adding new properties to the inventory, by photographing, and documenting information such as property type, description, and materials on field forms. She then entered the updates and the new information into the Wisconsin Architectural History Inventory (AHI). She additionally prepared all photos with the assigned AHI number which was sent to the Wisconsin SHPO for them to upload into the database with each individual record.

Carol Ahlgren conducted most of the thematic chapter and site-specific research. She spent many hours at the La Crosse Public Library Archives collecting articles, maps and other pertinent research material for the chapters. She then used that information and wrote the thematic chapters which are included in this report. Ms. Ahlgren also proofread, edited and helped prepare the Recommendations chapter.

Barbara Kooiman assisted in the report preparation by writing the Methodology, Overview, and Recommendations. Ms. Kooiman also did all the formatting, including tables, photographs, maps and other non-text portions of the final report.

## CHAPTER 2 – HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

La Crosse, Wisconsin was first settled by Euro-Americans in 1841, when Nathan Myrick, a fur trader, brought his wares up the Mississippi River from Prairie du Chien, about 60 miles south, to what is now known as Barron Island in the Mississippi, where today's Pettibone Park is located. The following spring, Myrick moved his trading cabin to the east side of the main channel, near the confluence of the Black and La Crosse rivers meet with the Mississippi River. From this humble beginning, La Crosse grew. First, only a few hundred settlers farmed the rich alluvial soils between the Mississippi's eastern bluffs and the river. But then, in 1858, when the railroad made its way from Milwaukee, eventually paralleling the La Crosse River, it terminated in the downtown area of the small village, causing the population to jump to about 3,000 residents. The natural progression of development was commercial and industrial ventures were near the river to meet transportation needs, and residential developments radiated out to the east and south, and on the north side of the La Crosse River marsh to the north.



**View from Grandad's Bluff, 1904**

## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

By the 1870s and 1880s, La Crosse thrived on the lumber industry, due to its location on the Black and Mississippi Rivers, where it had access to the logs floated downriver from northern pineries. But other industries such as the breweries and agricultural implement manufacturers employed the growing populations as well. By 1880 the population was 14,505, and by 1890, the population had more than doubled to 25,000, a 72.4% jump.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, the lumber industries died out or moved to the Pacific Northwest, due to the cutover of the northern pineries. However, by 1900, with La Crosse's population at 28,895, the city had begun to diversify, becoming a retail shopping hub for the region, and the expansion of industries such as brewing, auto parts manufacture and agricultural equipment. The early 20<sup>th</sup> century brought other employment opportunities with the La Crosse Normal School (1909) which later became University of Wisconsin – La Crosse, and the technical college (1911) which became Western Technical College, adding to Viterbo, the Catholic college which had been established in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Two hospitals were established and expanded into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, eventually becoming today's Gundersen Healthcare System and St. Francis – Mayo Clinic Healthcare System. Population growth continued.

By the time La Crosse had reached the post-World War II period, the population between 1940 and 1950 had risen 11.3%. This Postwar boom required construction of new homes, expanding subdivisions, streets and infrastructure, as well as new ways to live in a Postwar period where most families owned a car. This automobile-centric period influenced the spread of commerce, pulling some business out of the traditional shopping areas of downtown into the neighborhoods, where shopping centers and strip malls were constructed. This also moved other commerce amenities away from the traditional core downtown, such as banks, which built smaller branches with drive-through banking. Neighborhood grocery stores were being replaced by supermarkets. Churches were sometimes abandoning or demolishing their older buildings, and constructing new, modern churches with expanded amenities such as staff offices, Sunday school educational wings, and expanded kitchen and gathering spaces.





**La Crosse from Granddad's Bluff, postcard, 1959**

The population growth of the city slowed considerably during this period, sometimes even dropping slightly (as in between 1950 and 1960), in part due to the fact that the geography of the area that Nathan Myrick chose for his trading post eventually land-locked the city's expansion. The prairie between the river and bluffs pinches off to the south, and to the north, the expansion of Onalaska prevented further growth in that direction. The bluffs to the east and the river to the west made extensive development in either of those directions virtually impossible.

This survey and report focuses on the physical growth of the built environment of La Crosse in the period many refer to as Mid-Century. It is sometimes recognized by sprawling neighborhoods of one story ranch style houses on large lots, connected by curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. The churches were often no longer the traditional gabled form with a steeple. The streets were designed for vehicular traffic and the institutions of both the higher education institutions and the two hospital campuses have helped define those parts of the city with their sprawl into the neighborhoods surrounding them.

**City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975**

---

**City of La Crosse populations, 1940 to 1980**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Percentage difference from previous decade</b>
1940	42,707	n/a
1950	47,535	+11.3%
1960	47,258	-.06%
1970	50,286	+6.4%
1980	48,347	-3.9%

- The current population of La Crosse (as of 2016) is 52,109



### CHAPTER 3 – COMMERCE

Commercialization and expansion did occur in La Crosse despite the relatively slow population growth of the city during the study period of this report, 1950 to 1975, partially due to factors such as: dependence upon and the influence of the automobile; desire for modernization in the latest styles; rise of strip malls and free-standing office buildings; and later, construction of large scale shopping malls. Also, La Crosse continued to be a regional shopping hub for other communities in La Crosse County, as well as adjacent Houston County, Minnesota and beyond. Therefore, new types of auto-accessible shopping venues appeared in the post-World War II period in the city.

As early as 1947 the *La Crosse Tribune* advertised the Grand Opening of the Smith Shopping Center at 1908-1920 Campbell Road with the telling phrase, "Bringing Downtown Out to You." The one story, brick flat roofed "strip" featured four bays, with a supermarket, liquor store, soda fountain, women's clothing, and appliance store. Its proximity to the state university as well as surrounding middle class residential neighborhoods helped this be a popular, early strip mall in La Crosse. Although the Village Shopping Center, started in 1950 at State Road and Losey Boulevard was considered to be the "first" of its kind in the city, Hessel and Hollnagel in their 2007 history, noted that the claim rightly belonged to the Smith Shopping Center. The Village, which began with four stores expanded through time with remodeling and expansion to 116,000 square feet and a 2004 million dollar "face lift", which removed over two-thirds of the original shopping center.<sup>1</sup>

In 1986 the *Tribune* provided a list of the names and original dates of the area's shopping malls with year built, square footage and major tenants. Those that fall within the survey period (1950-1975) or within a few years after included: the Bridgeview Plaza (2420 Rose Street) in 1973; Center-Q/Jackson Plaza (1006 S. 19th St.), 1974; Menard Plaza (223 Lang Dr.), 1976; Riverview Plaza (4000 Mormon Coulee Rd), 1979; Shelby Mall (4200 Mormon Coulee Rd), 1977; and the Valley View Mall (3800 U.S. Highway 16), 1979. Within a few years of the construction of the Valley View Mall, a 1982 *Tribune* editorial would argue that regional

---

<sup>1</sup> "Grand Opening at the Smith Shopping Center," *La Crosse Tribune*, April 17, 1947. Op. cit. Hessel and Hollnagel, *A History of La Crosse, Wisconsin in the Twentieth Century*, 2007, pp. 146-147.

shopping malls could indeed turn out to be an ally to benefit the region and also cause the downtown area to change its emphasis from retail to a variety of other businesses.<sup>2</sup>

Delivered On 8FD—May 23, 1957

The LA CROSSE TRIBUNE, La Crosse, Wisconsin

Wednesday, May 22, 1957 Page 21

# GRAND OPENING



JACKSON STREET at 19th

## LA CROSSE'S MODERN SHOPPING CENTER



### FREE PRIZES

spontaneously from 9:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M. during the Bill Joseph Jackson Plaza Quiz Show. Come out and have fun at the Jackson Plaza grand opening.

### JACKSON STREET AT 19th

#### 10 GREAT STORES TO SERVE YOU

 <p>"WIGGLY WIGGLY WELCOMES ALL THEIR NEW NEIGHBORS TO JACKSON PLAZA."</p>	 <p><b>SHERWIN-WILLIAMS</b> . . . "We are glad to be able to move into a growing section of La Crosse where our customers can enjoy leisurely service without parking meter worry."</p>	 <p><b>DIANE'S RECORD SHOP</b> . . . "Diane's Record Shop promises to bring you the latest innovations in the record field. Pay us a visit at Jackson Plaza."</p>	 <p><b>THE SEW 'N SEW SHOP</b> . . . "We have a complete line of everything essential to sewing. We will be very happy to help you with your notions and also to solve your sewing problems."</p>
 <p><b>ONE-STOP SHOPPING CENTER</b></p>	 <p><b>THE DAD AND LAD SHOP</b> . . . "Dad, bring your Lad to our shop for the finest in clothes for you and your youngster. We see happy La Crosse growing with Jackson Plaza."</p>	 <p><b>THE TOT SHOP</b> . . . "The Tot Shop is happy to be able to bring you a store exclusively for children, the latest for boys and girls, the things that make them look their prettiest."</p>	 <p><b>THE BABY MART</b> . . . "Step in and see the wonderful array of baby furniture and accessories we have, the largest stock in this part of Wisconsin."</p>
 <p><b>*OPEN 'TIL 9 P.M. MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY</b></p> <p>Here is an opportunity to do your shopping in the evening. No rush, no fuss, no parking meters to worry about. For complete view hours of all stores, see their individual ads in this Jackson Plaza section.</p>	 <p><b>MAXINE'S DRESS SHOP</b> . . . "We plan to bring to La Crosse the latest and smartest fashions available."</p>	 <p><b>PAPPY'S CHICKEN LITTLE, INC.</b> . . . "Welcome to Pappy's Chicken Little at Jackson Plaza. For a smackerel of a complete lunch, stop in at Pappy's."</p>	 <p><b>MAJOR DRUGS</b> . . . "Major Drugs welcomes these new businesses to Jackson Plaza. We now have truly a one-stop shopping center."</p>

ONE-STOP SHOPPING JACKSON PLAZA GROWS WITH LA CROSSE



<sup>2</sup> "La Crosse Shopping Centers," *La Crosse Tribune*, June 30, 1986; "Shopping Malls and Downtown," *Ibid.* Nov. 2, 1982.

### **Jackson Plaza Grand Opening, *La Crosse Tribune*, May 23, 1957**

Though there are several of these strip malls in La Crosse which were built during the focus period for this report, none were found to have sufficient integrity to be considered National Register eligible, due to multiple alterations.

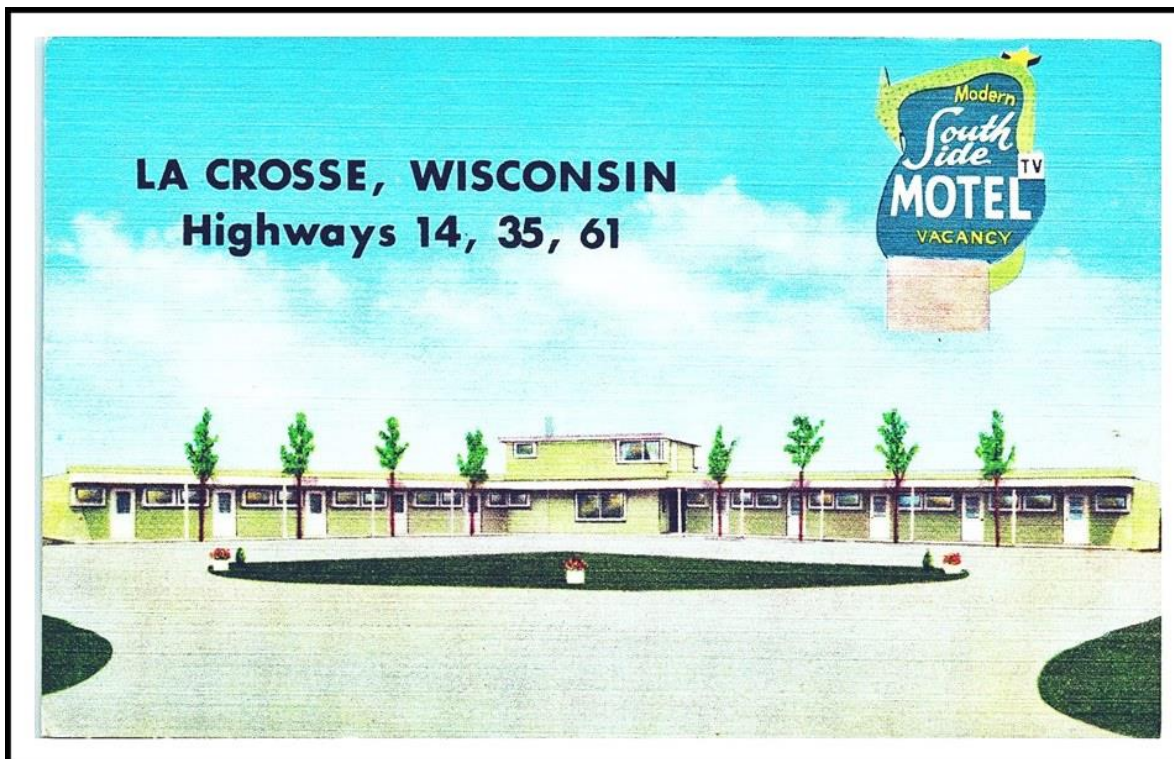
### **Transportation related commerce**

With the completion of Interstate 90 north of La Crosse in 1967, new commerce would result and existing motels, including those located along the main artery of Mormon Coulee Road would be affected. In 1998 the *La Crosse Tribune* described the existing motels on the south side of La Crosse, their dates of construction and at the time status as described below. The **Wishing Well Motel** (3343 Mormon Coulee Road) was constructed in 1953 with 18 rooms. The **South Side Motel** (3438 Mormon Coulee Road) was constructed in 1954. The Redwood Motel (3305 Mormon Coulee Road) was constructed in 1955 and was converted to apartments in c. 1998. Other motels in the area with date of construction currently unknown include the **Maple Grove Motel** (5212 Mormon Coulee Road) and the **Bluff View Inn** (3715 Mormon Coulee Road).<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Steve Cahalan, "Checkout Time: South Side Motel Owners Have Seen Better Times, But Survivors Aren't Ready Yet to Throw in the Towel," *La Crosse Tribune*, Oct. 26, 1998.





**Southside Motel, postcard, circa 1955**

Another motel constructed in the 1950s was the **Medary** located at 2344 Highway 16 with 15 units; a second story was added in the 1960s. The motel was converted into apartments and retail space as Eagle Bluff Plaza in 2003. An additional transportation related commercial resource was the **Midway Motor Lodge--Hoffman House** located in the 1800 block of Rose Street; construction began in 1971. At 125 rooms the motel was said to be the largest Midway Motor Lodge in Wisconsin.<sup>4</sup>

### **Financial Services**

There is to date, a dearth of information regarding individual businesses and associated property types, and the impact of suburbanization beyond a general desire for modernization and expansion into areas with available land. An exception is the work of Carol Dubie and Anthony Rubano in their paper prepared for the National Park Service sponsored, "Recent Past 2" conference held in 2004. Dubie and Rubano in their seminal work regarding post World War II banks analyzed the typical location of banks in historic downtown commercial areas and the

---

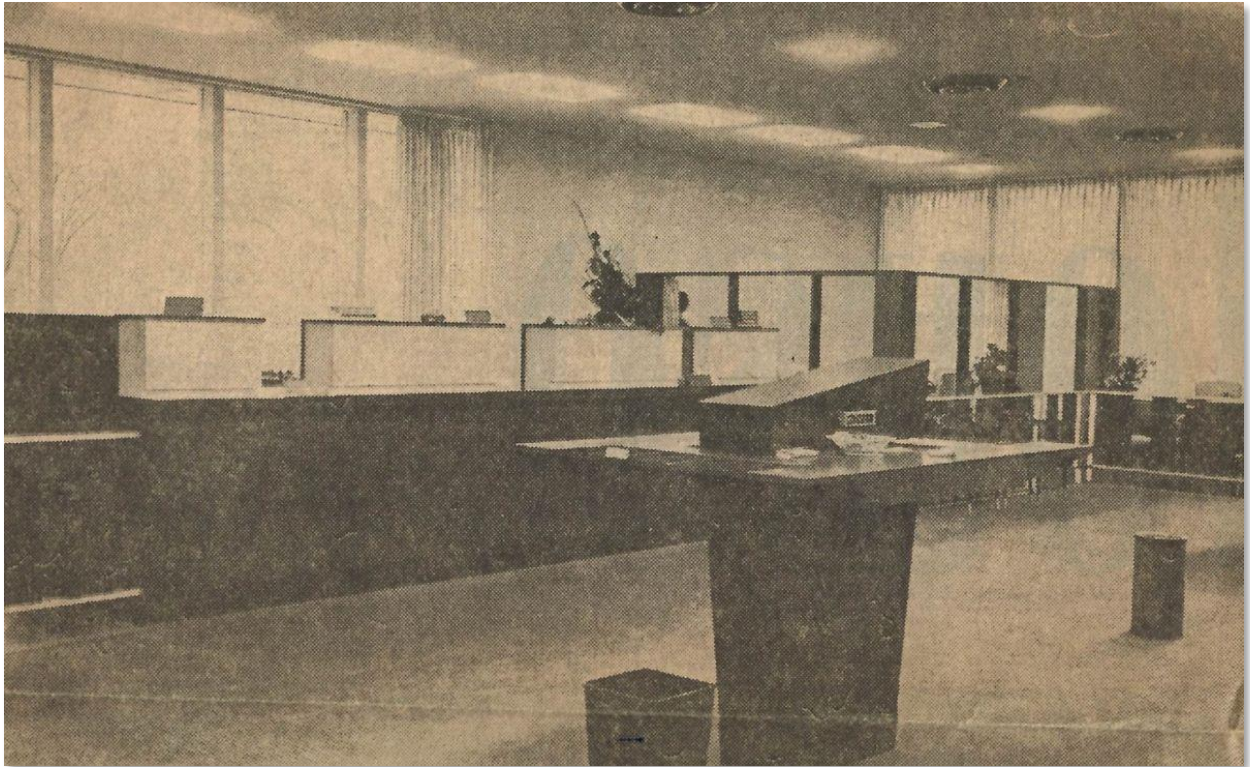
<sup>4</sup> "Motel Converted to Office, Retail Space and Apartments," *La Crosse Tribune*, Oct. 6, 2003. Ibid, "Midway Motor Lodge-Hoffman House Site," July 20, 1971.

## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

move to suburbs and a shift to modern architectural styles. While the authors noted that the "tenacious Colonial style bank has never stopped being built," the Postwar bank utilized modern styles to provide an image-making and passive advertising tool. Suburban banks could also more readily accommodate the automotive with drive up services.<sup>5</sup>

The expansion of a traditional established 19th century bank to a modern facility can be seen in La Crosse with the north side Exchange State Bank, established in the 1880s on Rose Street. In 1961-1962 the bank constructed a new, modern building at 1300 Rose Street.<sup>6</sup> This building, which is highly intact on the exterior and interior, may be considered potentially eligible for the National Register.



**Exchange State Bank, 1300 Rose Street (at Clinton Street), interior. *La Crosse Tribune* – 7 December 1962**

---

<sup>5</sup> Carol J. Dyson and Anthony Rubano, "Banking on the Future: Modernism and the Local Bank," in *Preserving the Recent Past 2*, conference workbook, Deborah Slaton and William G. Foulks editors. Washington, D.C. Historic Preservation Education Foundation, 2000, pp. 43-55.

<sup>6</sup> Op. cit. Joan Rausch, 1995, p. 264.

## CHAPTER 4 – EDUCATION

The city of La Crosse experienced growth in its schools during the period of the current survey (1950-1975); a new Central High School was constructed, along with several public and parochial elementary schools. According to *A History of La Crosse in the Twentieth Century*, the post-World War II baby boom also affected the city, with the student population expanding from 7,235 in 1955 to 8,707 in 1965; existing schools were often overcrowded and poorly maintained.<sup>7</sup>

Throughout the city, three (3) new public elementary schools were constructed; they were brick, or brick and concrete construction in a stripped down modern style. The 1996 Architectural and Historical Intensive Survey of La Crosse, completed by Joan Rausch and Carol Lowry Cartwright, identified five schools outside of the time period of the 1996 survey that would "need to be evaluated...within the next decade." The survey also noted that all of the 1940s-1960s schools were designed in "contemporary styles completely devoid of ornamentation."<sup>8</sup> The identified schools were: **Franklin Elementary; Harry Spence School; Jefferson School**; a parochial school affiliated with two Lutheran congregations, Mount Calvary and Grace Lutheran churches; and **Trinity Lutheran School**.<sup>9</sup> Since the 1996 survey, both the Franklin and Jefferson Schools have been demolished. An additional school, **Birch Elementary** (now **Josephine Hintgen**) was identified during the current (2018) survey. The **University of Wisconsin La Crosse**, also witnessed construction of several new buildings during the 1950-1975 survey period, including dormitories as described below.

The parochial schools including the two elementary schools cited above, the Holy Cross Seminary, Viterbo University buildings, and the University of Wisconsin La Crosse Newman Center, are found in the Religion chapter under their associated denominations.

### **Birch School** (now **Josephine Hintgen**) (3505 28th St.)

Construction of Birch Elementary School did not commence until 1967 although it had been proposed as early as 1951 to serve the southeast side of the city. The delay was due to the site

---

<sup>7</sup> Hessel et.al. ...2007, p. 307.

<sup>8</sup> Joan Rausch and Carol Cartwright, "City of La Crosse Wisconsin: Architectural and Historical Intensive Survey Report," Architectural Researches, 1996, p. 227.

<sup>9</sup> Op. cit, p. 227.



originally being outside of the city limits. At the end of the school year in 1967, the La Crosse Board of Education approved the preliminary plans by the local architectural firm Carl Schubert and Associates with a planned completion for the 1968 school year.<sup>10</sup>

According to the *La Crosse Tribune*, Birch would be a two-section school for kindergarten through sixth grade and that its plan differed from conventional schools of the past; the differences referred to the accommodation of team teaching via interior sliding partitions. Classrooms would be located on the perimeter of the one story brick building with library and other rooms in the center. It was also noted that the school was designed so that a "one section addition could be added in 1970."<sup>11</sup>

### **Harry Spence Elementary (2150 Bennett St)**

The Harry Spence School, named in honor of a long-time La Crosse educator, school district principal and youth leader, was constructed in 1953. The one story, two-unit school with 13 classrooms was designed by the architectural firm Thorshov and Cerny of Minneapolis and was built in the south-central part of the city on land formerly part of Salzer Field, the city's first airfield.<sup>12</sup> The school was described as "modern" to meet the educational needs of its almost 700 students. The *Tribune* further noted its new building materials, methods, and sound planning. An unnamed student was quoted saying, "we like the big rooms...everything on one floor" ... "and the great big windows." Within two years, in 1955, the first of several additions also designed by Thorshov and Cerny was approved for seven new classrooms.<sup>13</sup>

On the school's 50th anniversary in 2003, The *Tribune* noted that the school's main entrance had changed little since its 1953 construction but also noted that in addition to the 1955 expansion, the school had been added to in 1962, 1973, 1992, 1994, and 1996.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> "Birch St. School Okayed," *La Crosse Tribune*, July 15, 1966; Ibid., "Putting Schools Where the Pupils Are," July 23, 1964; "Preliminary Plans for Birch School Receive Board Okay," May 17, 1967.

<sup>11</sup> "Birch St. School Bid Opening is Tuesday," *La Crosse Tribune*, July 7, 1967.

<sup>12</sup> "Harry Spence School to be Ready Sept. 8; Board Inspects Wings," *La Crosse Tribune*, Aug 27, 1953; "Spence Turns 50: Southside Elementary School has Educated Thousands Since 1953," Sept. 2, 2003.

<sup>13</sup> "School Plans Must Meet Education Needs of Pupils," *La Crosse Tribune*, Nov. 7, 1954; "Dedicate New Addition to Spence School Wed." Nov 11, 1955.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, *La Crosse Tribune*, Sept. 2, 2003.

### **Central High School (1807 Losey Blvd)**

Central High School was constructed in 1967; the four million dollar building was dedicated in 1968 with a student body of 1,700 and features such as an 838 seat auditorium.<sup>15</sup> It has since been modified with more additions.

Due to alterations and additions, none of the public schools surveyed for this report currently have sufficient integrity to be listed on the National Register.

### **UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN LA CROSSE**

The University of Wisconsin La Crosse, added relatively late to the University of Wisconsin system, was established in 1909 as the La Crosse State Normal School, renamed the La Crosse State Teachers College in 1927, and went through subsequent name changes until 1971 when it gained its current name.<sup>16</sup> During the period of the current survey--1950-1975--the La Crosse campus experienced substantial growth and development including major campus buildings such as an arts/performance center, science building, student union, library, and several dormitories.

Similar to La Crosse public schools, the University's student population increased during the Postwar years. In 1956, the *La Crosse Tribune* reported the University's long range plans and noted a 45 percent increased enrollment since 1952; its 1955 enrollment was 1,234 with a projected 8,136 students by 1965. In response to projected increased enrollment, it was reported that the University had commenced on a major expansion to add nine (9) new buildings at an expenditure of approximately six million dollars.

A prospectus for potential future businesses in La Crosse, completed in 1968, cited that the University had in fact, almost 3,000 students in 1965, over 5,000 by 1968, and increasing projected enrollments throughout the 1970s. Beyond the end of the current survey period (1975),

---

<sup>15</sup> Hessel, 2007, p. 307.

<sup>16</sup> George Gilkey, *The First Seventy Years: A History of the University of Wisconsin La Crosse, 1909-1979*. La Crosse: University of Wisconsin Foundation, Inc., 1981, pp. 3-5.



## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

in 1977 the University had an enrollment of 8,550 students, a ten percent increase over the previous year and the largest growth rate in the University of Wisconsin system.<sup>17</sup>

Since 1975, many of these buildings have been expanded, altered, or demolished. The following discussion lists the buildings alphabetically, followed by the dormitories which are listed chronologically by date of construction. Addresses for the following utilize the general University of Wisconsin La Crosse address: 1725 State Street.



**UW-La Crosse, 1963, courtesy of Special Collections, Murphy Library, UW-La Crosse**

---

<sup>17</sup> "\$2.6 Million Building Program Proposed for La Crosse State," *La Crosse Tribune*, Aug. 12, 1956; Boettcher and Company, "Official Statement \$4,015,000 City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Corporate Purpose Bonds," La Crosse, WI, Office of Director of Finance, 1968. Hessel and Hollnagel, 2007, p. 341.

### **Cartwright Center (Student Union) 1959, 1964, 1985**

The Cartwright Center, originally called the Student Union, was constructed in 1959 to serve projected increasing enrollment. The new Union would provide food service, meeting and social spaces and recreational opportunities. Designed by local architects Shubert, Sorensen and Associates, the brick and concrete four story flat roof building featured paired windows and an articulated main entrance. In 1964, perhaps in response to an increased enrollment of almost 1,000 to 2,911 students on campus, a three story stylistically similar wing was added to the north façade of the original building, adding 40,000 square feet. Similar to other buildings constructed on campus during the 1960s boom, the name Student Union was changed to honor a former instructor or Dean, in this case to honor Edith Cartwright, former Dean of women students.<sup>18</sup>

### **Center for the Arts: 1973, 2017**

The Center for the Arts was completed in 1973. The multi-level brick building in the modern style was designed to provide facilities for the fine arts including the departments of visual arts, theater, music and speech with classrooms, studios, a gallery and a theater/auditorium.<sup>19</sup>

### **Cowley Hall of Science: 1969**

The Cowley Hall of Science was constructed in 1969 to house the departments of biology, chemistry, mathematics, physics with associated laboratories, planetarium and research facilities.<sup>20</sup> As of 2018, a new science center building is under construction, and Cowley Hall is slated for demolition.

### **Heating/Power Plant: 1967**

Despite neighboring residents' initial objections the UW La Crosse Heating/Power plant was completed in 1967. The large brick building with adjacent smoke stack was modeled after a similar structure on the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh campus. The flat roofed, four story building featured large bands of windows on the main level and transom windows at the roof

---

<sup>18</sup> Chris Nudd, "LCU Food Center Design Winner," *La Crosse Tribune*, Oct. 25, 1969; *The Racquet*, Vol. 55, No. 1, Sept. 29, 1964.

<sup>19</sup> "University of Wisconsin La Crosse," *The Racquet*, Vol. 64, no. 1, Aug 30, 1973.

<sup>20</sup> *The Racquet*, Vol. 64, no. 1, Aug 30, 1973.

level. The *La Crosse Tribune* reported that the UW's director of state universities said that the 1.5 million dollar building, "won't be an eyesore, but will be an attractive structure."<sup>21</sup>

### **Mitchell Hall:** 1965

Mitchell Hall was built to be the new physical education building, including a large, interior fieldhouse with track, as well as basketball courts, dance studios, classrooms, as well as offices for faculty and lower level lockers. As the university became more identified as the school within the Wisconsin system which trained physical education instructors, it was felt that Wittich Hall (original campus gymnasium, 1920, 1930) was no longer large enough nor modern enough to fill that expectation. Mitchell Hall did not completely replace Wittich Hall, however, it did augment the physical education training and space.

### **Murphy Library:** 1969; 1995

The Murphy Library was proposed as early as 1956 as part of a 2.6 million dollar building program at the University. The modern style brick and concrete building with rectangular block sections in a modern style. In addition to the University holdings the library continues to serve as the Wisconsin Historical Society Area Research Center. Although the building had been proposed, funding was not secured by the state until 1967. In 1995 a 60,000 addition was completed by Shute-Larson Architects of La Crosse that was recognized for excellence in design and new construction.<sup>22</sup>

**Newman Center:** 1964 - See *Religion* chapter

### **Whitney Center/Food Service Building:** 1966

Designed by architects Durant, Deininger, Dormer, Kramer and Gordon of Dubuque, Iowa and Watertown Wisconsin, the two story slate roofed building was completed in 1969. At the time of its construction it was cited as a "superlative achievement" in design, fabrication and function in

---

<sup>21</sup> "Heating Plant to be Attractive, McPhee Claims," *La Crosse Tribune*, Aug. 31, 1965.

<sup>22</sup> "2.6 Mil Building Program Proposed for La Crosse State," *La Crosse Tribune*, Aug 2, 1956."State Gives LCU Library GO Signal," *La Crosse Tribune*, Jan 24, 1967; UW-L Library Architecture Cited," *La Crosse Tribune*, April 9, 1997.

institutional services facilities and was commended by *Institution Magazine's* international awards program.<sup>23</sup>

### **Wing Library/Communication Center: 1956; 1970**

Built as the Florence Wing Library in 1956, the building was eventually expanded for use as a communications center in 1970, after the construction of Murphy Library. It was further renovated and expanded in 2001 as the Wing Technology Center, now home to computer classrooms and training centers as well as the campus Information Technology (IT) department.<sup>24</sup>

### **North Hall/Wimberly Hall 1974**

North Hall, built in 1974 as a square, brick four story building with a center open-air atrium, was constructed as a classroom building to accommodate the growing campus. Historically, the building houses classrooms and department offices for Anthropology/Sociology, English, History as well as the School of Business.

## **DORMITORIES**

### **Wilder: 1951 (demolished 2009)**

Constructed at the end of 1951, the two story red brick dormitory to house 86 "coeds" was designed by the local architectural firm Boyum, Shubert and Sorensen and was named for Emma Lou Wilder, a former physical education instructor at the University. Wilder Hall was the first, and one of seven similar dormitories designed by Boyum, Shubert and Sorensen for the University of Wisconsin system. Construction of Wilder Hall was significant for the UW La Crosse in that it represented over \$300,000 allocated to the University by the state legislature. The new dormitory also provided an opportunity to consolidate women's housing from several locations such as the YWCA. The new dormitory featured such amenities as a lounge, live in house

---

<sup>23</sup> Chris Nudd, "LCU Food Center Design Winner," *La Crosse Tribune*, Oct 25, 1969; "National award winner for its innovative architecture styling" (*The Racquet*, vol 64, no. 1, August 30, 1973).

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.uwlax.edu/campus/wing-technology-center>

manager, laundry, and--reflective of its time--all the double rooms "with an eye for usefulness," had closets designed with "a special tall section for hanging evening dresses."<sup>25</sup>

### **Reuter Hall:** 1957 (demolished 2005)

Reuter Hall, a three story brick flat roofed building was constructed in 1957 as a men's dormitory. In 1997 the dorm commemorated its 40 anniversary with a sock hop and open house; eight years later the dorm would be demolished.<sup>26</sup>

### **Baird Hall:** 1963 (demolished 2009)

Completed in 1963, the Baird dormitory hall for women was the third such on the University Campus and named for Betty Baird, a former long term physical education instructor. The four story brick flat roofed structure similar to other dormitories constructed during the period of the current survey features two part windows, an entrance portico.<sup>27</sup>

### **Angell Hall, Coate Hall, Drake Hall:** 1966

Angell, Coate and Drake Halls were constructed in 1966; all were four story flat roofed t-shaped modern brick buildings with details suggestive of the formalist style including two part symmetrically located windows, and articulated main entrances with narrow horizontal windows, and low limestone walls. Angell Hall was a women's dorm, Coate was men's and Drake was to serve either depending on enrollment needs.<sup>28</sup>

### **Hutchinson Hall, Sanford Hall:** 1967

Typical of the dorms completed during 1966, the new Hutchinson Hall, for women, and Sanford, for men, were four story flat roofed modern brick buildings with formalist style details including articulated entrances. Hutchinson Hall had 183 rooms with a capacity for 366 students; Sanford, had 115 rooms with a capacity for 226 students. The *La Crosse Tribune*, in describing the

---

<sup>25</sup> "Emma Lou Wilder Hall at College Nearing Completion; 86 Women Students Move into New Building in January," *La Crosse Tribune*, Dec. 30, 1951.

<sup>26</sup> "Events Set to Observe Reuter Hall's 40 Years," *La Crosse Tribune*, Mar. 22, 1987; "Reuter Hall Demolition Under Way," Mar 6, 2005.

<sup>27</sup> "Open House Sunday at LSC Women's Dorm, Baird Hall," *La Crosse Tribune* Oct 15, 1963.

<sup>28</sup> "New Homes for Students," *La Crosse Tribune*, Sept 18, 1966.

completion of Sanford Hall noted that the University had opened its first dorm, Wilder, in 1951 and at the present time--1967--had 12 dormitories with the capacity of 2,973 residents.<sup>29</sup>

### **Towbridge** (demolished 1969)

Though there are multiple buildings which were constructed on the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse Campus during the study period, none were found to be individually eligible. Many have been razed and others have been significantly altered. Nonetheless, the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century was a period of significant expansion for the state university.

---

<sup>29</sup> University of Wisconsin La Crosse, *The Racquet*, Vol. 58, no. 1, Sept. 25, 1967; *La Crosse Tribune*, "LCU's Sanford Hall to be Ready by Fall," Aug. 16, 1967.

## CHAPTER 5 – GOVERNMENT/SOCIAL SERVICES

La Crosse County was established in 1841; and the city of La Crosse, which would become the county seat, was incorporated in 1856. Courthouses were built in 1852, 1867, and 1904. Plans were in place as early as the 1940s to establish a "Civic Center" that would include courthouse, county office building, auditorium, and city hall. The Civic Center would be located in an area bounded by 4th, 6th, Badger, and Pine Streets.<sup>30</sup> The Civic Center, as in other cities during the survey period (1950-1975) was intended to locate, or add to existing governmental offices in the same area. Buildings constructed during this period in La Crosse included a new courthouse/county building, city hall, and fire station headquarters.

Other notable governmental buildings were also constructed including during this period as described below: two fire stations; the main library, and the south side library. An additional governmentally funded resource type--public housing--witnessed several projects in La Crosse beginning in 1959 with one or two story duplexes and later, high-rise senior towers.

The La Crosse Home for Children (1963, 1976), although a private endeavor, is also included in this category since it fulfilled a societal need.

### **City Hall** (400 La Crosse Street)

Plans for a new city hall building began in the late 1960s. The architect would be the prolific Harry Schroeder of Hackner, Schroeder, Rolansky and Associates who presented a model of a six story building to be part of the new Civic Center, which would include new courthouse and other administrative buildings and landscaping in a five acre area.<sup>31</sup> Plans continued to advance and evolve through the next few years with expansion of original space needs. The completed building, dedicated in 1970, features a six story core with projecting one and two story rectangular wings. With its exterior of sand blasted, exposed aggregate concrete with black

---

<sup>30</sup> Susan T. Hessel and Gayda Hollnagel, *A History of La Crosse, Wisconsin in the Twentieth Century*, La Crosse, WI: La Crosse County Historical Society, 2007, p. 284.

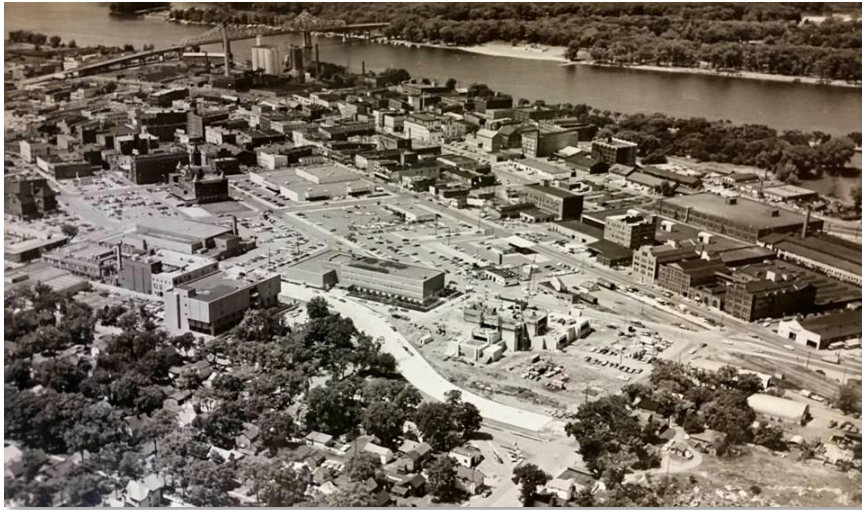
<sup>31</sup> "Model Shown of Six Story City Hall," *La Crosse Tribune* Aug 29, 1966.



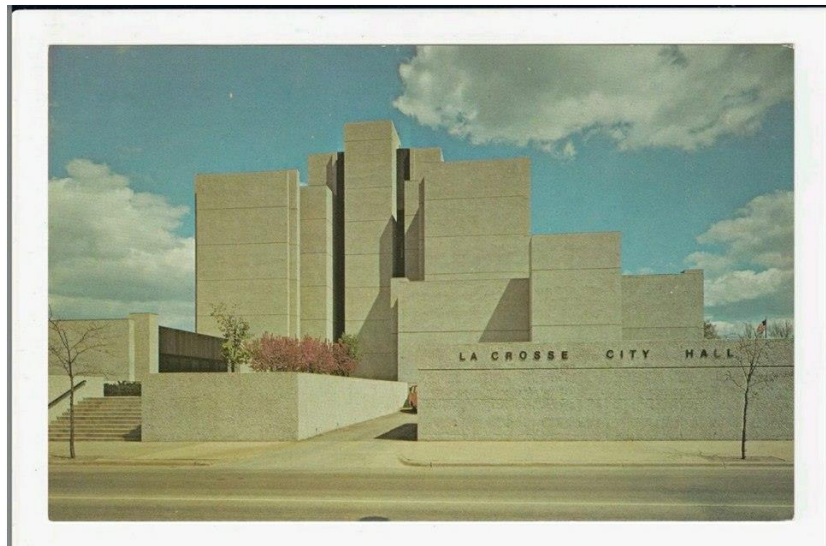
## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

slate panels, anodized aluminum windows and articulated floors the building is suggestive of the Brutalist style.<sup>32</sup>



**La Crosse City Hall, under construction, October 12, 1969, press photo by Kathy Gibbs Nimm**



**La Crosse City Hall, postcard, circa 1970**

The *La Crosse Tribune* quoted architect Schroeder and described his intention to have designed a building "not to be innovative" but to be distinctive and function, a "nice appearing landmark type building." The exterior's concrete rectangular forms were described as "characteristic of work of the architects." The *La Crosse Tribune* also noted interior features such as the color scheme

---

<sup>32</sup> Judith H. Robinson and Stephanie S. Foell, Robinson & Associates, Inc. *Growth, Efficiency and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s*. Washington, D.C. U.S. General Services Administration, 2003, pp. 14-15; "City Hall Space Estimates Increase," *La Crosse Tribune* Feb 5, 1967.



with accents of oranges, blues, reds, greens and brown on off-white washable vinyl walls and slate floors.<sup>33</sup>

The La Crosse City Hall retains a high degree of integrity and after 2020 when it becomes 50 years old it could potentially be listed on the National Register as a good local example of the Brutalist Style, as well as the late 20<sup>th</sup> century seat of city government in La Crosse.

### **County Building (333 Vine Street)**

Hackner, Schroeder and Associates had also received the bid for the new La Crosse Courthouse, or County building, the city's fourth, during the time of plans for the Civic Center. The intention was that the new building would house all county agencies in a three story building with a two story jail wing; it was designed so that a fourth floor could be added in the future. Completed in 1965, the architectural firm described its design goals as intending durability and an ease of maintenance and that the building was "reserved, dignified, and not flamboyant." The three story flat roofed rectangular shaped building with aluminum frame bands of windows is suggestive of the Meisian style.<sup>34</sup> Though extant, the County Building was vacated by La Crosse County due to asbestos abatement cost concerns, and they moved into a renovated bank nearby. The building was sold to a developer who is in the process (in 2018) of converting the building into apartments with ground level covered parking and retail space. Therefore, the building has lost significant integrity and cannot be considered National Register eligible.

### **Fire Department**

The La Crosse Fire Department originated as a volunteer fire company in 1857 after a devastating fire occurred on Front Street. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the volunteer company was replaced with a full-time city Fire Department.<sup>35</sup> As the Fire Department grew through the years, fire stations were constructed through the city. The brick buildings were typically two stories with stylistic details. Horses were replaced with motorized fire trucks; stations were remodeled to accommodate equipment changes. During the period of the current survey, 1950-1975, three new buildings were constructed to accommodate changing needs in equipment and more efficiently utilize space. Unlike the 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings, the Postwar fire stations were not typically

---

<sup>33</sup> "A Dignified Landmark: Architects Wanted Distinctive Design," *La Crosse Tribune* Aug 2, 1970.

<sup>34</sup> "Ground Broken for New \$2.3 Million Courthouse," *La Crosse Tribune* June 20, 1963; "La Crosse Government Has a New Home," May 21, 1965; Op Cit, Robinson and Foell, 2003, pp. 14-15.

<sup>35</sup> Hessel, 2007, p. 219.

designed to stylistically fit into their surrounding neighborhoods. As noted previously, three buildings: Station Headquarters; Station 2; and Station 3 were constructed during the survey period.

### **Station Headquarters/Station No. 1 (726 5th Ave S.)**

Designed by the local architectural firm of Carl W. Schubert and Associates, the new Fire Department Headquarters (Station No. 1) was constructed in 1965-66. The building resulted in the combination of stations 1 and 3. The building, as noted by the *La Crosse Tribune*, could accommodate eight fire trucks and had dormitory space for 18 men. The new headquarters at 5th Avenue South and Market streets is a Brutalist style two story concrete and brick building with a recessed first floor and recessed second floor windows.<sup>36</sup>

### **Station #2 (626 Monitor St.)**

Station #2, meanwhile had been constructed ten years previously in 1956 with a one-half story bay to accommodate the fire trucks, has a one story wing; both sections are flat roofed.

### **Station #3 (1710 Losey Boulevard)**

While the new headquarters was being constructed in 1965-66 a stylistically similar station, #3, was constructed on Losey Boulevard. Like the headquarters building, Station #3 is constructed of brick and concrete with vertical bands of windows, and also has a flat roof.<sup>37</sup>

### **La Crosse Home for Children (2507 Weston St.)**

The La Crosse Home for Children, now the Family and Children's Center, is located at 2507 Weston Street on a five acre lot. Originally known as the La Crosse Home for Friendless Women and Children, the home was a private endeavor founded in 1888 by local women. The first facility was a house located at 717 Badger Street; in 1891, money was raised to purchase a house at 11th and Ferry Streets which was used until 1963.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> *La Crosse Fire Rescue: Legends and Legacies*, La Crosse Fire Department Centennial Book Committee, 1995, p. 81.; "Proposed \$300,000 Fire Station," *La Crosse Tribune* Dec. 12, 1965; Op Cit, Robinson and Foell, 2003, pp. 14-15.

<sup>37</sup> "La Crosse's 'New Look' Fire Dept." *La Crosse Tribune* Sept 17, 1967.

<sup>38</sup> "La Crosse Home for Children Had Beginning 75 Years Ago," *La Crosse Tribune*, no date.

Likely designed by local firm Hackner, Schroeder, Roslansky and Associates, the 1963 building which used no public funds for construction, is a two story L shaped 16,500 square foot, stone and frame sided building with an arcade extending along the main entrance. The building included residential wings for boys and girls, recreational areas, offices, and an apartment for resident house parents. In 1976, a one story 3,375 square foot wing was added to the west side of the original building, also designed by Hackner, Schroeder, Roslansky and Associates (formerly Hackner, Schroeder and Associates). As noted by the *La Crosse Tribune*, the wing featured a stone and white frame sided exterior that was "designed to blend as closely as possible" to the existing building.<sup>39</sup>

### **La Crosse Public Library - Main Branch (800 Main St)**

The La Crosse main city library was constructed on the site of the 1887 library which was demolished for the new construction. Completed in 1967, the prolific local firm of Hackner, Schroeder and Associates who had designed many of the governmental buildings described in this section received the bid for the building. The new building increased the library's previous square footage from approximately 12,000 to 55,000. The design of the new brick and concrete library featured staggered planes, recessed windows, and was stylistically similar to other Hackner and Associates designs. The interior featured an open floor plan with a dominant central staircase; the building was intended, as the architectural firm noted to be open, friendly, warm, yet "completely functional." The library received a Wisconsin Chapter, American Institute of Architects' award as one of the six best designed buildings of 1967.<sup>40</sup>

In the 1990s plans were in place for a major expansion of the library which would result in a 4.5 million dollar, 15,000 foot expansion to include a new entrance, reconfiguration of the main stairway, and a vastly expanded children's area designed by Schute-Larson Architects and completed in 1996.<sup>41</sup> Due to this newer addition, the La Crosse Public Library does not retain sufficient integrity to be considered National Register eligible.

---

<sup>39</sup> "Open House is Sunday in New Children's Home," *La Crosse Tribune* Nov. 17, 1963; "A New Wing to Get Youths Flying Right," May 16, 1976.

<sup>40</sup> "Library Called Open, Functional," *La Crosse Tribune* Nov. 3, 196; Anita Taylor Doering and Bill Peterson, *A Gift to La Crosse: A History of the La Crosse Public Library*, La Crosse Public Library, 1997, p. 27.

<sup>41</sup> "Public Invited to Check Out New Setup at La Crosse Public Library," *La Crosse Tribune*, Aug. 18, 1996.

### **South Side Library (1307 16th Street South)**

During the New Deal era, plans were underway for construction of both north side and south branch libraries. Through legal complications, construction did not occur except for the North Branch library which began shortly before the onset of World War II. Despite war-time restrictions on construction materials, the library was completed in the fall of 1942. The South Side branch library however, would not be constructed until after the World War II. The building was officially opened on May 25, 1952.<sup>42</sup> The two story flat roofed building designed by Milwaukee architect Frank Fuchs, exhibits characteristics of the international style with its narrow banded windows and articulated recessed entrance. Local architectural historian Dr. Leslie Crocker described the building as a series of rectangular blocks. In 1993, the library was remodeled with a new entrance and a sloped roof with overhanging eaves that, according to Crocker, "modified its harsh shape."<sup>43</sup> Therefore, with the entrance and roof alteration, the South Side Branch Library does not retain sufficient integrity to be considered eligible for the National Register.

### **PUBLIC HOUSING**

America's public housing as we know it today, had its origins in 19th century state and local efforts to improve housing conditions, particularly with east coast tenements. Federal efforts to provide public financing for low cost housing occurred during the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt with a Housing Division within the Public Works Administration (PWA). The intention of the New Deal developments was to provide employment, stimulate the economy, and provide slum clearance with housing developments which were typically low profile buildings or duplexes. The New Deal initiatives lead to the passage of the 1937 Housing Act which established the concept of federal subsidies to local housing authorities and set the ground work of the modern program. The 1937 Act would be followed by subsequent legislation to facilitate housing for defense workers during World War II, and after the war, to alleviate housing shortages.<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup> Doering and Peterson, 1977, pp. 19-20.

<sup>43</sup> Dr. Leslie F. Crocker, *Places and Spaces: A Century of Public Buildings, Bridges and Parks in La Crosse, Wisconsin*. La Crosse, WI, self-published, 2012. Pp. 224-225.

<sup>44</sup> Jennifer A. Stoloff, "A Brief History of Public Housing," paper presented at the American Sociological Association Conference, San Francisco, August 14, 2004; Paul R. Lusignan, Judith Robinson, Laura Bobeczko and Jeffrey Shrimpton, "Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949." Multiple Property Documentation Form, Washington, D.C. National Park Service, December 1, 2004, p. 3.

Federally subsidized low cost housing made possible by the passage of the 1937 Act typically consisted of low rise buildings in landscaped settings often with amenities such as play grounds and community centers. Following World War II however, and the passage of subsequent housing acts, high rise towers became the norm, seen as more economically efficient and characterized by a "stripped down" modern design.<sup>45</sup>

The national trends in federally subsidized housing are reflected in La Crosse's public housing. The La Crosse Housing Authority was established in 1946; early projects, beginning in 1959 and described below, consisted of scattered site, low rise buildings and duplexes. During the period of the current survey (1950-1975) several towers were built for low income senior citizens; at the same time, low rise complexes were also being built. The following resources associated with in La Crosse public housing are described in chronological order since both types of housing--scattered site and high rises--were being built at the same time.

### **Schuh Homes** (1305 St. James Street)

The La Crosse Housing Authority's first public low rent housing development was completed in 1959. Designed by local architect Robert Hackner of Hackner, Schroeder and Associates, the project was located near St. James and George streets. The development consisted of 74 units, brick one or two story duplexes with one to five buildings; the majority being two bedroom units.<sup>46</sup> According to a history of the La Crosse Housing Authority, Hackner encouraged the Authority to "go beyond the standards set by the federal government" and design buildings to last, with features such as the brick construction and asphalt roof tiles. Hackner, it was noted, would go on to develop regional expertise in public housing projects.<sup>47</sup>

Because of the advent of public housing in the post-World War II era in La Crosse and indeed in the nation, public housing neighborhoods such as Schuh Homes gained significance. Schuh Homes retains a high degree of integrity with original designs intact, street layout and the later addition of the adjacent Mullen Homes and the Margaret Annett Center, this development may be considered National Register eligible under criterion A for its historical significance as an early and well designed housing development in La Crosse.

---

<sup>45</sup> Lusignan et. al, p. 66.

<sup>46</sup> Susan Hessel, *We Need a Roof Over Our Heads: The Story of the La Crosse Housing Authority*, La Crosse WI, The La Crosse Housing Authority, 1998, p. 73.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, p. 77.

### **Margaret Annett Center** (1321 St. James Street)

The Margaret Annett Center, originally the Margaret Annett Day Care Center located at the Schuh Homes, was the first building in the state to be designated as a children's day care center financed by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Annett was a La Crosse Housing Authority Commissioner who was credited with making the center possible as a free standing building designed by local firm Hackner, Schroeder, Roslansky and Associates in 1975.<sup>48</sup> This building is a contributing property in the proposed Schuh Homes Historic District.

### **Stoffel Court** (333 S. 7th Street)

In 1963-64, a few years after the completion and occupancy of the Schuh Homes, plans were approved for the Authority's first high rise tower for the elderly. Also designed by Robert Hackner, the Court is a nine story, four bay brick building in a stripped down modernist style.

### **Mullen Homes**

In 1968 an addition to the Schuh Homes development occurred. The area, know as Mullen Homes added 29 units for a total of 133 units in the area. The new development was also designed by Hackner who noted that the homes were of frame and brick construction in groupings around activity areas, namely playgrounds. Unlike the Schuh Homes, Mullen Homes had buildings with four to six apartment units in each, against the recommendation of Hackner who felt that low density was a preferred design for families.<sup>49</sup>

### **Stokke Tower** (421 S. 6th Street)

During the same year a second senior tower was completed, a 10 story, 91 unit building also designed by Hackner who had proposed an exterior sandblasted concrete surface. The additional expense for the sandblasted concrete was initially rejected by the federal Public Housing Authority. It was argued by the LHA that without the sandblasting the building would be "too cold and stark" and not in keeping with the La Crosse's "architectural tastes."<sup>50</sup>

La Crosse public housing continued the same pattern of construction of low density family developments while simultaneously building towers for senior housing. In early 1970, **Huber**

---

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, pp. 133-135; University of Wisconsin La Crosse, *The La Crosse Alumnus*, Winter 1976.

<sup>49</sup> "Mullen Homes Addition Completed, Being Occupied," *La Crosse Tribune* Oct 9, 1968; Hessel, 1998, p. 107.

<sup>50</sup> Hessel, 1998, p. 107.

## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

**Homes** near 15th and Gladys Streets was completed, a 40 unit project with one to four bedroom units in 20 duplexes. **Sauber Manor** (1025 Liberty Street) meanwhile was occupied during the same year, an eight story brick and concrete building which featured one bedroom apartments and amenities such as an eighth floor lounge, community, laundry, and arts and crafts rooms. When Sauber Manor was dedicated in 1971 Wisconsin Senator William Proxmire was in attendance; he praised La Crosse for its treatment of the elderly.<sup>51</sup>

### **Becker Plaza** (415 S. 7th Street)

A final project at the end of the survey period (1950-1975) was Becker Plaza. Work began on the nine story, 76 unit building in 1975. Also designed by Hackner, amenities included meeting rooms, a lounge, and living quarters for custodian and family. In a first for the senior high rises, Becker Plaza was built on city owned park land. Architectural firm Hackner, Schroeder, Roslansky and Associates noted that only a minimal amount of trees would be removed; 52 trees and over 80 varieties of shrubs and ground cover would be planted in a park like setting.<sup>52</sup>

### **State Office Building** (3550 Mormon Coulee Road)

Plans for a regional state office building to be located in the La Crosse area began as early as 1956. For the next several years negotiations with the State Building Commission, other cities interested in obtaining the building, and where the building would be located in La Crosse, would occur. To area communities, there were obvious prestigious and economic benefits of securing a state office building. The selection of the La Crosse site went through litigation with the State Engineer testifying in Madison Circuit Court against challenges from the city of Sparta's Industrial Development Foundation.<sup>53</sup>

By the end of 1958 the La Crosse location prevailed and the state purchased approximately 10 acres of land at the current site from the Diocese of La Crosse. The *La Crosse Tribune* noted that

---

<sup>51</sup> "112 Unit, \$20.7 Mil. Housing Project Planned," *La Crosse Tribune* June 25, 1970 CHECK; Ibid "Tenants Moving Into New High Rise for the Elderly," Dec. 20, 1970. Hessel, 1998, p. 118.

<sup>52</sup> "Housing Unit for Elderly on Schedule," *La Crosse Tribune* Aug. 27, 1975; "Authority Dedicates Building, Starts Another," July 1, 1976.

<sup>53</sup> "\$500,000 Regional State Office Building to be Constructed at one of Three La Crosse Locations During 1957; Will House 200 Employees," *La Crosse Tribune*, Dec. 30, 1956. "State Office Building to be Constructed on Highway 14," Nov. 22, 1958; "Quizzed by Sparta Attorney: Engineer Defends Choice of Office Building Site," Dec. 16, 1958.

the decision had "brought to end" two years of "activity" regarding the location of a state office building for southwestern Wisconsin. Although other communities had proposed sites without cost to the state, the State Building Commission determined that the diocese property between Woodlawn cemetery and the Holy Cross Seminary (see Religion chapter) was the most appropriate site and was purchased at a price of \$50,000.<sup>54</sup>

The two story marble faced rectangular shaped building, described as "modern" with a main entrance facing the rear of the property at its parking lot, was completed in 1961. Over 150 state employees would be housed in the building from divisions such as the state departments of health, conservation, welfare, highways, and motor vehicles. The architect is presently (2018) unknown.<sup>55</sup>

In 2011 the La Crosse State Office Building underwent a LEED for Existing Buildings assessment, and with changes the building gained a LEED Gold Certification.<sup>56</sup> LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, the most widely used green rating system in the world. This building is potentially eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for its importance as a regional branch hub of the state government, and under Criterion C as an excellent example of a modern, mid-century office building.

---

<sup>54</sup> "State Completes Purchase of Site for Office Building: Deed is Filed with Register," *La Crosse Tribune* Dec. 18, 1958.

<sup>55</sup> "150 State Employees Work in New Offices," *La Crosse Tribune*, July 9, 1961.

<sup>56</sup> ([www.leonardoacademy.org/thanks/472-lacrossetbldg.html](http://www.leonardoacademy.org/thanks/472-lacrossetbldg.html)) accessed 2.19.18.



### CHAPTER 6 – INDUSTRY

La Crosse was founded in 1841 by trader Nathan Myrick at the confluence of three rivers: the Mississippi; the Black River; and the La Crosse, a location which would ensure its future as a regional trade center. The village of La Crosse was platted in 1851; within five years it would have a population of approximately 2,000 and be incorporated in 1856. Due to its river location and area logging, river trade, and early commercial enterprises such as brewing, La Crosse grew rapidly and by the late 19th century had a population of 25,000.<sup>57</sup>

At the beginning of the 20th century La Crosse's largest industry--lumbering--was at an end due to the depletion of the pine forests. It was noted that 10,000 residents--one in three--had depended upon some form of lumbering for their livelihood in 1900 such as sawmills, logging, towing, and related industries such as cooperage and blacksmith shops. With the end of the lumbering, other industries, notably brewing which had also been established in the mid 19th century came into their own. In the mid to late 19th century, a reported twenty breweries were operative in the city; by the 20th century, five remained. The most prominent of the breweries would become Heilemen's which was established through several mergers and was reportedly the fourth largest brewery in the nation before it too, was taken over by mergers in the 1980s as discussed later.<sup>58</sup>

Another industry that originated in the 19th century and grew to prominence in the 20th century was the Trane Company. Established in 1885, the manufacturing heating and later air conditioning company expanded through the 20th century by the 1980s with approximately 4,800 employees was one of the area's largest employers.<sup>59</sup>

Established businesses from the 19th century similar to the Trane Company expanded or added new buildings in the early 20th century and following World War II. By the 1950s however, the city realized that there was little room for expanding and retaining its industrial base due to little available land. In the early 1950s several planning studies occurred to address the issue, and the La Crosse County Industrial Development Council, along with the city council, and Chamber of Commerce sought to address "future development of land area within the city limits for industrial purposes." In a report presented to the City Council the Industrial Development Corporation

---

<sup>57</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La\\_Crosse\\_Wisconsin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Crosse_Wisconsin) accessed 12-22-16

<sup>58</sup> Hessel, 2007, pp. 77-78; 81-82.

<sup>59</sup> "Places of the Past: Trane Company," *La Crosse Tribune*. Nov. 16, 2016.

## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

prepared a report in 1956 recommending land acquisition and rezoning to support existing industries and to attract new ones. The favored location for such future development was cited as the Grand Crossing and the Indian Hill project which could provide La Crosse County with the "type of industrial development area it needs."<sup>60</sup>

In 1966 the completion of I-90 north of the city resulted in proposals for the four mile wide strip. Planning/zoning consultants Vogt, Ivers and Associates of Minneapolis were hired to provide recommendations for development. The firm recommended an industrial park at the southeast corner of the La Crosse Airport, protection of existing residential areas near the French Island interchange and development of an industrial park south and east of the airport.<sup>61</sup>



**John F. Kennedy, at campaign rally, La Crosse Municipal Airport, 23 October 1960**

---

<sup>60</sup> "Few City Sites Immediately Available for Industry Use; Long Study Brings 3 Major Conclusions," *La Crosse Tribune*, Aug. 5, 1956.

<sup>61</sup> Jerome R. Rosso, "I-90 Development in Campbell: Industrial Park Proposed," *La Crosse Tribune*, March 29, 1966.

Two years later, in 1968, a prospectus for future businesses/industry development in the form of bonds was prepared for the city by Boettcher and Company of Denver, which included descriptions of La Crosse; its geographic and demographic information including existing businesses, cultural and educational resources. The bond appeal noted that La Crosse, as a regional trade center, served over 250,000 people. La Crosse was touted for its economic stability and it was noted that it had 105 manufacturing facilities, approximately 735 retail/wholesale businesses and approximately 300 service businesses. It was also noted that the city in 1967 had rezoned a 1,000 acre tract to the north for an industrial park. An additional 100 acre industrial park would soon be added, located near the airport.<sup>62</sup>

The following describes those industries that experienced growth, expansion and development where known, such as the Trane Company, during the survey period (1950-1975).

### **G. Heileman Brewing Company**

Dating back to the mid-19th century, Heileman grew to a large complex with buildings added throughout its history to become the fourth largest brewery in the country before a merger in the 1980s. During its heyday Heileman was one of the city's largest employers and was instrumental in the establishment of Oktoberfest in 1961 (see Recreation/Entertainment chapter). Although its 19th century buildings were expanded, enlarged, and altered in its multi-acre complex, the most well known during the survey period was the creation of the "World's Largest 6 Pack," in 1969, created by the painting of "Bavarian" scenes replicating the graphics of its popular "Old Style" beer can onto a cluster of six, 53 foot tall storage tanks.

The World's Largest Six Pack was a popular tourist attraction, promoted by Heileman's. By the 1980s when the company became the La Crosse City Brewery, the Bavarian styled graphics were white washed, but allegedly are still visible; today the new brewing company, rather than paint over the original, "wrapped" the cans with the new logo; the six pack still appeals as a roadside attraction.<sup>63</sup>

---

<sup>62</sup> Boettcher and Company, "\$4,015,000 City of La Crosse, Wisconsin: Corporate Purpose Bonds Series Dated April 1, 1968," La Crosse, WI, City of La Crosse, 1968.

<sup>63</sup> Hessel, 2007, p. 89; Paul D. Koeller and David H. DeLano, "Brewed With Style: The Story of the House of Heileman," University of Wisconsin La Crosse Foundation, Inc. R. C. Printing, La Crosse, WI, 2004; "World's Largest Six Pack," RoadsideAmerica.com, accessed May 26, 2016.





**World's Largest Six-pack, S. Third Street, circa 1970 postcard**

### **Norplex Corporation**

The Norplex Corporation, which produced laminated plastic sheet, rod and fabricated parts, employed over 350 people in 1968. The Bond appeal of the time also noted that the company had "new manufacturing facilities" in the "new Vernon Industrial Park" on the banks of the Mississippi River.<sup>64</sup>

### **Trane Company**

The Trane Company was established in La Crosse in the late 19th century as a heating manufacturer, which expanded rapidly throughout the next century to include air conditioning and by the time of the current survey had expanded into an international company that employed approximately 4,000 area residents and was the largest employer in La Crosse. Through mergers and acquisitions, in 1954, the Trane Research and Development Laboratory opened and three years later a 65,000 square engineering building. In 1966, plans were announced for the

---

<sup>64</sup> Boettcher, 1968, p. 8.

## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

construction of a headquarters/administration building on a 40 acre tract near the Hillview Home. The flat roofed, Meisian style two part building intended for expansion, featured panels of windows and as described by the *La Crosse Tribune* was "contemporary window wall construction with glass set in aluminum and trimmed with marble and granite." The new headquarters were designed by architect Sol King of Detroit, with Albert Kahn and Associates. Typical of corporate headquarters of the survey period, the site would be "extensively landscaped" with a courtyard and artificial lake.<sup>65</sup>

**Air conditioned comfort for millions of people starts here in La Crosse**

Throughout the world, millions of people enjoy Trane air conditioned comfort. People in homes, schools and apartments. People working in offices and factories. People traveling in buses and mass transit cars. Food products, too, are kept cool and fresh while being transported to market in rail cars and truck trailers equipped with Trane refrigeration systems. And a wide variety of process industries depend on Trane special heat exchange units. For example, brazed aluminum exchangers are a key component in the continuous production of liquid oxygen which is used extensively in steelmaking processes worldwide.

The United States is served by manufacturing facilities in five locations and sales offices in 137 cities. In these offices are more than 650 graduate engineers working with consulting engineers, architects, contractors, building owners and dealers. Internationally, Trane has manufacturing facilities in five countries and markets products through more than 55 sales offices and 65 distributors in 78 countries throughout the world.

The Trane Administration Building in La Crosse is the focal point for this worldwide organization.

In La Crosse, too, are extensive research and development laboratories and central manufacturing engineering. Plants located in La Crosse produce large refrigeration equipment, special purpose heat transfer equipment and key components such as compressors for the company's other plants.

**MANUFACTURING FACILITIES: LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN • SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH • SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA • LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY • CLARKSVILLE, TENNESSEE • TORONTO, CANADA • DONIBRISTLE, SCOTLAND • EPINAL, FRANCE • SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA • JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA • SALES OFFICES IN 137 U. S. CITIES. INTERNATIONAL SALES OFFICES AND DISTRIBUTORS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD**

**TRANE**  
air conditioning

THE TRANE COMPANY, LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN 54601

### Trane Corporation advertisement in La Crosse Chamber of Commerce pamphlet, 1970

By the time of the 1967 bond issuance, Trane was a well-established international company; twenty years later in the 1980s it was reported that the company was considering a move from the city and that it had extensive holdings including nine buildings. For the next two decades, consolidations and mergers continued and a corresponding reduction in employees. In 2003, the

<sup>65</sup> "Trane at 100: Firm Marks Milestone; Mum on Jobs, Expansion," *La Crosse Tribune*, April 24, 2013; "Trane Details Plan for \$6.7 Million Building," *Ibid*, May 13, 1966;

company had a reported 2,550 employees with four manufacturing plants, warehouse, the headquarters building and support facilities.<sup>66</sup>

Because of the strong design of the Trane Company Headquarters building, and Trane Company's historical importance to La Crosse, the headquarters building may be considered potentially eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for its significance as the administrative headquarters of a nationally known industry, and under Criterion C for its excellent architectural design of a large office complex with associated campus.

---

<sup>66</sup> Boettcher, 1968, p. 12; "Could Trane Leave This All Behind?" *La Crosse Tribune*, Dec. 14, 1986; "Trane's Employment Roller Coaster," *Ibid*, Oct. 30, 2003.



## CHAPTER 7 – RECREATION

### Parks

By the mid-20th century La Crosse had a well-established park system, thanks to the foresight of the city in hiring nationally significant landscape architect and city planner John Nolen in 1908.<sup>67</sup> The city followed his recommendations for acquisition and development resulting in the system in place today with the most well-known parks being Granddad's Bluff and Riverside Park. The following established parks, listed alphabetically, had additional developments between 1950 and 1975.

#### **Black River Beach:** 1433 Rose Street

Located along the Black River in the north section of the city, Black River Beach Park was established in 1947 by dredging and adding fill along the river. According to the *La Crosse Tribune*, construction of a bathhouse was delayed due to the necessity of soil testing and approval. A 1948 report noted that the soil, "comprised of sand and gravel, wood, bark, chips and cinders" would not support the proposed brick bathhouse.<sup>68</sup> In 1953 the bathhouse was completed at a cost of \$21,758 by the Williams Construction Company of La Crosse. The one story red brick building, it was reported included changing rooms and measured 32 by 66 feet.<sup>69</sup> That building is not extant. A new Black River Beach Neighborhood Center opened in 2010 adjacent to Black River Beach.

#### **Copeland Park:** 1130 Copeland Park Drive

Also located in the north part of La Crosse along the Black River, Copeland Park was established in 1909. The 20 acre park was donated to the city by Colonel and Mrs. Fredrick Copeland. Formerly the site of sawmills, development included dredging of sand from the Black River, grading and landscaping.<sup>70</sup> In the early 1960's a group of local railroad enthusiasts formed the

---

<sup>67</sup> Susan T. Hessel and Gayda Hollnagel. *A History of La Crosse, Wisconsin in the Twentieth Century: Reinventing La Crosse Again and Again*. La Crosse, WI. La Crosse County Historical Society, 2007. Pp

"John Nolen," by John L. Hancock, in *American Landscape Architecture, People and Places*. William Tishler, editor. Washington, D.C. Preservation Press, 1989, pp. 70-73.

<sup>68</sup> "Black River Bathing Beach Patrons May Wait Another Year for Construction of Bath House." *La Crosse Tribune*, May 28, 1948.

<sup>69</sup> Photo with caption, *La Crosse Tribune*, June 7, 1953, p. 14.

<sup>70</sup> "Copeland Park Site of Saw Mills," *La Crosse Tribune*, July 21, 1938.



Citizen's Steam Locomotive Committee and raised funds to acquire a steam locomotive and caboose to commemorate the city's railroad heritage. The 1930s steam locomotive weighs 200 tons and is in a streamlined Art Deco style. It was donated by the Burlington Railroad with the stipulation that the city: provide funds for its restoration; a permanent site; temporary and permanent trackage; and future maintenance. The ca. 1880 caboose was donated to the committee for one dollar by the Milwaukee Railroad.<sup>71</sup> Generally relocated buildings, structures and objects are not considered eligible for the National Register. The locomotive and caboose were moved to Copeland Park over 50 years ago.<sup>72</sup>

### **Erickson Park:** 2324 Thompson Street

Erickson Park is located on the south side of La Crosse on land that was originally Salzer Airfield which was relocated in the early 1930s. Athletic fields were established on the 13 acre site, but no other development occurred. In 1953, after La Crosse resident Edwin Erickson provided \$25,000 in his will for city parks, plans for the development of the area with athletic fields and for use by visiting circuses was underway.<sup>73</sup> The park, originally named the Edwin Erickson Recreation Field was added to the city's park system in June, 1955. A site plan was soon completed by local firm Schubert, Sorensen, and Associates; a sketch provided in the *La Crosse Tribune* indicated 22 foot tall "Winona Stone" entrance pillars on Losey Boulevard, with lighted pylons, flanked by permanent concrete ornamental seating. In July, 1965 a pool and bathhouse were added to the park.<sup>74</sup>

### **Houska Park (Isle La Plume Park):** 1011 Joseph Houska Drive

Located south of downtown La Crosse along the Mississippi River, Houska Park is a four acre park that was established in the 1940s on a city dump site. Originally called Isle la Plume, the park was established in 1942, intended to "glorify the city's new [sewage] disposal plant."<sup>75</sup> Originally the park was under the jurisdiction of the public works department; in 1951 management was transferred to the city's parks department. A free-standing stone fireplace was one of the early

---

<sup>71</sup> "Locomotive and Caboose to be Installed in Park." *La Crosse Tribune*, May 12, 1963.

<sup>72</sup> Barbara Wyatt: rolling stock...

<sup>73</sup> "Establishment of Circus Recreation Center in City Approved by Aldermen." *La Crosse Tribune*, Sept 8, 1953, p. 1.

<sup>74</sup> "Dedication of Edwin Erickson Recreation Field Set Aug. 4th." *La Crosse Tribune*, June 26, 1955, p. 7; "First in the New Pool." July 18, 1965.

<sup>75</sup> "Island Beauty Spot: Numerous Groups, Individuals Responsible." *La Crosse Tribune*, April 1, 1945.

developments. State Assemblyman John Mulder had acquired granite, marble, and limestone engraved blocks from 23 of the 50 states; after his death the stones were given to the city, put in storage, but eventually ended up in the city dump until they were retrieved by a public works director for construction of the fireplace.<sup>76</sup> Picnic areas and additional fireplaces were added to the area. In 1968, a Modern style brick shelter was added with an arcade and a small, enclosed second story viewing tower.<sup>77</sup>

### **Red Cloud Park (Indian Hill Park): 520 Powell Street**

Located in the northern part of the city, Red Cloud Park was established on land that was historically the site of a Winnebago encampment; it was later owned in part by Buffalo Bill Cody and his friend, Dr. Frank Powell, a four term La Crosse mayor in the late 19th century. The city began purchasing the 18 acre site which was known by locals as "Indian Hill" in the 1950's. At the beginning of 1955, a park plan was developed by Robert Corwine, Minneapolis landscape architect.<sup>78</sup> Some controversy ensued regarding the formal name for the park; local historian William Koch argued for respecting the area's historic association with Native Americans. It was decided to name the park "Red Cloud Park" in honor of Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Corporal Mitchell Red Cloud, a Winnebago from Black River Falls who died in combat during the Korean War.

The park was decided on May 26, 1955 with a parade and dedication attended by approximately 2,000 people. In 1957 a Wisconsin Historical Society marker was placed on the site. Construction of a peeled log shelter house with stone fireplace was completed in 1958, along with additional fireplaces throughout the park. In 1962 the city announced plans to construct a rest room building.<sup>79</sup>

### **Riverside Park (Levee Park): 100 block, State Street**

Riverside Park located in downtown La Crosse along the Mississippi River, is, like Granddad's Bluff one of the city's oldest and most popular parks. Established in 1911, it features walkways,

---

<sup>76</sup> "23 States Represented by Stones in Fireplace." *La Crosse Tribune*, Sept. 6, 1959.

<sup>77</sup> City of La Crosse parks dept website <https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/content/407>. Accessed Oct 16, 2016.

<sup>78</sup> "Preserving, Building Indian Hills Region as Park is Study Project." *La Crosse Tribune*, Oct. 10, 1954; "Indian Hill Park Awaiting Council Approval, Schick." Jan. 23, 1955.

<sup>79</sup> "Appeal Heard for Development of Historic Indian Hill Area," *La Crosse Tribune*, June 19, 1955;

"2000 Persons Witness Parade, Park Dedication," *ibid*, May 27, 1957, p. 1;

"Red Cloud, Granddad, Hixon Areas Viewed." *Ibid*, Aug. 16, 1962.

sculpture, and a 1930 band shell. In 1958, plans were announced for the placement of a 25 foot Indian statue in the park by the Chamber of Commerce to "publicize La Crosse and the Hiawatha Valley."<sup>80</sup> The Chamber commissioned local artist and junior high school art teacher Anthony Zimmerhagl to prepare a model; he conducted historic research to determine historic accuracy. The statue would be of the Iroquois Chief Hiawatha, made famous by the 1855 Henry Wordsworth Longfellow poem, "The Song of Hiawatha."

During the next four years as Zimmerhagl and his sons created the concrete and wire mesh statue in their backyard, controversy over the selection of Hiawatha ensued. Local historian William Koch who had been involved in the Red Cloud Park naming, pointed out in editorials that Hiawatha was not an appropriate representation for the Winnebago tribe who had been in the La Crosse area and suggested a Chief such as Decorah. Koch noted the city's "obligation to the Winnebago nation to preserve and protect their historical birthright."<sup>81</sup>

By today's [2018] standards, the headlines and language used during the controversy would be considered inappropriate, if not racist. In 1961, Alvin Blackdeer, Burlington employee, and vice commander of the Wisconsin Winnebago Veterans Association expressed his concerns about the inappropriateness of the proposed Hiawatha statue. The *La Crosse Tribune* entitled the article "Indians on Warpath Against Chamber Unit," and continued, "Smoke signals are calling scattered tribesmen..." and that Blackdeer was not opposed to La Crosse merchants making "plenty of wampum" out of tourists, but that he considered the statue inappropriate for what was historically the Winnebago domain.<sup>82</sup> When the statue was installed and dedicated as part of the city's first Oktoberfest, the *La Crosse Tribune* captioned a photo with, "Got 'Em Injun, But No Name." A year later, the La Crosse City-Council Chamber Tourist Publicity Committee "reaffirmed" its decision to call the statue "Hiawatha" arguing that it was intended to represent "all Indians" and that the named was connected to the Hiawatha Valley from La Crosse to Hastings, Minnesota.<sup>83</sup>

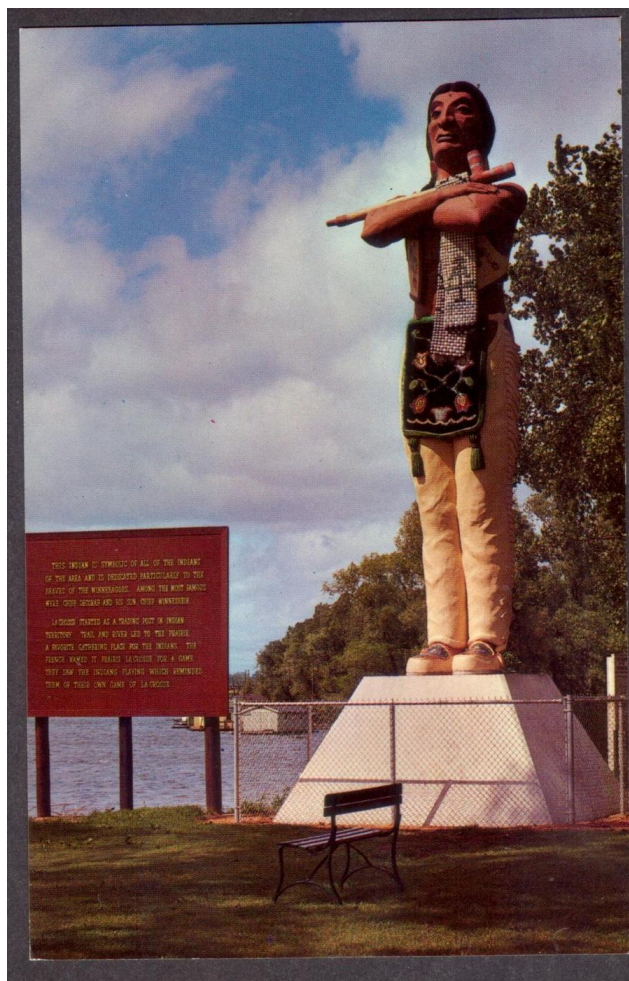
---

<sup>80</sup> "Statue of Indian May Be Erected in Park," *La Crosse Tribune*, June 3, 1958.

<sup>81</sup> "Koch Objects to Idea for Riverside Statue," *La Crosse Tribune*, June 29, 1958, p. 3.

<sup>82</sup> "Object to Hiawatha Statue: Indians on the Warpath Against Chamber Unit," *La Crosse Tribune* March 29, 1961.

<sup>83</sup> "Got 'Em Indjun But No Name," *La Crosse Tribune*, Oct 13, 1961; "Name of Statue is Hiawatha: Committee." Ibid, April 21, 1962.



**“Big Indian” sculpture in Riverside Park, postcard, 1960**

The statue is commonly known as "the Big Indian." In the year 2000, it was noted that it was in need of repair and repainting and once again it would spark controversy. Some felt that it was a stereotypical and unflattering portrait of Native Americans; others thought that it is an important part of La Crosse history. The city allocated \$20,000 for repairs and repainting in 2001; the estimated \$35,000 for repairs would be supplemented with private donations.<sup>84</sup>

#### **Oktoberfest Grounds (2nd Street and La Crosse Streets OR 1 Oktoberfest Strasse)**

As noted above, the "Big Indian" statue in Riverside Park was created for the city's first Oktoberfest. The event was created in 1961 as a festival to occur from October 13-16.

---

<sup>84</sup> "Hiawatha Fund Grows," *La Crosse Tribune*, May 31, 2001.

Community leaders, such as Chamber of Commerce members and the business community felt the need for a festival such as the defunct winter carnival which had taken place in the 1920s. Employees of the G. Heilman Brewing Company of German descent proposed an autumn festival modeled after the famous Oktoberfest in Munich, Germany. The idea was soon adopted and sponsored by the La Crosse Chamber of Commerce.<sup>85</sup>

The first festival consisted of approximately 32 concessions, temporary stages, tents, a parade, music, food, and of course, beer supplied by Heilman's. The festival "grounds" consisted of temporary tents and stages with Bavarian facades near the Mary E. Sawyer Auditorium (non-extant), along with a site in north La Crosse at Copeland Park. It was considered a tremendous success with somewhere between 50,000 and 100,000 people in attendance. Festival organizers soon incorporated under Wisconsin law as the Oktoberfest Corporation to protect the name.<sup>86</sup>

By 1971, Oktoberfest was so popular--with thousands of visitors from throughout the Midwest and national entertainment acts--it was determined that permanent grounds should be established. A five and one-half acre site, south of the La Crosse River, east of Riverside Park would triple the size of the existing grounds with a large developmental contribution made possible by the Heilman Brewing Company. At the time, more permanent structures were proposed.<sup>87</sup> Most of the structures in the Oktoberfest grounds are pole sheds, and are mostly not old enough to be National Register eligible.

### **South Lanes Bowling Alley (4107 Mormon Coulee Road)**

During the survey period (1950-1975) bowling was a tremendously popular sport throughout the United States. According to one author, "America fell in love with bowling after World War II." By 1964, a reported 39 million Americans enjoyed the sport including men, women, and children.<sup>88</sup> La Crosse was no exception to the national enthusiasm for bowling after WWII. According to the *La Crosse Tribune* in a retrospective article published in 1999, bowling alleys

---

<sup>85</sup> Hessel and Hollnagel, 2007, pp 476-479.

<sup>86</sup> "Three Day Oktoberfest Opens; Bavarian Mood Prevails in City," *La Crosse Tribune*, Oct. 13-1961; "Oktoberfest Group in Incorporated: 4-Day Program set for 1962," *ibid*, no date, Dec. 1961; photograph, Sept. 30, 1964.

<sup>87</sup> "Five Acre Site West of 2nd Street: Fest Gets New Grounds," *La Crosse Tribune*, May 20, 1971, p. 1; *Ibid*: "Heileman's made possible Permanent Fest Grounds, Sept. 26, 1971.

<sup>88</sup> Andrew Hurley, *Diners, Bowling Alleys and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in the Postwar Consumer Culture*. New York: Perseus Books Group, Basic Books, 2001, p. 108.

had been located in the early 20th century in church and lodge basements until the construction of free-standing buildings after the war.

In the early 1950s several bowling alleys were constructed in the city that included features such as viewing areas, lounges and/or restaurants. The South Lanes Bowling Alley on Highway 14 at Losey Building for example, claimed itself to be one of the best businesses in the city, and one of the best in the northwest. The building included a side entrance for minors, and a 300 foot long picture window in the lounge that overlooked the lanes.<sup>89</sup>

### **La Crosse Boat Houses**

Three groupings of a total of 58 seasonal boathouses were designated as city of La Crosse landmarks circa 2010 by the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC). As seasonal dwellings, boathouses have had a long association and tradition with the Mississippi River in the area. As defined by the HPC: 37 of the boathouses are identified as Copeland West; eleven (11) are identified as Copeland North; and ten (10) are identified as Copeland East. Designated under Criterion A, the boathouses are associated with the broad cultural, political, and social history of the city of La Crosse.

According to the HPC nomination, between 1965 and 1980 regulations and restrictions occurred. In 1986, the Water Resources Development Act protected the existing boathouses with the United States Army Corps of Engineers responsible for the permitting process and the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources respectively, responsible for administration of area codes; it was also noted that the addition of any future boathouses would be prohibited.<sup>90</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup> "Bowled Over," *La Crosse Tribune*, Feb. 14, 1999; *ibid*; "Partners Say South Lanes is Best Business in City," Dec. 5, 1954.

<sup>90</sup> Historic Preservation Commission, Historic Landmark Nomination Form: "La Crosse Boathouses (Copeland West, Copeland East, Copeland North) 58 Total Boathouses." La Crosse, WI: City of La Crosse Planning Department.

### CHAPTER 8 – RELIGION

Religious buildings played an important part in the architecture of Postwar America, particularly in its emerging suburbs. In 1955, *Time* magazine claimed that the nation was experiencing its greatest church-building boom in its history. The article noted that the boom was experienced by all faiths, all denominations, and in all areas of the country. Congregations opted for the use of modern materials such as steel, concrete, large windows and laminated wooden beams. Church designs also included flexible spaces for interior use and incorporated all functions- administrative, worship, fellowship, and education- under one roof.<sup>91</sup> A recent (2015) examination of the Postwar church building boom was completed by Gretchen Buggeln who also noted the popularity of the A- frame in Postwar churches for both "aesthetic and practical" reasons, given the versatility of the style. Although the A frame would fall out of favor by the mid-1960s, Buggeln cited its popularity due to economic and symbolic considerations. A- frame churches ranged from simple prefabricated buildings to architect designed; the form lent itself to a variety of materials and sizes. Buggeln noted that A- frame churches could and did, have either integral steeples and/or free standing bell towers, similar to other styles of Postwar church, often utilizing the bell from an original 19th century church.<sup>92</sup>

Although Buggeln's study focused on new churches in emerging suburbs, the national trends apply to churches constructed in La Crosse between 1950 and 1975. Many congregations debated and voted on whether to opt for a traditional design such as neo-Gothic or Colonial, or to build in a Modern style; the majority elected to build in the latter style. Of the churches built during this period, as many as five buildings were constructed in the A-frame style described by Buggeln as a cost effective and popular choice for Postwar war churches.

In La Crosse, numerous congregations had been established by the mid-19th century including Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Jewish.<sup>93</sup> A century later, these well established congregations faced expanding Postwar membership along with aging buildings and the need to decide between extensive repairs or new construction. Of the religious affiliated

---

<sup>91</sup> Gretchen Buggeln. *The Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar America*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2015, p. xxiii-xxiv; 85.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, pp 85-86.

<sup>93</sup> Susan T. Hessel and Gayda Hollnagel. *A History of La Crosse, Wisconsin in the Twentieth Century: Reinventing La Crosse Again and Again*. La Crosse, WI, La Crosse County Historical Society, 2007, pp. 394-412.



resources constructed between 1950 and 1975, several retained sufficient integrity to be included in the present survey. The national trend towards modernism in church design is reflected in the La Crosse religious buildings including churches, seminaries, monasteries, schools, and senior housing, constructed during the time frame of the present study.

The following provides historic context information regarding religious denominations in La Crosse that have resources which retain historic integrity and were constructed during the period of the current survey. Where appropriate, resources are cross-referenced to related thematic chapters. The following describes denominations in terms of extent of construction and influence during the survey period and does not reflect any preference regarding denominations. Resources are listed alphabetically under each denomination.

### **CATHOLIC**

The Catholic Church has historically, and to the present been an important and powerful presence in the city of La Crosse. Its importance was assured in 1868 when it became the headquarters of the western Wisconsin diocese. Today, [2016] the Diocese encompasses 19 western Wisconsin counties, with 160 parishes that serve over 200,000 members.<sup>94</sup> During the period of the current survey, numerous visually prominent landmark buildings such as the Cathedral were constructed; the majority of these buildings with the exception of the Newman Center at the University of Wisconsin La Crosse and buildings at Viterbo University, were constructed in a traditional architectural style, notably neo-Gothic or Modern Gothic. Resources which retain historic integrity sufficient to be included in the inventory as well as those which may be potentially eligible for inclusion on the National Register are described below.

#### **Church of the Blessed Sacrament (130 Losey Boulevard)**

The Church of the Blessed Sacrament, which includes school and rectory, was established in the late 1930s on Losey Boulevard. The building was originally a combination church and school constructed in 1938.<sup>95</sup> In late 1949, work began on a new church which was completed in 1950. Designed by the Leo A. Daly firm of Omaha, Nebraska, the cross gabled building was described

---

<sup>94</sup> [www.dioceseoflacrosse.com](http://www.dioceseoflacrosse.com) accessed 7-13-16.

<sup>95</sup> *La Crosse Tribune*, 5-18-1997.

in the *La Crosse Tribune* as an "effort to bring something different in church construction in this area." The *La Crosse Tribune* continued to say that while the church was a "marked departure from the ordinary," it "could not be called 'Modern.'" But was rather a return to "true Gothic lines." The architect, it was reported, referred to the building as "rural Gothic."<sup>96</sup>

The Indiana limestone cross gable building was unusual for its use of staggered blocks of the limestone in different shapes and hues. The use of masonry it was noted had not been utilized previously in La Cross. In 2004, a major building project, including moving the 1938 rectory for construction of a new parish hall occurred. The parish hall, rectory relocation would reconfigure the site, utilize matching stone and connect all functions of the church.<sup>97</sup> Because of the 2004 addition, this building does not retain sufficient integrity to be listed on the National Register at this time.

### **Holy Cross Seminary (3710 East Avenue South)**

Plans for the construction of a seminary in La Crosse were in place by the late 1940s. Groundbreaking ceremonies occurred in the fall of 1948; nationally significant church architect Edward Schulte was selected for the design and was aptly described in the *La Crosse Tribune* as "one of the foremost church architects in the United States."<sup>98</sup> Schulte, who would later design the La Crosse Cathedral, met with the Diocese several times to discuss his plans for the large seminary building which would be constructed on a 60 acre site on Mormon Coulee Road. The 800 foot long building would consist of five connected sections or "units" of various functions--chapel, dormitories, residences, offices, and gymnasium. Schulte's intention, as reported in the *La Crosse Tribune*, was to fit the sections into a "functional pattern"... and "avoid wastefulness in attempting to force three or four types of occupancy into a single symmetrical building of L, H, E, or U shape"; above all, his intention was to give the "church unit" dominance to "proclaim its function as a Catholic seminary."<sup>99</sup>

---

<sup>96</sup> "Blessed Sacrament Church Dedicated; Services Tuesday." *La Crosse Tribune*, July 10, 1950.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid; "Parish on the Move" Nov., 5, 2004.

<sup>98</sup> "Break Ground for Seminary in Afternoon: Give National Road Broadcast. Evening." "Civic Program to Greet Archbishop" *La Crosse Tribune*, Oct. 17, 1958.

<sup>99</sup> "Seminary Plans Moving Ahead: Construction Slate to Commence Soon," *La Crosse Tribune*, March 20, 1949. "Contracts Signed for Holy Cross Seminary: Expect Two Units to be Ready for Occupancy Next September": Jan. 29, 1950.

## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

Schulte succeeded in his design; the complex, including a power station, was constructed of Winona travertine, supplemented by Indiana limestone. The chapel, as Shulte intended, is the prominent feature with a 25 foot tall integral statue of Jesus. During the three day dedication ceremony of the three million dollar complex in September 1951, over 18,000 people were in attendance, including church dignitaries from throughout the country.<sup>100</sup>



**Holy Cross Seminary during construction, circa 1951, postcard**

During its peak years in the 1950s the building housed approximately 350 seminarians annually. By 1971, twenty years after it opened, with an enrollment of 55, the Diocese decided to close the seminary. Today the large complex, with acreage sold off throughout the years, serves as retired priest apartments, dioceses offices, a retreat center, and in a diminished capacity as a seminary with a handful of day students; nine in 1995.<sup>101</sup> This building, with its support buildings and

---

<sup>100</sup> "Favorable Weather Speeds Construction of Holy Cross Seminary; Expect Two Units to be Ready for Occupancy Next September," *La Crosse Tribune*, Jan. 29, 1950.; "New Holy Cross Seminary Majestic 800 Foot Structure of Stone: Dominated by Church Unit: Will be Devoted to Training Clergy," *La Crosse Tribune*, Sept 9, 1951; "18,000 Persons Attend Sunday's Holy Cross Ceremony Dedication: Church Dignitaries Attend, Participate," Sept. 17, 1951.

<sup>101</sup> "Holy Cross Closing Confirmed" *La Crosse Tribune*, Feb. 9, 1971, p.2; "New Seminary School a Sign of Hope for La Crosse Diocese," Aug. 12, 1991, p. A5.

grounds, meets the criteria for listing on the National Register under Criterion C, for its architectural significance.

### **Newman Center, UW La Crosse (1732 State Street)**

Located on the University of Wisconsin La Crosse campus, the Newman Center is part of an international organization of residence and Catholic ministry centers located at non-Catholic universities. Named in honor of Cardinal John Henry Newman, the centers were inspired by his writings; the first American center was established at the University of Pennsylvania in 1893.<sup>102</sup>

Designed by Hackner, Schroeder and Associates of La Crosse, the University of Wisconsin La Crosse Newman Center was dedicated in May, 1964. The building features a centrally located entrance with a 20 foot core with five arches, flanked by symmetrically located one story wings. Intended to provide chapel, lounge, offices, classrooms, library, and living spaces it fulfilled the intention of Newman Centers. The building, described as a blend of "Gothic, Byzantine, and Colonial American" architectural styles in a "contemporary collegiate design", also included a chapel-in-the-round.<sup>103</sup>

### **St. Dominic's Monastery (3000 South Avenue)**

The Dominican order of the Perpetual Rosary was established in La Crosse in 1909. The cloistered nuns initially occupied a house at 2616 George Street. Due to the age of the building and problems with flooding, the need for a new home for the sisters was recognized and a building fund drive began in the late 1940s.<sup>104</sup> The local firm of Boyer, Schubert and Sorensen was selected to design the three story Winona travertine stone building. Reflecting the orders' vows of poverty, chastity, obedience, and limited contact with outside world, the building had minimal ornamentation. Completed and dedicated in 1953, the monastery had space for 20 nuns and postulants, who, when not engaged in perpetual prayer, made communion hosts and embroidery for the Diocese. Thirty years later, in 1983, a diminishing number of postulants and difficulty in using the building for other religious purposes resulted in its closure and the transfer of the

---

<sup>102</sup> www. Newmannconnections.com. Accessed July 31, 2016.

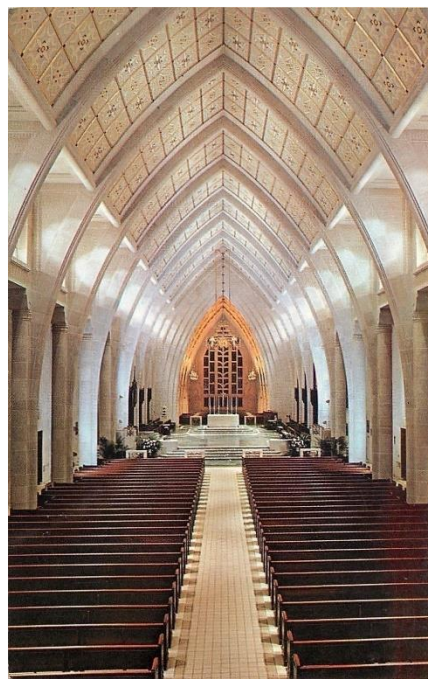
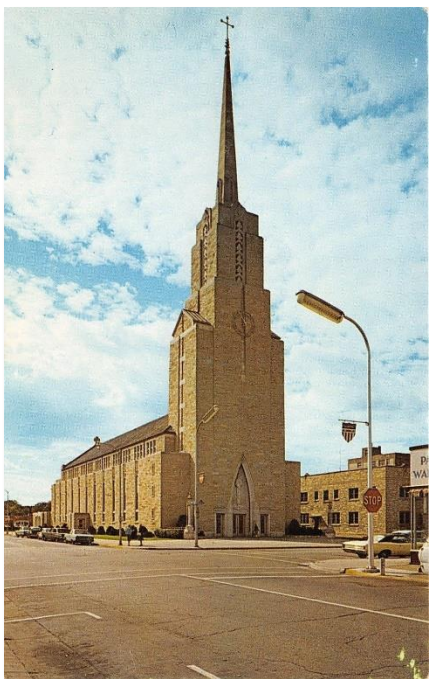
<sup>103</sup> "Roncalli Newman Center at LSC to Open Sunday." *La Crosse Tribune*, May 20, 1964.

<sup>104</sup> "Cloistered Nuns Carry on Work, Apart From World," *La Crosse Tribune*, Sept 10, 1951; "South Avenue Building Second in 45 Year La Crosse History of Dominican Monastery," May 2, 1954.

remaining nuns to a convent in Washington, D.C. "It's a monastery built for 20. It's gorgeous, but it's too big for us," the prioress stated.<sup>105</sup>

### **St. Joseph Cathedral of the Worker (530 Main Street)**

The La Crosse Cathedral was built on the site of the original 1860s building at 6th and Main Streets in downtown which was razed at the end of 1959.<sup>106</sup> Architect Edwin Schulte of Ohio, who had designed the Holy Cross Seminary (see above) was selected for the new Cathedral. By the end of 1959, Schulte's "contemporary architectural design" was approved and contracts were let. Work on the Indiana limestone building continued for two years. The two million dollar Cathedral as designed by Schulte was described as a long, rectangular form with seating for over 1,000 and a 250 foot spire.<sup>107</sup>



### **St. Joseph the Workman Cathedral, ca. 1962, postcards of exterior and interior**

The La Crosse Diocese newspaper, in describing the completed building noted that like the old Cathedral, it was Gothic in design but with "modern lines" in a contemporary style. The new building would also differ in its name: the Cathedral of St. Joseph the Workman. The cornerstone

---

<sup>105</sup> "Dominican Monastery to Leave La Crosse," *La Crosse Tribune*, Aug. 6, 1983, p. 5.

<sup>106</sup> "Decorations Up, Cathedral Down," *La Crosse Tribune*, Nov. 23, 1959.

<sup>107</sup> La Crosse Diocese, *Times Review*, Dec. 31, 1959; *La Crosse Tribune*, Jan. 3, 1960.

laying ceremony in 1960, was attended not only by Bishops but also by national representatives of the AFL-CIO. A week long dedication took place with thousands of attendees including clergy from throughout the Midwest. Speakers and officiants included three cardinals and Archbishop Spellman of New York, Archbishop Cushing of Boston and more than 1,000 priests and nuns.<sup>108</sup>

This building has a high degree of integrity and is potentially eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for its high style architecture.

**Thomas More Catholic Church (current name: Mary, Mother of the Church)** (2006 Weston Street)

The Thomas More Catholic Church is a complex consisting of school, rectory and church located on the south side of La Crosse. The complex originated with the 1947 a one story eight room school, which would which would be utilized for temporarily as a church as expansion plans were underway. Meanwhile a convent (demolished in 1986) was constructed. The school was expanded in 1953 with an addition of six classrooms; it would eventually be a two story with raised basement flat roofed building. The school building was razed in 2017. The church/rectory unit, designed by local firm Hackner, Schroeder and Associates began in 1959. The curved front brick modern style church was added to the site in the early 1960s.

This building (church and rectory) has a high degree of integrity and is potentially eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for its high style.

**Viterbo University** ( 9<sup>th</sup> and Market streets)

Viterbo University had its origins from the establishment of La Crosse as the Western Wisconsin Diocese in 1868. The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration arrived in the city in 1871 to serve as teachers for growing Catholic parishes. What became Viterbo College originated as a normal school for sisters to prepare them to teach primarily at the elementary school level. The curriculum evolved until Viterbo College was established in 1939, offering a Bachelor of Science degree in teaching. In the 1940s, programs offering courses in nursing, music, and an affiliation

---

<sup>108</sup> *Times Review*, "New Cathedral Climaxes Century Growth in Faith," May 11, 1962; "Cathedral Cornerstone is Laid in Sunday Ceremony," *La Crosse Tribune* Sept. 12, 1960; Ibid: "Cathedral to be Dedicated Monday Presence of 3 Cardinals to Highlight Rites," May 13, 1962.



with the Catholic University of American, the college continued to expand programs and increase enrollment.<sup>109</sup>

In the late 1950s as enrollment increased and lay women were admitted, the college constructed the Marian Hall Dormitory. The expansion, which further increased enrollment and led to the establishment of the institution as a Christian liberal arts college, would continue through the 1960s. The proposed expansion called for a seven story L- shaped dormitory to be located along Market and 9th streets, would connect o the existing Marian Hall with a cafeteria space. In 1962, a proposed expansion that would utilize federal funds through urban renewal, called for clearance of 5 to 6 blocks and construction of an additional dormitory, food service, and fine arts/performance building. Plans for the Fine Arts Building, which included a 1,000 seat theater, had been announced in 1968.<sup>110</sup> None of these buildings meet the criteria for individual National Register listing.

### LUTHERAN

As typical throughout Wisconsin, Catholic and Lutheran churches were predominant in La Crosse. Through various historic mergers, the Lutheran church includes the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The following describes the resources associated with the various Lutheran denominations within the period of the survey (1950-1975) that retain historic integrity.

#### **Bethany Lutheran Home** (1315 Cass Street)

Plans for a "home for the aged" began in 1954 by the La Crosse Circuit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, representing Lutheran churches in the area. The Cass Street site was purchased and the existing Easton property buildings razed. The L- shaped brick building located in a residential area, opened at the beginning of 1957. The corporation for the home consisted of 24 regional Lutheran churches--occupancy preference given--but not restricted, to those of the Lutheran faith.<sup>111</sup> The architectural firm of Thorshov and Cerny of Minneapolis designed the

---

<sup>109</sup> Hessel and Hollnagel, 2007, pp. 335-357.

<sup>110</sup> "Viterbo to Begin Arts Center in 1968; *La Crosse Tribune* March 3, 1967; Ibid: "Viterbo Development is Completed says Priest," June 6, 1976.

<sup>111</sup> "Lutheran Units Launch Drive for Building," *La Crosse Tribune*, Sept. 16, 1954.; "Ibid: "Bethany Lutheran Home to be Dedicated at Sunday Services, Dec. 29. 1956.



building which, it was reported blended with the many other "fine homes" in the vicinity.<sup>112</sup>

Thorshov and Cerny represented the merger of individual firms. Thorshov and Cerny represented a merger of several firms and individual practices, prominent in the Postwar period and existed from 1951- 1960.<sup>113</sup>

When the building opened in 1957, it was to capacity with 30 residents with a waiting list of 30 people; plans were immediately made to expand the facility to provide additional recreational and chapel areas, and housing for married couples. The addition, completed in 1960, resulted in the current U shaped building with the courtyard area facing Cass Street.<sup>114</sup>

### **Bethel Lutheran Church (1931 Loomis Street)**

The Minneapolis firm of Thorshov and Cerny which had designed the Bethany Lutheran Home cited above, also received the commission to design the Bethel Lutheran Church on Loomis Street. The church is one of five A-frame churches constructed in La Crosse during the survey period. The 86 year old congregation decided to construction a new building that would provide classrooms, office and fellowships spaces and a modern kitchen; needs described by Buggeln for Postwar congregations. The 117 by 64 foot building is faced with Winona stone, with an entrance portico in the gable end and a flat roofed side entrance.<sup>115</sup>

### **Faith Lutheran Church (1407 Main St.)**

A mission church of the Missouri Synod Lutheran denomination, Faith Lutheran Church was established in 1958 and originally held services in the Strand Theater. The congregation later had services in a remodeled ranch style house in Wedgewood Terrace. The current church was constructed in 1966 and designed by Hackner Schroeder and Associates. The brick and concrete building is unusual for its A frame style, which features a truncated roof. The church also features a free standing bell tower, typical of many Postwar-era churches.<sup>116</sup>

---

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid, 12-29-56; Alan K. Lathrop, *Minnesota Architects: A Biographical Dictionary*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2010, p. 35.

<sup>114</sup> Lutheran Witness, La Crosse, WI, Feb. 1962, p. 8.

<sup>115</sup> "Bethel Lutheran Church, 75th Anniversary, 1886-1961", La Crosse, WI, Bethel Lutheran Church, 1961.

<sup>116</sup> "Dedication Planned of Faith Lutheran," *La Crosse Tribune*, Nov. 30, 1966; "Church Marks Anniversary with Service," July 22, 1961.

### **Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (4141 Mormon Coulee Road)**

Good Shepherd was organized in 1954 as a mission church of the English Evangelical Lutheran Church. The congregation's first chapel was a frame, gable roofed building located at 3124 South 27th Street.<sup>117</sup> The congregation grew rapidly and in 1958 purchased two acres of land at the present location and completed a new building in 1964, including a parsonage at 2602 Leonard Street. The new church included chapel and offices. In 1982, the church again expanded and added a new sanctuary.<sup>118</sup>

### **Grace Lutheran Church (2718 S 26th St.)**

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, similar to Good Shepard, was established as a mission church, in this case with the Wisconsin Synod. The church was established in 1944 and was originally known as the South Avenue Lutheran Church which met in a rented building at 16<sup>th</sup> Street and South Avenue. The church grew during the Postwar years, purchased land, moved an old school building which was remodeled for use as a church; that building was dedicated in 1947. Eleven years later, in 1958, the church was released from its mission status and became self-supporting. A new, larger A frame brick church, at the present location, was dedicated in 1966; architect unknown.<sup>119</sup>

### **Mount Calvary Evangelical Lutheran School, Church, and Rectory (1411 S. 16th Street)**

The original frame church located at the site was dedicated in 1928. By the late 1950s the congregation at Park Avenue and 16<sup>th</sup> Street constructed a two story school; a stone faced rectangular building with attached classroom area. The school was the first of a planned expansion program which called for an additional two story unit with classrooms and offices. The final construction phase would be for a sanctuary with seating for over 400 people.

The architectural firm of Steffen and Kemp of Wauwatosa, Wisconsin received the contract.<sup>120</sup> Enrollment was reported at over 75 students; the new building could house 140 students.

The architectural sketch for the addition appeared in the *La Crosse Tribune* on June 27, 1962. The original, stone faced portion of the school, with three relief, staggered crosses, was shown with an

---

<sup>117</sup> "Congregation Moving into New Chapel", *La Crosse Tribune*, Mar 3, 1955.

<sup>118</sup> "Congregation to Dedicate Addition," *La Crosse Tribune*, Dec. 4, 1982.

<sup>119</sup> "Church Marks 40th Year," *La Crosse Tribune*, Nov. 9, 1985.

<sup>120</sup> "Bethel Lutheran Dedicates Church," *La Crosse Tribune*, Nov. 23, 1958.

attached two story windowed school addition to the north. The sanctuary section features a large shed roof, connected to the adjacent classroom section by a large stone pylon that separates and defines each section of the complex. In the 1960s enrollment continued to increase; thirty years later the school would again expand with a gymnasium and fellowship hall constructed-- south of the original school and parsonage.<sup>121</sup>

### **Our Redeemer Lutheran Church (2135 Weston Street)**

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church was established in 1946 as a mission church sponsored by the existing Our Savior's and St Paul's Lutheran churches in La Crosse. Designed in part by local architectural firm of Shubert, Sorenson, and Associates, the church had a two phased construction, beginning in 1951. In 1950 a parsonage was constructed; the new church, a stone faced cross gable building with raised basement was designed by architect Frank Fuchs and dedicated in May, 1952.<sup>122</sup> The new church measured 32 by 72 feet with a 16 by 16 foot entrance and was faced with Indiana, or Bedford limestone. Perhaps due to its early date of construction, the building is one of the more traditionally designed churches during the survey period. Modernistic touches included the modified triple Gothic arch windows on the west façade, and the random ashlar pattern of the limestone exterior. The education wing, which included church offices, was designed by Shubert, Sorenson and Associates; a one story flat roofed wing connected to the north of the church, and completed in 1958.<sup>123</sup>

### **Our Savior Lutheran Church (612 Division Street)**

The Our Savior's congregation was organized in 1861 and held services in members' homes, a former German Lutheran Church, and purchased a building from the Congregational church in 1869 at the current location; a new frame church building was constructed during the 1880s.<sup>124</sup>

Similar to other denominations during the Postwar period, the present church was constructed in phases as funds permitted. Due to expanding enrollment and lack of space in the 19th century building, construction of an education wing was completed in 1951. Designed by local architectural firm of Boyum, Schubert and Sorensen (later Shubert and Sorensen) the education

---

<sup>121</sup> "Lutheran School Plans \$400,000 Expansion Project" *La Crosse Tribune* May 30, 1991.

<sup>122</sup> "Our Redeemer Church Unveils New Structure Sunday May 18," *La Crosse Tribune*, May 11, 1952; "Break Ground for New Church Education Unit," *ibid*, July 21, 1958.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>124</sup> "Our Savior's Lutheran Church," *La Crosse Tribune*, Jan. 7, 1961.

wing was a two story stone faced building above an open arcade. Plans for the connected A frame church were approved in 1954 with a planned capacity for over 800 people.<sup>125</sup>

### **Saint Paul's Lutheran Church** (420 West Avenue South)

Similar to numerous churches constructed in the Postwar period, St. Paul's Lutheran had a phased construction with several building episodes such as parish hall, educational wing, and sanctuary. The complex was designed by Edward Solvik of Northfield, Minnesota, whom author Gretchen Buggeln cited in her recent [2016] work as a prolific and important architect who was a "theologian of space" and that he, in Buggeln's opinion, through his work and writing... "more than any other American Protestant architect, shaped discussions about church architecture in the last half of the twentieth century."<sup>126</sup>

St. Paul's was formed in La Crosse in the mid-19th century. The present church represents a merger with the Norwegian Lutheran Church with several previous buildings through time.<sup>127</sup> Beginning in 1954, the church voted to construct a new parish hall, the first unit of what would become a new complex on West Avenue. In January of 1955, plans for the phased expansion were provided in the *La Crosse Tribune*. The architect's sketch showed an L-shaped building across Division Street from the existing church that would provide space for offices, classrooms, and a sanctuary.<sup>128</sup> The *La Crosse Tribune*, in reporting the dedication of the Kasota stone and porcelain enamel building quoted architect Solvik who stated that it was a building, "designed to enrich the hours the congregation spends within its walls." The church, which connected the existing 106 by 54 foot education hall offices and chapel which had been completed in 1956, was described as "modernistic in design" yet was highly functional and retained "spiritual dignity."<sup>129</sup>

### **Trinity Lutheran Church** (1010 Sill Street)

Similar to the Bethany Lutheran Home (1315 Cass Street), the Minneapolis firm of Thorshov and Cerny received the commission for Trinity Lutheran Church. The church was established in 1919

---

<sup>125</sup> "Plan Dedication of New City Church Building Next Sunday," *La Crosse Tribune*, April 27, 1951; Ibid, "Our Savior's Congregation Accepts Architects' Plans. *La Crosse Tribune*, April 4, 1954.

<sup>126</sup> Buggeln, op cit, p. 30. Rtf32

<sup>127</sup> *La Crosse Lutheran Witness*, Dec. 1961, pp 2-3.

<sup>128</sup> "Parish House to be Built by St. Paul's," *La Crosse Tribune*, Jan 20, 1954.

<sup>129</sup> "Church Designed to Enrich Hours Congregation Spends in it: Architect," *La Crosse Tribune*, Dec 12, 1961; "New Chapel and Parish House of St. Paul's Lutheran Church to be Dedicated Sunday," Dec 14, 1956.

through a merger with the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church, resulting in the use of the Norwegian church building at Charles and Sill streets. During the 20th century the merged congregation continued to expand and by the mid-1940s plans were in place for a new building. The 1952 cross gabled A frame church designed by Thorshov and Cerny featured Fond du Lac Stone and was described as "contemporary" with its steep roofs and low eaves.<sup>130</sup> The design received an American Institute of Architects (AIA) award for best of religious design by *Progressive Architecture* magazine in 1952. The magazine however, noted that "while nothing of supreme brilliance had been submitted during the year in the category of religious structures," in general, religious designs had reached a level of "maturity" which promised well for the future.<sup>131</sup>



**Hammered copper sermon lectern, Trinity Lutheran Church**

Trinity Lutheran Church is highly intact both inside and out, and exhibits a high degree of architectural style and integrity. It is being recommended as potentially eligible for the National Register. The rectory/school should be considered for nomination at the same time as the church.

---

<sup>130</sup> Jan 3, 1954; "Trinity Congregation Outgrowth of Merger," *La Crosse Tribune*, Mar 24, 1957; Ibid, "Church Dedicates New Parish Building."

<sup>131</sup> "Church Design Receives Honor: Trinity Lutheran gets 'Best' Rate," *La Crosse Tribune*, Feb 3, 1952; *Progressive Architecture*, "Design Preview for 1952", p 96.

## BAPTIST

### **Faith Baptist** (3615 South 28th Street)

The Faith Baptist Church was established in 1959. As described by the *La Crosse Tribune* and typical of midcentury modern churches, it was constructed in phases. While the building units were being constructed the congregation met at the former Strand Theater building. Although at the present time [2018], the architect is unknown, the building as completed is a one story brick L-shaped structure with a one story office/ education wing, connected to the gable roofed chapel. The two units are visually connected with a projecting brick pylon with an extending cross.<sup>132</sup>

### **First Baptist Church** (1209 Main Street)

Established in 1852, First Baptist along with the First Congregational Church, is one of the oldest churches in La Crosse. The two congregations along with Presbyterians, initially intended to share a building, constructed by the Baptists with assistance from the Congregationalists and Presbyterians. Typical of early 19th century La Crosse churches, members met in homes or rented commercial spaces. Although they shared meeting spaces, the arrangement between the Baptists and Congregationalists soon dissolved; the two denominations continued through time however, to be aware and appreciative of their shared heritage.<sup>133</sup>

The current building at 1209 Main Street represents the fourth house of worship for the church. The initial building was located on the old courthouse square at the corner of 4th and State Streets. Subsequent buildings were lost to fire; the third church, constructed at the current site in 1871, was reconstructed after an 1881 fire and served the congregation until the construction of the current building.

Designed by local architect Harry Schroeder of Hackner, Schroeder and Associates, the church and education wing was dedicated in January of 1962. According to the *La Crosse Tribune*, in 1960, then pastor Reverend Harbold made a to-scale model of the new church including interior spaces. The article also noted that he had photographed all stages of the building's progress. These important historic artifacts it is hoped, are still housed at the church.<sup>134</sup>

---

<sup>132</sup> "Faith Baptist Church, (proposed)," *La Crosse Tribune*, July 23, 1960.

<sup>133</sup> "150 Years of Faith: Two La Crosse Churches Plan Anniversary Events," *La Crosse Tribune*, Nov 12, 2002.

<sup>134</sup> "Rev. Ferre to Speak at Dedication," *La Crosse Tribune*, Jan 21, 1962; "First Baptist Pastor Makes Miniature of New Church," Nov 13, 1960.

### **ASSEMBLY OF GOD (now La Crosse Christian Church) (535 South 16th St)**

The La Crosse Assembly of God church was featured with a captioned photograph in a 1942 as one of the "churches of La Crosse," in the *La Crosse Tribune*. The church, a frame gable roofed building featured simple gothic arched windows, a frame projecting gable roof bell tower above the main entrance and a small gable roof main entrance vestibule. By 1945 the congregation had tripled in membership to warrant construction of a new building to be constructed on land purchased from the Phillips Estate. Ground was broken for the new church in 1956; and construction by church members and pastor was likely completed in 1957. Designed by architect John Wolf of Shawno, Wisconsin, the church measures 89 by 48 feet, and is a gable roofed structure trimmed with Lannon stone, with a small flat roofed entrance portico and a small side gable roof entrance. The width of the gable front building, foreshadows the A frame style that would be popular in the following decade.<sup>135</sup>

## **CONGREGATIONAL**

### **First Congregational Church (2503 Main Street)**

As described above, the First Congregational, along with First Baptist (1209 Main Street) were the first churches established in La Crosse during the 1850's. The two churches were organized at the same meeting on January 22, 1852. As noted previously, the two congregations, along with Presbyterians soon departed from shared worship spaces to construct their own buildings. By 1855 the Congregational church built the first of three churches in its history. The first frame building located on Market Square was used until the second church was built at Seventh and Main streets in 1870. The second church was a large brick neo Gothic style building with a circular rose window. The second church, with an addition in 1931 was in use until the present building was constructed. Due to a wind storm in 1949 and previously unknown structural problems the church was condemned by state and local officials.<sup>136</sup>

---

<sup>135</sup> "Pastor Helps Build Church; Assembly of God to Have New Structure," *La Crosse Tribune* Dec 5, 1948; "Ground to be Broken for New Church," June 12, 1956.

<sup>136</sup> Op cit, Hessel and Hollnagel, 2007, pp. 398-399. "Congregational Church Founded Here in 1852," *La Crosse Tribune*, Sept. 13, 1953; "Burned out Light Bulb Provided Tip Resulting in New Church," March 4, 1951.



## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

Until funds could be raised for a new church the congregation met in a school, fraternal hall and other churches. Architect Carl Schubert, a member of the church and partner in the local firm Boyum, Schubert and Sorensen was selected to design the new building in January, 1952. Ground was broken in the fall of 1952. Materials from the old church such as pews, carpeting, and stained glass were either salvaged or sold if possible. According to historian Charles Haas, the congregation, like many Postwar denominations was faced with the decision to build in either a traditional or a contemporary style. Haas, in his history of the church, noted that the "sentiment for building classic lines of the Georgian style was strong."<sup>137</sup>



**First Congregational Church, 2503 Main St., La Crosse Tribune photo, November 26, 1960**

A special meeting was held on September 20, 1951 where architects Carl Schubert and Edwin Eckert presented three design options: 1) Georgian Colonial; 2) Contemporary with a bell tower to accommodate the old bell; and 3) Contemporary without a bell tower. Voting by ballot

---

<sup>137</sup> Charles Haas, *Bless the Work of Our Hands: A History of the First Congregational Church of La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1852-1972*. P. 86

resulted in 112 members in favor of a contemporary design, 57 for traditional; the vote was unanimous for no bell tower.<sup>138</sup>

The new church was dedicated in the fall of 1953 and was described by the *La Crosse Tribune* as a "departure from the traditional" with its "flat roof multi-level appearance." Haas, in his church history noted that the design was "enhanced by the skillful use of building materials which emphasized the natural colors and textures of the bricks, stones, tiles and woods used in the narthex and sanctuary."<sup>139</sup> Haas also noted that a photographer from *Time* magazine had been in La Crosse to photograph the church for inclusion in the Sept. 1955 issue on Postwar churches, cited above; the church however, was not included.<sup>140</sup>

### JEWISH

#### **Congregation Sons of Abraham** (1820 Main Street)

The Sons of Abraham synagogue, constructed in 1948, was included in the 1996 survey of La Crosse although it was not yet 50 years old. The building is therefore included in the present survey due to its previous identification and historic integrity.

A Hebrew Indigent, Sick and Burial Society formed in La Crosse in 1857 and in 1878 became the Congregation Anche Chesed which met in homes and other locations until a synagogue was built on 5th Street between Kind and Main.<sup>141</sup> The congregation later met at 216 North 11th Street until it purchased the Main Street site and constructed the present building. Designed by Boyum, Shubert and Sorensen of La Crosse, the brick flat roofed Modernistic building measures 86 by 50 feet with wings. A raised central core main entrances features a recessed doorway flanked by stone panels with the Ten Commandments in English and Hebrew.<sup>142</sup>

---

<sup>138</sup> Ibid, pp 88-89.

<sup>139</sup> "Three Services Mark New First Congregational Church," *La Crosse Tribune* Sept. 13, 1953. Haas, 1984, p. 98.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid, p 98.

<sup>141</sup> Hessel and Hollnagel, 2007, p. 399.

<sup>142</sup> "New Synagogue Will be Modernistic in Style," *La Crosse Tribune*, Aug 10, 1947.

### METHODIST

#### **St. Luke's Methodist** (1022 Caledonia Street)

Similar to other early 19th century La Crosse churches, St. Luke's experienced the need for a new building in the 20th century. Established in the mid 1850s, the church, as other early La Crosse denominations, met in houses and other spaces until a building was constructed in 1867 at the Caledonia Street location. The first frame church building was remodeled and expanded in 1886 and again in 1917 to a frame cross gable roof building with a square bell tower. The congregation expanded with mergers with other churches--the North Side German Methodist and North Side Norwegian congregations and changed its name to the Caledonia Street Methodist Episcopal Church.<sup>143</sup> The church building served until the late 1940s when it was revealed that termite damage had severely compromised the foundation. On Palm Sunday 1949, beams in the basement began cracking; although steel beams were later added plans for a new church began immediately.

Typical of many Postwar churches in La Crosse a phased building plan was implemented. Architect Harry Schroeder of Hackner, Schroeder and Associates of La Crosse (they also designed the First Baptist Church, above) was selected for the phased development to include educational wing, offices, fellowship hall, and sanctuary in a connected one story building.<sup>144</sup> The first unit of construction was completed in 1959 as a one story flat roofed building with horizontal bands of windows, faced with Indiana limestone. The A frame sanctuary, connected to the 1959 building was completed in 1963. The 42 by 88 foot building featured a stained glass window in the gable end and its interior was described as "contemporary Gothic." The building continued to serve the congregation until 2013 when St. Luke's merged with the Asbury United Methodist church to become Faith United Methodist Church. The 1959-1963 building continues to be used for outreach such as a food pantry and for educational purposes.<sup>145</sup>

---

<sup>143</sup> "Bad Foundation Source of New Church Building," *La Crosse Tribune*, April 29, 1978; "St. Luke's Methodist Church, 1022 Calendonia Street." Oct 15, 1960.

<sup>144</sup> "St. Luke's Methodist Church 1022 Caledonia Street" *La Crosse Tribune*, Oct 15, 1960.

<sup>145</sup> "Cornerstone Rites at Church to be Sunday," *La Crosse Tribune*, June 6, 1958; "St. Luke's Church Building Program Totals \$300,000," Feb. 10, 1963; "I Know We've Got to Do it: Church Merger Evokes Sadness, Optimism," Aug 1, 2013.

## PRESBYTERIAN

### First Presbyterian Church (233 West Avenue South)

The Presbyterian Church was one of the congregations established in La Crosse in the mid-19th century. A church was constructed at 6th and King Streets until it outlived its usefulness; plans for a new building began soon after World War II. The contract for the new building was given to Lang and Raugland, a Minneapolis architectural firm, in 1950. The new church would be located on the former Cargill property on West Avenue, constructed of Lannon stone with Mankato stone trim, in "clean, modern, functional lines, with a simplicity and beauty to mark it as one of the outstanding examples of church architecture," in the area. An architectural sketch which appeared in the *La Crosse Tribune* indicated a gable roofed rectangular shaped building with projecting wings.<sup>146</sup>

In 2000-01 an extensive construction project was undertaken which reoriented the sanctuary, a 2.2 million dollar project which relocated the main entrance from West Avenue to Cass Street, and the addition of a chapel with seating for 100 people.<sup>147</sup> These changes obviously affect the property's potential eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

---

<sup>146</sup> "\$220,000 for Church Voted: Presbyterians Give Nelson Contract," *La Crosse Tribune*, May 4, 1950; sketch, May 7, 1950.

<sup>147</sup> "First Presbyterian Changes With the Times," *La Crosse Tribune*, May 20, 2000; "First Presbyterian Finished With Extensive Renovation," Jan. 27, 2001.

### CHAPTER 9 – RESIDENTIAL

Following the end of World War II and lessening of wartime restrictions in building materials, along with the expansion of freeway systems, and population growth resulted in what has been referred to as the largest building boom in the nation's history.<sup>148</sup> Along with a growth in suburbs, there was an increase in experimentation of new building materials and forms such as prefabrication.

In La Crosse, the national trends were also reflected in Postwar growth, yet a boom in population was relatively minimal due to geographic constraints; suburbanization nonetheless occurred. The city's population increased most dramatically from 1940 to 1950; in 1940 the population was 42,707; in 1950 it was 47,258. This was the most dramatic increase in population during the survey period; no substantial increase occurred from 1950 to 1960; in 1970 the city's population was approximately 50,000.<sup>149</sup>

During the survey period (1950-1975) La Crosse reflected the national trends with construction of new housing in the form of single family homes, apartment buildings, subdivisions, and prefabrication in the form of mobile homes/trailers and several Lustron houses, the increasing rare enameled steel panel prefabs sold from 1949 to 1950. Public housing projects from the period are discussed in the Government chapter; as seasonal dwellings, boathouses are discussed in the Entertainment/Recreation chapter.

The following will discuss the Postwar housing trends in La Crosse followed by discussion of architectural styles, including prefabrication (Lustrons); mobile homes/trailers; subdivisions; and apartment buildings.

#### **Postwar Years: 1946-1954**

Returning veterans and their families were housed in temporary apartments at the former ordnance shop area on Losey Boulevard South. In 1946, 2,036 people toured the apartments

---

<sup>148</sup> David L. Ames and Linda Flint McClelland, "Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places," Washington, D.C. National Park Service, Sept. 2002, p. 65.

<sup>149</sup> Howard Ohm, Hazel Kuehn, Eds. *The Wisconsin Blue Book* 1946, 1955, 1960, 1970. [www.digicoll.library.wisc.edu](http://www.digicoll.library.wisc.edu). Accessed Oct. 20, 2016.

with finished and unfinished units under the auspices of the newly former Housing Authority of La Crosse. The *La Crosse Tribune* reported that between 50 and 60 apartments would be constructed at the site in the near future. As noted above, the decade between 1940 and 1950 witnessed the greatest growth in La Crosse's population during the survey period, with an approximate 5,000 new residents. In early 1955, the *La Crosse Tribune* reported on the number and value of building permits that had been issued by the city in the previous year. It was noted that 91 permits had been issued for new houses at a cost of \$1,424,323. Residential permits issued also included 137 for garages and 175 for remodeling projects.<sup>150</sup>

### **Architectural Styles, Postwar Housing**

Post-World War II residential styles included in the 2002 National Register *Historic Residential Suburbs* Bulletin were limited to the "Suburban Ranch House," its variation of the "Split-level" and the "Contemporary House."<sup>151</sup> Many existing state and local preservation databases are also limited to these styles, in some cases with accommodation for regional or local variations. As survey and documentation continues throughout the country it is expected that these stylistic terms will be expanded and refined for more encompassing definitions to be applied to local and state surveys and National Register nominations.

The following is a discussion of the prevalent terms, general characteristics and potential subtypes based on current scholarship.

### **Suburban Ranch House**

The term "Suburban Ranch House" may be misleading since the style was also built in rural areas as free-standing houses and in urban areas on existing city lots. Nonetheless, the style is typically associated with suburban Postwar development. The style is also referred to as "rambler" and is broadly applied to Postwar housing. The Ranch style represents an evolution from the Minimalist Traditional and earlier, the Prairie School architectural styles and is generally characterized by an emphasis on horizontal lines. Typically Ranch style houses are one story, rectangular in form with low pitched, hipped roofs, wide overhanging eaves with attached one or two stall, or tuck under garages. Other terms commonly used include the raised ranch (a two story house), and the

---

<sup>150</sup> "2,036 View First Housing Units in City," *La Crosse Tribune*, April 29, 1946; Ibid, "1954 Building Permits in City Exceed \$4.2 Million," Jan. 9, 1955.

<sup>151</sup> Op Cit. *Historic Residential Suburbs*," pp. 66-69.



“walk-out” ranch. Variations identified and analyzed by scholars Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings in 2009 include L shaped, U shaped, H shaped, and open gable styles.<sup>152</sup>

Emphasis on horizontality can include the ubiquitous "picture" window on the main façade along with smaller ribbon or rectangular shaped windows that sometimes wrap around the corners. Siding material can include wood, clapboard, aluminum, brick or stone facing, or combinations of those materials. Ranch houses often feature integral planters on the main façade, typically near the main entrance, constructed of brick or stone. Other exterior features can include a prominent brick or stone pylon exterior chimney; located asymmetrically along the roof, or flush to a side elevations. Ranch style houses are also characterized by the lack of a traditional front porch; some examples, however, feature wide, recessed arcaded porches beneath the roof overhang. Walk out ranches maintain the appearance of a one story house but include a lower level area which leads to the back yard. The walk out form is often undetectable from the street/main facade particularly given the absence of alleyways in most Postwar subdivisions.

### **Split Level**

As noted above, the *Historic Residential Suburbs National Register Bulletin* included the split level as a variation on the Ranch style house. Split level houses, similar to the Ranch style described previously is a term used to broadly define a style which includes variations such as the bi or tri-level and the raised ranch. Split level houses are characterized by a split foyer leading from a main entrance to upper and lower living zones. Similar to the Ranch style exterior materials can include wood, steel, aluminum, prominent brick chimneys and tuck-under garages. Exterior finishes can include "colonial" or "swiss" details such as columns and "fachwork."<sup>153</sup>

### **Contemporary**

The third house style identified in the *Historic Residential Suburbs bulletin* was categorized as Contemporary. According to Ames and McClelland, the contemporary house grew out of and was influenced by work of architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius, Mies Van der Rohe

---

<sup>152</sup> Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, *American Vernacular Buildings and Interiors 1870-1960*, New York, W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2009, pp. 209-217. Thomas C. Hubka, *Houses Without Names: Architectural Nomenclature and the Classification of America's Common Houses*. Knoxville, The University of Tennessee Press, 2013, pp.85-86.

<sup>153</sup> Op cit. Ames and McClelland, 2002, pp. 66-67; Gottfried and Jennings, 2009, pp. 219-220.

and other "modernists." Characteristics of the style include modern materials such as glass steel, and concrete, cantilevered forms, and the integration of interior and exterior living spaces.<sup>154</sup>

### **PREFABRICATION**

#### **Lustrons**

Lustron houses are porcelain enamel, steel panel pre-fabricated dwellings that were assembled in a Columbus, Ohio factory then shipped to building sites throughout the country. The Lustron Corporation existed from 1947 to 1951; and today (2018) approximately 2,000 houses remain nationwide, out of approximately 5,000 originally manufactured and built. Unique in Postwar prefabrication, Lustrons were entirely constructed of porcelain enameled steel panels and components--both interior and exterior. The houses, available in exterior pastel colors of blue, pink, yellow, and gray were one story, rectangular in form with low pitched gable roofs, recessed front porch/entrance areas, and available in two or three bedroom models. One story detached garages were also available, also constructed of porcelain enamel in the exterior house colors.



**Lustron House at 751 22<sup>nd</sup> St. N., built ca. 1950**

---

<sup>154</sup> Ibid, pp. 67-68.

La Crosse had six Lustron houses erected between 1947 and 1951 when the Lustron Corporation declared bankruptcy. The houses are located at: 1211 Bluff Street; 4514 Mormon Coulee Road; 2011 Park Avenue; 7512 2nd Street North; 2215 State Road; and 1830 Losey Boulevard.<sup>155</sup>

### **Mobile Homes/Trailers**

A far more prevalent form of Postwar housing than the Lustron house was the rise of prefabrication in the form of mobile homes, or to some, the more pejorative term, "trailers". As cultural geographer J. B. Jackson has noted, mobile homes have had a long tradition in America that reflect a tradition of mobility and short term occupancy.<sup>156</sup> The mobile home or trailer had its origins as travel trailers, house trailers to more permanent manufactured housing. Historian Allan D. Wallis in his 1991 seminal work, *Wheel Estate: The Rise and Decline of Mobile Homes* noted the affordability of mobile homes but also the social bias against such dwellings. Wallis notes that during the post-World War II era mobile homes came into prominence with 500,000 units in 1950 to over 700,000 by the mid-1950s.<sup>157</sup>

Both manufacturers and the government recognized the potential of mobile homes as a portable, affordable year round housing, or as permanent factory built housing. As mobile home parks or courts came into existence, especially after World War II, zoning and other local restrictions typically regulated them to commercial and industrial areas. In the early 1950s the Federal Housing Administration developed regulations regarding the density, for example 18 units per acre, and lot sizes, e.g. 1,250 square feet with a recommended 15 feet between units. The Mobile Home Manufacturer's Association (MHMA) later known as the Manufactured Housing Institute provided site plans and landscaping recommendations for permanent parks/courts.<sup>158</sup>

A recent (2014) graduate thesis by Parker Clifton Lawrence in the historic preservation program at the University of Georgia provided a history of the mobile home in America, the rise of "trailer parks" or courts and sought to determine their eligibility to the National Register of Historic

---

<sup>155</sup> H. Ward Jandl, "Lustron: The All-Metal Dream House," in *Yesterday's Houses of Tomorrow: Innovative American Homes, 1850-1950*. Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1991, pp. 183-199. Op. Cit: Hessel and Hollnagel, 2007, pp. 598-599.

<sup>156</sup> John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*, Yale University Press, New Haven, Ct, 1984, p. 101.

<sup>157</sup> Allan D. Wallis, *Wheel Estate: The Rise and Decline of Mobile Homes*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, pp. 96, 178-179.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.* p. 180.

Places. Utilizing the Register's seven aspects of integrity as applied to mobile home parks Lawrence stated that to be eligible, like any other resource, the parks would have to exhibit several aspects of integrity. For mobile home parks this would include age of individual units, integrity of site plans, e.g. spacing of units, and retention of circulation systems, playground areas, and the presence of original features such as office or community buildings.<sup>159</sup>

In La Crosse, the Riverview Court, with space for 72 units (with most of the original trailers in place) dating circa 1955, appears to retain several aspects of integrity including similar size, design and manufacturer of the mobile homes, small lot size, and a planned street pattern between mobile homes, but the court appears to be one of the earliest trailer courts in La Crosse, and retains a high degree of integrity with many of the single-wide metal trailers dating from the mid-1950s, including the half-sized office trailer. The layout of the trailer park, with its small lot sizes, street configuration, small off-street parking for one, and abutting the Black River on the west side, gives insight into early trailer parks in not just La Crosse, but possibly Wisconsin and the upper Midwest. Therefore, with more research, the Riverview Court Mobile Home Park may meet Criterion A for historical significance to be listed on the National Register.

### **SUBDIVISIONS**

At the beginning of 1956 the *La Crosse Tribune* published an extensive article listing the then current and proposed subdivisions noting that an anticipated 1,666 building lots could be available in the future. The article by staff writer James Holmund called the city's residential development "picture....tremendous and far sighted."<sup>160</sup> A reported 21 subdivision and development areas were cited; many at the beginning of 1956 were not yet within the city limits. The following discussion, organized alphabetically, is limited to the subdivisions that are currently within the city limits; as could be expected some of the proposed developments were not built, or not as fully as originally proposed. Subdivisions were also planned and built or partially built in the mid to late 1960s. Though none of these subdivisions currently meet criteria to be listed as National Register districts, future research may show that some of them do.

---

<sup>159</sup> Parker Clifton Lawrence, "Home Sweet Mobile Home Park: Developing a Historic Context for a Modern Resource," University of Georgia, Athens, Master of Arts thesis, Historic Preservation, 2014, pp. 121-135.

<sup>160</sup> James O. Holmund, "Farsighted Residential Development Program Expected to Make 1,666 Building Lots Available Here in Near Future," *La Crosse Tribune*, Jan. 2, 1956.

Subdivisions known to date which fit within the survey area and time period are discussed below, listed alphabetically.

**Cliffside Park Addition:** Located near the La Crosse County Home at 3501 Park Lane Dr., the Cliffside Park Addition was begun in 1954; two years later at least seven homes were under construction. The 30 acre subdivision, according to the *La Crosse Tribune* had a potential for 59 lots with an additional 100 acres to be platted south of the La Crosse County Home.<sup>161</sup>

**Cliffwood Heights Addition:** The Cliffwood Heights Addition, located north of the Bluffview Addition was located on the former Sidney Seller farm and consisted of 40 acres with 117 building lots and was under construction in early 1956.<sup>162</sup>

**Hiawatha Islands:** (north of Clinton Street with Nokomis Ave bisecting)

Developed between 1963 and 1967 with three additions during that period, and a fourth proposed, the subdivision consisted of 97 lots in 1967 which contained 16 houses. Development of the areas required dredging and the construction of a 25 foot long bridge crossing a canal connecting the Black River with Richmond Bay.<sup>163</sup>

**Hoeschler Addition:** (near Cliffwood Bluff): Another development by the prolific Hoeschler Realty Company was announced on the site of the former Salzer farm with an area of 40 acres, 117 lots. In early 1956 it was described as "close to the city and not named yet."<sup>164</sup>

**McLoone's Hillside Addition:** (East of 28th Street along front slopes of Grandad Bluff)

A subdivision planned and constructed beginning in 1955 was the McLoone Hillside Addition promoted by the Bluffside Corporation headed by Mrs. J.E. McLoone. The 40 lots of varying dimensions would be located east of 28th Street along the front slopes of Grandad's Bluff approximately 500 feet along the bluff road, east of 28th Street. According to Mrs. McLoone, the subdivisions would have two short streets with "turn-a rounds" [cul-de-sacs] and one long

---

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> "Hiawatha Area 3rd Addition is Planned," *La Crosse Tribune*, April 22, 1967.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

avenue from Cass on the south to Grandad's Bluff Road on the north. It was anticipated that split level houses would be built along the upper drive.<sup>165</sup>

**Sherwood Manor Addition:** A development proposed near the end of the survey period in 1969, again by James (Jake) Hoeschler, was Sherwood Manor, intended to be a "high quality residential development" that would also be affordable. The 80 acre site would have an "architectural control committee to impose restrictions on minimum construction value and style of houses. The proposed development would also have a "Robin Hood motif" carried out in street names such as Maid Marion, Will Scarlet, Nottingham, and Sherwood Forest. To date [2018] it has not been determined how much of the area was developed or how many houses were built, but some of the "Robin Hood" themed street names remain.<sup>166</sup>

### APARTMENTS

As noted in Gwendolyn Wright's *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America*, not all housing needs were fulfilled during the Postwar suburban building boom. There was a need she argued, for a middle ground between suburban sprawl and urban high-rises, resulting in the concept of "clustered housing". In the 1960s developers began supporting medium density, multi-family housing. Apartments and townhouses were grouped in planned residential communities which could also include play grounds, swimming pools and communal space. Wright noted that between 1963 and 1973 nearly 20 million new dwellings were built in the United States and that there was a "notable" decline in conventional single family housing.<sup>167</sup>

These national trends in non-single family housing would be reflected in La Crosse during the 1950-1975 survey period. In 1960 the *La Crosse Tribune* reported that although the 134 single family homes had been built in the previous year, the number did not equal the building boom of the immediate Postwar period. The paper noted that construction since 1960 had increased but would likely slow and that apartment construction however, was "booming." The increase was partly attributed to interest rates and lending and also because of a lack of land for home

---

<sup>165</sup> "Addition Being Developed at Foot of Grandad Bluff," *La Crosse Tribune*, Aug 2, 1955.

<sup>166</sup> "Local Development Group Starts Grading for Residential Area," *La Crosse Tribune*, Feb. 3, 1969.

<sup>167</sup> Gwendolyn Wright, *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1981, pp. 259-260.



construction within the city.<sup>168</sup> One of the most notable apartment buildings was a multi-story building constructed near downtown, the Elliott Arms.

### **Elliott Arms Apartment Building (804 Cass Street)**

When proposed, the Elliott Arms Apartment Building required zoning amendments for height to construct an eight story, 103 unit "modern" building. Designed by architect F. J. Hinton of Milwaukee, work began in 1950. In addition to its height, the Arms was new for La Crosse with its modern design and proximity to downtown. The units included eight efficiencies, 16 two bedrooms and 79 one bedrooms.

Work on the Elliott Arms, or Cass Street apartments as it was then known, began in 1950; the apartments would open in 1952, described as the "largest project for housing ever undertaken in the city and that it was "most modern," in the "metropolitan manner with clean, uncluttered modern lines." The completed building was brick with stone sills, and a marble faced main entrance, lobby with office area including an onsite manager and a 24 hour attendant.<sup>169</sup> The Elliott Arms Apartment Building appears to meet the criteria under Criterion A for history and Criterion C for architecture to be individually listed on the National Register.

### **Hillview Home Apartments: (near site of Hillview Home)**

The national trend in planned multi-family developments as cited above, was seen in La Crosse with the construction of the Hillview Apartment complex. The development which received approval in 1965, was bounded to the north by Funk Road, east by Cliffside Park addition and south by the Green meadows Addition. Hillview began with 64 units in four apartment buildings, with 24 units to be added in three townhouses on a 26 acre site. Hillview was introduced as a "new concept in apartment building in La Crosse... a planned development with buildings spread over a large area." The two story flat roofed buildings would include basements, a patio or balcony, 1.5 bathrooms, and brick construction.<sup>170</sup>

---

<sup>168</sup> "Residential Construction Booms," *La Crosse Tribune*, May 17, 1960.

<sup>169</sup> "Estimated at \$900,000 by Dr. Hoeschler; Eight and Cass Site Selected. 8 Man Corporation Organized," *La Crosse Tribune*, Jan. 18, 1950; "103 Units in Apartment at Eighth, Cass," June 15, 1952.

<sup>170</sup> "Hillview Area Apartment Project Beginning This Week," *La Crosse Tribune*, May 4, 1966; "Planned Development Concept of Apartments Introduced Here," Jan. 8, 1967; Apartment Housing Near Hillview Okayed," May 21, 1965.

### **Apartment Building** (1003 Zeisler St.)

In 1968 a proposed apartment building at 1003 Zeisler Street was announced as having features that would be "offered for the first time to the residents of our city." Constructed by the Wernecke-Gerard Development Corporation, the three story flat roofed building would have 78 units in a masonry building with brick veneer and stone trim. Amenities new to the city's apartment as noted in the *La Crosse Tribune* included underground parking, an indoor pool with a "recreation area" including saunas.<sup>171</sup>

- For Public Housing, see Government chapter.

---

<sup>171</sup> "Apartment Building to Go Up on Jail Site," *La Crosse Tribune*, Mar. 19, 1968.

## CHAPTER 10 – SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTS, BUILDERS & DEVELOPERS

The following describes architects, architectural firms, builders and developers who played a significant role in shaping La Crosse during the 1950-1975 survey period. The list includes firm names and individuals in various permutations with dates; many firms merged and changed through the period, adding principals and associates. The list is no doubt incomplete; future research will likely yield additional individuals and firms along with associated resources.

### **Boyum, Schubert & Sorenson (1939-1953)**

Boyum, Shubert & Associates practiced from 1928 to 1954 with offices in both Winona, Minnesota and La Crosse. Benjamin O. Boyum (1884-1954) was a Minnesota native who graduated from the University of Minnesota with a civil engineering degree. A draftsman with Long & Long, and Long & Lamoreax in Minneapolis, he later opened private practices in Canada and in his hometown of Peterson Minnesota.<sup>172</sup>

Until Boyum's death in 1954, the firm was responsible for the following buildings during the survey period:

Congregation Sons of Abraham (1820 Main Street), 1948. Although two years prior to the survey period of 1950-1975, the synagogue was identified during the previous 1996 survey and is also included here.

Other significant Religious buildings during Boyum's tenure with what would later become Schubert Sorenson & Associates, include the St. Dominic's Monastery (3000 South Avenue), 1953; the education wing of Our Savior Lutheran Church (612 Division Street) in 1951; a portion of the Our Redeemer Church complex in 1951; and the First Congregational Church (2503 Main Street) in 1952. (See Religion chapter for more information regarding the buildings associated with the firm).

The firm also was also responsible for Wilder Dormitory (not extant) in 1951 on the University of Wisconsin La Crosse campus. For more information on this building, see the Education chapter. As

---

<sup>172</sup> Carolyn Nelson, compiler, "La Crosse Architects: A Checklist of Architects in the City of La Crosse from 1853 to 1973," General Editor, Edwin L. Hill. University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, Murphy Library, Area Research Center Checklist Series Number 2, 1977, unnumbered pages.

## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

noted below, following Boyum's death, the firm with name changes and additional principals continued to contribute to the built environment of La Crosse as described below.

**Schubert, Sorenson & Associates (1955-1960); Schubert, Carl W. & Associates (1961-1973); Schubert, Schroeder & Associates (1971-1973).**

As described above Boyum, Schubert, & Associates received the commission for the First Congregational Church. Church member Carl Schubert was principal architect. As noted in the Religion chapter, the congregation voted to decide on a traditional style or contemporary. Working with Schubert the congregation voted for a modern style, reflective of national trends; the church was photographed, but not included in a 1955 *Time* magazine article on Postwar churches in America.<sup>173</sup>

Following the death of Boyum in 1954 the firm continued as Schubert, Sorenson & Associates, Schubert, Carl W and Associates and finally Schubert, Schroeder & Associates until the retirement of Schubert in 1973. Significant buildings by the firm and its various permutations between 1954 and 1973 include the following:

- Erickson Park, Site plan (1324 Thompson Street) in 1955.
- Our Redeemer Lutheran Church complex, addition (2135 Weston Street) in 1958;
- Cartwright Center at the University of Wisconsin La Crosse in 1959-1964
- Birch School [now Josephine Hintgen] (3503 28th Street) in 1967-1968;
- Fire Department Headquarters (726 5th Street) in 1965-1966.

(For more information on the buildings cited above see the Recreation/Entertainment chapter, Religion chapter., Education chapter, and Government chapter.)

**Robert B. Hackner, Architect (1953-1958)**

**Hackner, Schroeder & Associates (1958-1969);**

**Hackner, Schroeder, Roslansky & Associates (1969-1974);**

**HSR Inc. (c.1975 to present)**

---

<sup>173</sup> Charles Haas, *Bless the Work of Our Hands: A History of the First Congregational Church of La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1852-1972*. First Congregational Church of La Crosse, 1984.

## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

One of the most prolific and influential firms during the 1950-1975 period was Hackner, Schroeder & Associates and its later permutation as Hackner, Schroeder, Roslansky & Associates. Each of the principals--Robert Hackner and Harry Schroeder--were involved in significant designs during the period; together with their firm which still exists as HSR Inc., they had a tremendous impact on La Crosse's built environment during the survey period with major commissions for churches and government buildings including public housing.

Robert Hackner who formed the firm in 1953 would be significantly associated with La Crosse public housing, designing many of the projects listed below. According to the history of the La Crosse Housing Authority, Hackner developed a regional expertise in similar projects, designing approximately 5,000 units in three states valued at more than \$375 million, including \$60 million for the city of La Crosse.<sup>174</sup> Projects attributed to Hackner include the Schuh Homes, Stoffel Court, Mullen Homes, and Becker Plaza. (For more information on public housing projects associated with Hackner, or Hackner, Schroeder & Associates, and Hackner, Schroeder, Roslansky & Associates see the Government chapter.)

Harry Schroeder joined the firm in 1958 and would be principal architect for the design of the La Crosse County building (1965), City Hall (1970), and the Main Library (1967).

Other buildings attributed to Hackner, Schroeder, Roslansky & Associates which continues to work in the La Crosse area as HSR, Inc. include the following:

- Thomas More Catholic Church, School, and Rectory, (2006 Weston) 1959
- The La Crosse Home for Children (2505 Weston), 1963 and 1976 addition;
- The Newman Center, (1732 State Street), University of Wisconsin La Crosse, 1964
- Faith Lutheran Church (1407 Main Street), 1966

The firm designed its own office building at 100 Milwaukee Street in 1972 which was described by the *La Crosse Tribune* as a "low slung concrete and glass building."<sup>175</sup>

### **Jake Hoeschler/Hoeschler Realty** (c.1950-present)

James "Jake" Hoeschler was part of a family owned business, originally as a pharmacy in downtown La Crosse. Along with, brother Frank, as well as their uncle, by the 1950s the company

---

<sup>174</sup> Hessel, Susan, *We Need a Roof Over Our Heads: The Story of the La Crosse Housing Authority*, p.77

<sup>175</sup> Reid Magney, "Architecture Firm Celebrates 50th Anniversary," *La Crosse Tribune*, Oct 22, 2006.

had expanded into real estate and development. Hoeschler formed a corporation to construct the Elliott Arms (originally the Cass Street Apartments at 804 Cass Street), the first of its type in La Crosse.

As realtors and developers the Hoeschlers were innovative in terms of using the newly emergent medium of television. The firm was also innovative in employing female agents. Jake was quoted in the *La Crosse Tribune* as saying "...don't kid yourself--it's the woman who buys the home; she's the one we have to satisfy. The man just takes care of the finances." He also noted that having women on the sales forces "gives us a well-balanced team."<sup>176</sup>

After several moves in the downtown area, in 1970 Jake Hoeschler designed and built a one story stone faced, flat roofed office building located, according to the *La Crosse Tribune*, in the "heart of the New Civic Center," at 224 North 6th Street.<sup>177</sup>

### **Peter Nelson and Son (1890-2013)**

Peter Nelson and Son was a third generation family business in La Crosse started in 1890 by Peter Nelson. Orval, the third generation became president of the company in 1954. A graduate of La Crosse High School, he worked in an architectural firm and steel company in Chicago before joining the family business in the 1930s. During the period of the current survey (1950-1975) the Nelson firm was contractor projects such as the Mary E. Sawyer Auditorium (non-extant), the La Crosse County Courthouse, and City Hall. The 122 years of contribution to the built environment of La Crosse came to an end in 2013 when the firm closed.<sup>178</sup>

---

<sup>176</sup> "Fastest Growing in State," *La Crosse Tribune*, Nov. 14, 1954.

<sup>177</sup> "A Quarter Century in Real Estate and Going on Our 100th Year," *La Crosse Tribune*, July 4, 1976.

<sup>178</sup> David Sedevie, "Orval Nelson of La Crosse: Buildings His Monuments," *La Crosse Tribune*, Jan. 28, 1986; Ibid, "Ex-president of Construction Firm Dies." "Peter Nelson and Son, Inc." *La Crosse Tribune*, Jan. 13, 2013.



## CHAPTER 11 – SIGNIFICANT PERSONS

### **Fred Genz, Sr.**

Fred Genz, Sr. served the La Crosse Fire Department from 1933-1967. He had been appointed as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Chief in 1958, the 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant in 1959, becoming Fire Chief in 1963. He retired as Fire Chief in 1967.

During his time as Chief three new fire stations were built: the headquarters, Fire Station #1 (at Losey and Green Bay streets) as well as Stations # 2 and 3.<sup>179</sup>

### **Gertrude Thurow**

La Crosse Public Library, librarian head, 1953-1975. Gertrude Thurow, during her tenure at the La Crosse Public Library was recognized as Wisconsin Librarian of the Year in 1959. She was instrumental behind pushing for the new, modern library to be constructed on the site of the original library at Eighth and Main streets, starting a library capital campaign in 1964.<sup>180</sup>

### **Bishop John Patrick Treacy (1948-1964)**

Bishop Treacy was the head of the La Crosse Diocese during the time of extensive construction of Catholic properties during the mid-century period. He successfully brought nationally-renowned architects to the city and saw through the construction of many large projects, thus winning him the name “The Builder.”

Catholic Diocese construction projects during Bishop Treacy’s period:

- St. Joseph the Workman Cathedral
- Holy Trinity Seminary
- St. Thomas More Church
- Church of the Blessed Sacrament
- Newman Center at UW-La Crosse

---

<sup>179</sup> “Fire Chief Genz Realized his Goal” *La Crosse Tribune*, May 14, 1967.

<sup>180</sup> Hessel, 288-289.

- St. Dominic's Monastery<sup>181</sup>

(For more information on these buildings, see the Religion chapter).

---

<sup>181</sup> Hessel, p. 407; [www.wikipedia.org/wiki/john\\_patrik\\_treacy](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/john_patrik_treacy) accessed Dec. 21, 2016.

## CHAPTER 12 - BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ames, David L. and Linda Flint McClelland, "Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places," Washington, D.C. National Park Service, Sept. 2002.

Bethel Lutheran Church. *Bethel Lutheran Church 75th Anniversary, 1886-1961*. La Crosse, WI, Bethel Lutheran Church, 1961.

Boettcher and Company, "Official Statement \$4,015,000 City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Corporate Purpose Bonds," La Crosse, WI, Office of Director of Finance, 1968.

Buggeln, Gretchen. *The Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar America*. Minneapolis, MN, University of Minnesota Press, 2015.

City of La Crosse parks dept website <https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/content/407>. Accessed Oct 16, 2016

Crocker, Dr. Leslie F., *Places and Spaces: A Century of Public Buildings, Bridges and Parks in La Crosse, Wisconsin*. La Crosse, WI, self-published, 2012.

[www.dioceseoflacrosse.com](http://www.dioceseoflacrosse.com) accessed 7-13-16.

Doering, Anita Taylor and Bill Peterson, *A Gift to La Crosse: A History of the La Crosse Public Library*, La Crosse, WI, La Crosse Public Library, 1997.

Gilkey, George. *The First Seventy Years: A History of the University of Wisconsin La Crosse, 1909-1979*. La Crosse: University of Wisconsin Foundation, Inc., 1981.

Gottfried, Herbert and Jan Jennings. *American Vernacular Buildings and Interiors 1870-1960*, New York, W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2009.

Haas, Charles. *Bless the Work of Our Hands: A History of the First Congregational Church of La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1852-1972*.

Hancock, John L. "John Nolen," in *American Landscape Architecture, People and Places*. William Tishler, editor. Washington, D.C. Preservation Press, 1989.

## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

Hessel, Susan. *We Need a Roof Over Our Heads: The Story of the La Crosse Housing Authority*, La Crosse Wisconsin, La Crosse Housing Authority, 1998.

Hessel, Susan T. and Gayda Hollnagel. *A History of La Crosse, Wisconsin in the Twentieth Century: Reinventing La Crosse Again and Again*. La Crosse, WI, La Crosse County Historical Society, 2007.

Historic Preservation Commission, Historic Landmark Nomination Form: "La Crosse Boathouses (Copeland West, Copeland East, Copeland North) 58 Total Boathouses." La Crosse, WI: City of La Crosse Planning Department. 2010.

Holmund, James O. "Farsighted Residential Development Program Expected to Make 1,666 Building Lots Available Here in Near Future," *La Crosse Tribune*, Jan. 2, 1956.

Hubka, Thomas C. *Houses Without Names: Architectural Nomenclature and the Classification of America's Common Houses*. Knoxville, The University of Tennessee Press, 2013.

Hurley, Andrew. *Diners, Bowling Alleys and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in the Postwar Consumer Culture*. New York: Perseus Books Group, Basic Books, 2001.

[www.dioceseoflacrosse.com](http://www.dioceseoflacrosse.com). accessed 7-13-16.

*La Crosse Times Review*, 1959-1962.

Jackson, John Brinckerhoff. *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*, Yale University Press, New Haven, Ct, 1984.

Jandl, H. Ward. "Lustron: The All-Metal Dream House," in *Yesterday's Houses of Tomorrow: Innovative American Homes, 1850-1950*. Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1991.

Koeller, Paul D. and David H. DeLano. "Brewed With Style: The Story of the House of Heileman," University of Wisconsin La Crosse Foundation, Inc. R. C. Printing, La Crosse, WI, 2004.

*La Crosse Lutheran Witness*, La Crosse, WI, 1961-1962.

La Crosse Fire Department Centennial Book Committee. *La Crosse Fire Rescue: Legends and Legacies*. La Crosse, WI: La Crosse Fire Department, 1995.

Larson, Margret *For the Common Good: A History of Women's Roles in La Crosse County, 1920-1980*. La Crosse, WI, League of Women Voter's Educational Fund, 1996.

## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

Lathrop, Alan K. *Minnesota Architects: A Biographical Dictionary*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2010.

Lawrence, Parker Clifton. "Home Sweet Mobile Home Park: Developing a Historic Context for a Modern Resource," University of Georgia, Athens, Master of Arts thesis, Historic Preservation, 2014.

Lusignan, Paul R., Judith Robinson, Laura Bobeczko and Jeffrey Shrimpton, "Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949." Multiple Property Documentation Form, Washington, D.C. National Park Service, December 1, 2004.

[www.Newmanconnections.com](http://www.Newmanconnections.com) . Accessed July 31, 2016.

Nudd, Chris. "LCU Food Center Design Winner," *La Crosse Tribune*, Oct. 25, 1969.

Ohm, Howard and Hazel Kuehn, Eds. *The Wisconsin Blue Book* 1946, 1955. 1960, 1970.  
[www.digicoll.library.wisc.edu](http://www.digicoll.library.wisc.edu). Accessed Oct. 20, 2016.

*The Racquet*, University of Wisconsin La Crosse, 1964-1973.

Rausch, Joan and Richard Zeitlin, "City of La Crosse Wisconsin: Architectural and Historical Intensive Survey Report," "Architectural Researches, La Crosse WI, City of La Crosse Planning Department, 1984, 1996.

Robinson, Judith H. and Stephanie S. Foell, Robinson & Associates, Inc. *Growth, Efficiency and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s*. Washington, D.C. U.S. General Services Administration, 2003.

<http://www.RoadsideAmerica.com>. "World's Largest Six Pack," accessed May 26, 2016.

Rosso, Jerome R. "I-90 Development in Campbell: Industrial Park Proposed," *La Crosse Tribune*, Marc 29, 1966.

Stoloff, Jennifer A. "A Brief History of Public Housing," paper presented at the American Sociological Association Conference, San Francisco, August 14, 2004.

University of Wisconsin La Crosse, *The La Crosse Alumnus*, Winter 1976.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La\\_Crosse\\_Wisconsin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Crosse_Wisconsin) accessed 12-22-16

## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

Wallis, Allan D. *Wheel Estate: The Rise and Decline of Mobile Homes*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Wright, Gwendolyn. *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1981.

Wyatt, Barbara. "Integrity Requirements for Settings and Locations of Locomotives and Other Rolling Stock," Washington, D. C. National Park Service, National Register Policy Clarification, April 9, 2009.

.



### CHAPTER 13 – RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Overview**

In the City of La Crosse two previous architectural/historical surveys had been conducted, one in 1984, and another in 1996, both by architectural historian Joan Rausch. In this survey architectural historians/historians Barbara Kooiman and Carol Ahlgren found that 3,259 properties had been previously surveyed in the city of La Crosse, with 66 of those noted as “demolished” in the Wisconsin Historical Society’s Architectural History Inventory (AHI) database. Kooiman and Ahlgren added 235 new properties to the database, but found that of the previously surveyed properties, 256 more had been demolished since the 1996 report.

#### **National Register recommendations**

See the Table A in the appendix. There are 13 individual potentially eligible properties and two (2) proposed historic districts which were added to the inventory which fall into this report’s time period of 1950 to 1975.

These 13 individual properties could be nominated as local landmarks to give them the protection that the city’s historic preservation ordinance provides. This may also give these properties status to utilize city funds, as they are made available, for renovations and rehabilitations. Additionally, with further research, all 13 properties have been pre-screened by Wisconsin Historical Society staff as meeting the National Register criteria.

The three historic districts should be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as well as designated as local overlay districts, as per the La Crosse Historic Preservation Ordinance. Overlay districts in La Crosse have been prepared with historic preservation plans which allow the property owners within the districts to have a voice in how changes, alterations and improvements within the boundaries of the district can be done, with the help of Heritage Preservation Commission oversight. This is a powerful and effective tool in maintaining neighborhoods and specialized districts.

By listing these properties on the National Register, they may qualify for state and federal historic tax credits for rehabilitation. More information on the National Register program and the

historic tax credit program may be found at

<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS15309> .

### **Historic preservation recommendations**

The City of La Crosse has been very progressive concerning historic preservation initiatives for the past 40 years. In about 1976 the first form of the Heritage Preservation Commission was formed. In 1991, the city's historic preservation ordinance had been updated to allow for demolition denial for locally landmarked properties, allowing for dialogue to happen between property owners and preservationists. Despite this strengthening of the historic preservation ordinance, some historically designated properties HAVE been demolished when properties owners have appealed the historic status of their designated properties to the City Council, the Council too frequently allows the repeal of the historic status, thus granting the property owner the ability to apply for a demolition permit. Past examples of this were designated properties including the Michel Brewery Building, the Uhl Row Houses and the Schubert Meat Market, which were designated as historic landmarks, but when their historic status was appealed to City Council, the Council voted in favor of allowing the historic status to be repealed. All three buildings were demolished.

Therefore, one recommendation would be more efforts on the part of the Heritage Preservation Commission and others in the historic preservation community to work more closely with the City Council, helping them to understand the importance of the historic designation status.

The practice of designating overlay districts has been a good tactic for historic preservation in La Crosse. Building on either an existing National Register district, or creating a stand-alone local district, then enables the property owners to devise a historic preservation plan that they create themselves, thus giving them more voice in what happens, not only with their own property, but the properties around them, which affect all of their values and tax base. Thus, a recommendation would be to create more overlay districts based off the results from this survey.

Another recommendation for historic preservation would be to work with the city attorney's office to strengthen parts of the current Historic Preservation Ordinance. Ordinance changes could include:

- Monetary penalties for non-compliance of Certificate of Appropriateness. Make these penalties severe enough to encourage people to comply.
- Making the Certificate of Appropriateness for individually designated landmarks mandatory, rather than recommendation only.
- Create disincentives for allowing properties to deteriorate by neglect. Work more closely with the Inspections Department, especially in residential neighborhoods, to find issues before the building is so deteriorated that the building can no longer be saved. Be proactive.

Education efforts concerning local landmarks should also be continued with the La Crosse community at-large. The Heritage Preservation Commission is encouraged to team up with others in the community interested in the city's built environment, including the La Crosse County Historical Society and Preservation Alliance of La Crosse.

- Provide training and workshops for city council members so they understand how the Historic Preservation ordinance works.
- Provide continued training and education for the Heritage Preservation Commission members, through conferences, workshops and webinars. An education HPC member can be a useful resource in the community.
- Consider collaborating with organizations such as the La Crosse County Historical Society and Preservation Alliance of La Crosse on community outreach education. Topics for outreach could include:
  - Workshops for community members on basic renovation skills
  - Conduct "building fairs" where the community can come to an event venue and speak with contractors, preservationists, historians and historic building property owners about historic preservation topics
  - Provide more programming and education with school children. Perhaps help local educators to provide education units on local historic preservation within the schools or on field trips. Consider having a local school teacher on the HPC as a liaison between the schools and the City's heritage preservation community.
- Prepare information on the economic benefits of historic preservation in La Crosse. Collaborate with the La Crosse Convention and Visitors Bureau and Downtown Mainstreet, Inc. on numbers of heritage preservation tourism dollars our city sees because of past

historic preservation efforts. Use these economic benefit numbers to convince the City Council as well as local investors, bankers and developers of the benefits of renovating and restoring buildings which already exist.

- Take opportunities with the local news media to emphasize the good things that the HPC is doing in the community
- Engage the citizens!

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

#### Tables of Potential National Register Eligible Properties

Table of Potential NRHP eligible properties – individual

AHI #	Property Name	Address	Date built	Additional Information
80116, 80117	Trinity Lutheran Church	1010 Sill St.	1952	The adjacent rectory and school may be eligible as well
236694	Sauber Manor	1025 Liberty St.	1970	Best example of high rise Housing Authority properties.
236696	Exchange State Bank	1300 Copeland Ave.	1963	Excellent example of modern, drive-thru bank
236698	HSR Architects Office Building	100 Milwaukee St.	1972	Modern style office
79951	La Crosse City Hall	400 La Crosse St.	1970	Brutalist style, representative of city government
236700	State Office Building	3550 Mormon Coulee Rd.	1961	Modern style, regional state office building
33133	St. Joseph Cathedral of the Worker	530 Main St.	1960	Modern style Catholic church
33785	St. Thomas More Catholic Church	2006 Weston St.	1959	Modern style Catholic church
34854	Holy Cross Seminary	3710 East Ave. S.	1951	Large, modern style seminary designed by a well known architect
80210	St. Paul's Lutheran Church	420 West Ave. S.	1954-56	Built in three stages, designed by prominent architect
33259	Congregation Sons of Abraham Temple	1820 Main St.	1948	Modern style synagogue
224233	Elliott Arms Apartment Building	804 Cass St.	1950	Modern high rise apartment

**City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975**

236701	Trane Corporation Office Building	1700 Horton St.	1966	Modern industrial style office campus
--------	-----------------------------------	-----------------	------	---------------------------------------

**Table of Potential NRHP eligible properties – districts**

<b>AHI #</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Date built</b>	<b>Additional information</b>
	McDonald Heights Addition Residential Historic District	26 <sup>th</sup> St./Schubert St./Van Loon St./Zephyr Circle	1950s, 1960s	District - 26 houses ranging from split level to one story ramblers and modern styles.
	Schuh Homes	1305 St. James St. with multiple individual building addresses	1959	District – 43 residential buildings, built by the La Crosse Housing Authority, plus Margaret Annett Center, Office and garage – total 46 properties

# McDonald Heights Addition Residential Historic District (proposed)

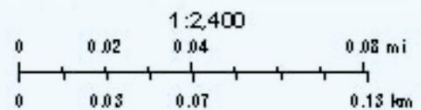


October 15, 2018



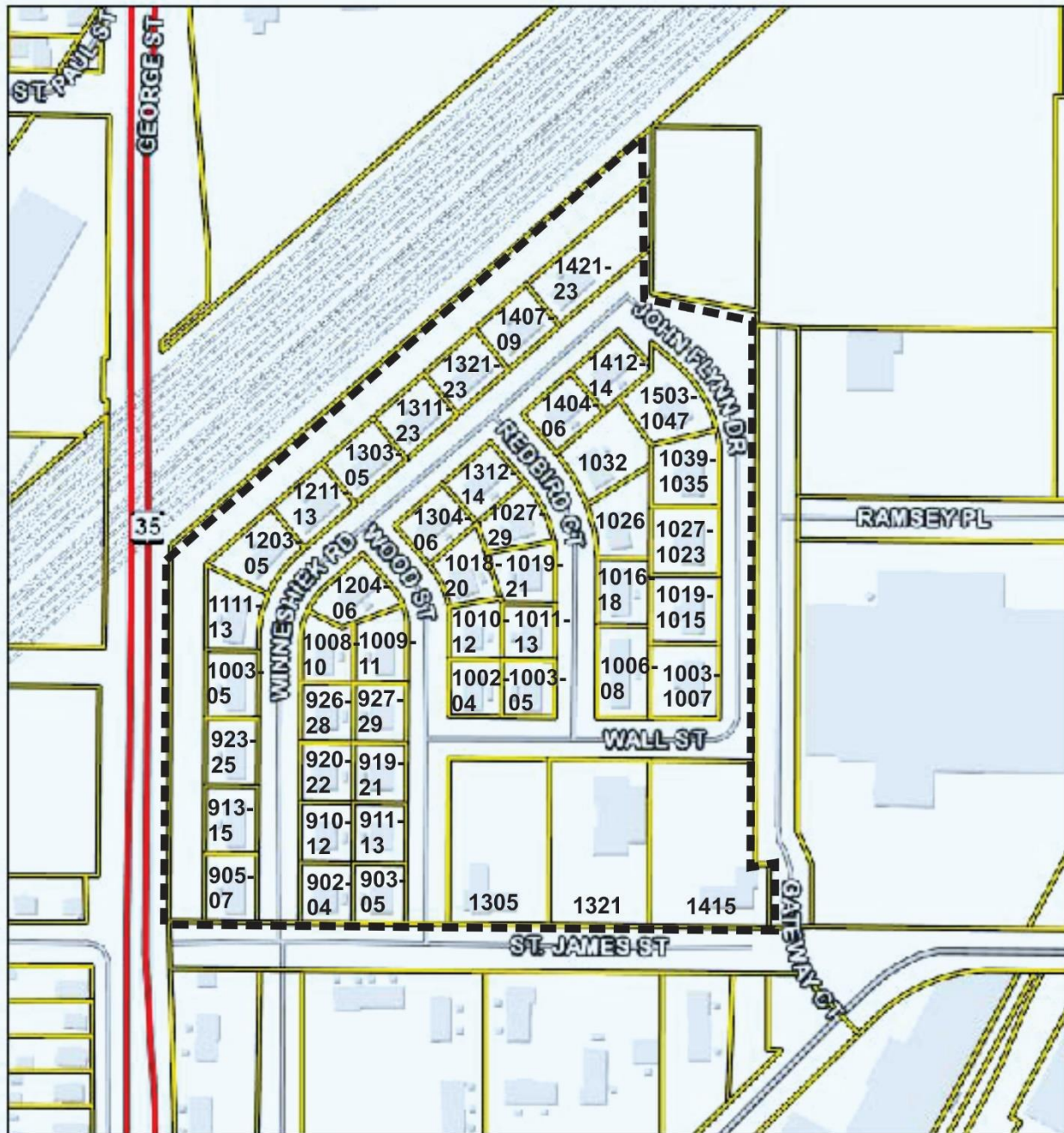
McDonald Heights Addition  
Residential Historic District (proposed)  
26 properties, all contributing

Proposed Boundary - - - - -





# Schuh Homes Historic District (proposed)

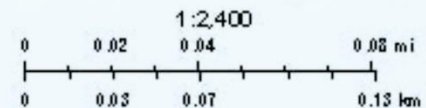


October 15, 2018 Schuh Homes Historic District (proposed)  
46 properties, all contributing



NORTH

Proposed boundary - - - -



## Appendix B

### City of La Crosse Historic Preservation Ordinance, as of July 2018

#### Chapter 20 - HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ARCHEOLOGY<sup>[1]</sup>

Footnotes:

--- (1) ---

**Cross reference**— Buildings and building regulations, ch. 103; zoning, ch. 115.

#### ARTICLE I. - IN GENERAL

##### Sec. 20-1. - Enforcement officers and citations.

The following persons are hereby authorized to enforce the provisions of this chapter and may issue citations as provided for in Wis. Stat. § 800.02(2) for violations of this chapter:

- (1) The Chief of Police.
- (2) The Fire Chief.
- (3) Such other City officers or City employees who are assigned enforcement responsibilities for this chapter.

(Ord. No. [4911](#), § I(attch.), 1-14-2016)

Secs. 20-2—20-20. - Reserved.

#### ARTICLE II. - HISTORIC PRESERVATION<sup>[2]</sup>

Footnotes:

--- (2) ---

**State Law reference**— Historic preservation, Wis. Stat. § 44.30 et seq.

#### DIVISION 1. - GENERALLY

##### Sec. 20-21. - Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

*Certificate of appropriateness* means the certificate issued by the Commission approving an alteration, construction or reconstruction of any property or improvement within a Historic Zoning Overlay District.

*Certificate of appropriateness for demolition* means the certificate issued by the Commission approving the demolition of a historic structure, historic site or demolition of any structure or improvement in a Historic District.

## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

*Certificate of recommendation* means the certificate issued by the Commission approving or disapproving a proposed alteration, construction or reconstruction of a historic structure or historic site. The certificate of recommendation shall be a nonbinding recommendation only.

*Commission* means the Heritage Preservation Commission created under this article.

*Contributing and noncontributing building*. A "contributing building" means a building or structure that contributes to the distinctive architectural or special historic character of a historic district as a whole and, therefore, should be preserved for the benefit of the people of the City and the State, as opposed to a "noncontributing building" which is a building or structure that does not so contribute.

*Historic District or Historic Zoning Overlay District* is an area designated by the Common Council on recommendation of the Commission composed of one or more improvements or sites that is of special character or special historic interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, State or nation and which has been designated as a Historic District pursuant to the provisions of this Code.

*Historic site* means any parcel of land whose historic significance is due to a substantial value in tracing the history of aboriginal people, or upon which a historic event has occurred, and which has been designated as a historic site under this section, or an improvement parcel, or part thereof, on which is situated a historic structure and any abutting improvement parcel used as and constituting part of the premises on which the historic structure is situated.

*Historic structure* means any improvement which has a special character or special historic interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, State or nation and which has been designated as a historic structure pursuant to the provisions of this article.

*Improvement* means any building, structure, or place constituting a physical betterment of real property, or any part of such betterment which has historic significance, exclusive of interior renovation or remodeling.

*Improvement parcel* means the unit of property which includes a physical betterment constituting an improvement and the land embracing the site thereof, and is treated as a single entity for the purpose of levying real estate taxes; provided, however, that the term "improvement parcel" shall also include any unimproved area of land which is treated as a single entity for such tax purposes.

(Code 1980, § 2.27(B))

**Cross reference**— Definitions and rules of construction, § 1-2.

Sec. 20-22. - Penalties for violations.

Any person violating any provision of this article shall be subject to a forfeiture of not less than \$20.00 nor more than \$1,000.00 for each separate violation. Each and every day during which a violation continues shall be deemed to be a separate offense. In addition to other remedies, the proper authorities of the City may institute appropriate action or proceedings to prevent a violation of this article, including injunctive relief.

(Code 1980, § 2.27(I))

**Cross reference**— General penalty for ordinance violations, § 1-7.

Sec. 20-23. - Purpose and intent.

It is hereby declared a matter of public policy that the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of improvements of special character or special historical interest or value is a public necessity and is

required in the interest of health, prosperity, safety and welfare of the people. The purpose of this article is to:

- (1) Effect and accomplish the protection, enhancement, and perpetuation of such improvements which represent or reflect elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political, engineering and architectural history.
- (2) Safeguard the City's historic and cultural heritage, as embodied and reflected in such historic structures, sites and objects.
- (3) Stabilize and improve property values.
- (4) Foster civic pride in the beauty and noble accomplishments of the past.
- (5) Protect and enhance the City's attractions to residents, tourists and visitors, and serve as a support and stimulus to business and industry.
- (6) Strengthen the economy of the City.
- (7) Promote the use of historic structures, sites and objects for the education, pleasure and welfare of the people of the City.

(Code 1980, § 2.27(A))

Sec. 20-24. - Conditions dangerous to life, health or property.

Nothing contained in this article shall prohibit the demolition of any historic structure, or any improvement on a historic site pursuant to order of any governmental agency or pursuant to any court judgment, for the purpose of remedying emergency conditions determined to be dangerous to life, health or property. In such cases, no approval from the Commission shall be required.

(Code 1980, § 2.27(H))

Secs. 20-25—20-51. - Reserved.

DIVISION 2. - HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION<sup>[3]</sup>

Footnotes:

--- (3) ---

**Cross reference**— Boards and commissioners generally, ch. 2, art. X.

Sec. 20-52. - Creation; membership; officers.

- (a) A Heritage Preservation Commission is hereby created, consisting of seven members, all of whom shall be residents of the City. Of the membership, one shall be a Council Member and the remaining members shall be citizens of the City. The Mayor shall appoint the Commissioners subject to confirmation by the Common Council. The Commission may recommend to the Mayor members to be appointed to the Commission. To the extent available in the City, the local government shall appoint a professional member from the disciplines of history, architectural history, architecture, archeology, planning or other historic preservation related disciplines such as urban planning, American studies, American civilization, cultural geography or cultural anthropology. Membership on the Commission shall be for a term of two years. However, the Common Council may remove a member from

appointment if a member has accumulated three or more unexcused absences within one year and the Commission recommends removal. No salary or compensation shall be paid to any member of said Commission for services.

- (b) The Commission shall meet at such times and frequency as may be necessary at a place designated by the Commission Chair. The City Clerk shall provide appropriate notice of the meeting prior to such meeting.
- (c) The Commission shall elect four officers, each to serve the full duration of a term of appointment to the Commission; a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The last two offices may be combined into one office as Secretary-Treasurer, served by one person, at the discretion of the Chair and subject to approval of the entire Commission membership. The duties of the Chair shall be to preside at meetings, to assign projects to members, to call special meetings, to issue public statements for the Commission, and in general to assume the duties of directing the activities of the Commission. The duties of the Vice-Chair shall be to act in the place of the Chair in event of the latter's absence or inability to act. The duties of the Secretary shall be to keep complete and accurate minutes of each meeting. The Secretary shall arrange for a suitable place for each meeting upon instruction from the Vice-Chair. The duties of the Treasurer shall be to keep complete and accurate records and accounting of all funds—income and expenditures of every nature of the Commission. The Treasurer shall also prepare a written statement of recommended expenditures and reasons therefor, to be submitted to the Common Council for approval, such statement to be subject to approval of the Commission's Chair and the Commission membership.

(Code 1980, § 2.27(C))

### Sec. 20-53. - Powers and duties generally.

The Commission shall have the power, subject to sections 20-54, 20-58, 20-91 and chapter 15, article V, division 3, to designate historic structures and historic sites and to recommend designation of historic districts within the City limits. Such designations shall be made based on the criteria in section 20-90 and chapter 15, article V, division 3. Historic districts shall be approved by the Common Council. Once designated, the owner of such historic structure, site, and improvement shall notify any purchasers of such designation and such historic structures, sites, improvements and districts shall be subject to all the provisions of this Code.

(Code 1980, § 2.27(F)(1))

### Sec. 20-54. - Procedures.

In carrying out its duties under this article, the Commission must provide notice and hold public hearing. Prior to designating property as a historic structure or site, the Commission shall notify, in writing, the owners of record, as listed in the City Assessor's Office, of the proposed designation. Such notice shall be by personal delivery or certified mail at least 20 days prior to the public hearing considering the matter. Notice of such hearing shall also be published as a Class 1 Notice under Wisconsin Statutes. These owners shall have the right to confer with the Commission prior to final action by the Commission. Prior to any hearing considering a matter provided for in this article, the Commission shall notify the following: Mayor, Director of Public Works, Redevelopment Authority, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Planning and Development and Council Member in whose district the property is located. Each such department may respond to the Commission within ten days of notification with its comments on the proposed request for action. The Commission shall then conduct such public hearing and, in addition to the notified persons, may hear expert witnesses and shall have the power to subpoena such witnesses and records as it deems necessary. The Commission may conduct an independent investigation into the proposed request for action. Notification of the decision of the Commission to designate or rescind a designation of a historic structure or historic site or to issue any certificate under this article shall be sent to



## City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural/Historical Survey, 1950 to 1975

---

the property owner. Notification shall also be given to the City Clerk, Planning and Development Department, Fire Department-Division of Fire Prevention and Building Safety and City Assessor.

(Code 1980, § 2.27(G)(1); Ord. No. [4911](#), § I(attch.), 1-14-2016)

Sec. 20-55. - Recognition of historic structures, sites and districts.

At such time as a historic structure, site or district has been properly designated, the Commission may cause to be prepared and erected on such property or within such district at City expense, a suitable plaque declaring that such property is a historic structure, site or district. Such plaque shall be so placed as to be easily visible to passing pedestrians. The plaque shall state the name of the historic property, the date of its construction of significance, and other information deemed proper by the Commission.

(Code 1980, § 2.27(F)(4))

Sec. 20-56. - Annual report.

The Commission shall make an annual written report to the Common Council, through the Mayor, with respect to its activities for the preceding year. Such annual report shall be filed with the Council on October 1 of each year.

(Code 1980, § 2.27(D))

Sec. 20-57. - Other duties.

In addition to those duties already specified in this article, the Commission shall:

- (1) Work for the continuing education of the citizens about the historical heritage of this City and the historic properties designated under the provision of this section.
- (2) Cooperate with the State of Wisconsin Historic Preservation Officer and the State Historic Preservation Review Board in attempting to include such properties hereunder designated as historic structures or historic sites, or historic districts in the National Register of Historic Places and the State Register of Historic Places.
- (3) As it deems advisable, receive and solicit funds for the purpose of historic preservation in the City. Such funds shall be placed in a special City account for such purpose.

(Code 1980, § 2.27(F)(5))

Sec. 20-58. - Appeals.

An appeal from any decision of the Commission of any kind, including designation of historical structures, improvements and sites or the refusal to rescind any designation of historical structures or sites may be taken to the Common Council. Such appeal may be initiated by filing a petition to appeal specifying the grounds therefor, with the City Clerk within 30 days of the date of the decision of the Commission which is being appealed. The City Clerk shall file the petition to appeal with the Common Council. The Common Council shall hold a public hearing on the appeal and may by majority vote of its members reverse or modify any decision of the Commission.

(Code 1980, § 2.27(G)(3))

Secs. 20-59—20-89. - Reserved.

DIVISION 3. - HISTORIC STRUCTURES AND SITES

Sec. 20-90. - Historic structures and sites designation criteria.

- (a) For purposes of this article, a historic structure or historic site designation may be placed on any site, natural or improved, including any building, improvement or structure located thereon, or any area of particular historic, architectural or cultural significance to the City of La Crosse such as historic structures or sites which:
  - (1) Exemplify or reflect the broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the nation, State or community;
  - (2) Are identified with historic personages or with important events in national, State or local history;
  - (3) Embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period, style, method of construction, or of indigenous materials or craftsmanship; or
  - (4) Are representative of the notable work of a master builder, designer or architect whose individual genius influenced such master's age.
- (b) The Commission may adopt specific operating guidelines for landmark sites designation providing such are in conformance with the provisions of this article.
- (c) A fee in the amount established by resolution shall be paid by the owner of said property to the City of La Crosse in connection with said historic designation.

(Code 1980, § 2.27(E))

Sec. 20-91. - Voluntary restrictive covenants.

The owner of any historic structure or site may, at any time following such designation of his property, enter into a restrictive covenant on the subject property after negotiation with the Commission. The Commission may assist the owner in preparing such covenant in the interest of preserving the historic property. The owner shall record such covenant in the County Register of Deeds Office, and shall notify the City Assessor of such covenant and the conditions thereof.

(Code 1980, § 2.27(G)(2))

Sec. 20-92. - Regulation of construction, reconstruction or alteration.

- (a) Prior to applying for a permit from the Fire Department - Division of Fire Prevention and Building Safety involving the exterior of a designated historic site or historic structure, an application for a certificate of recommendation shall be filed with the Commission, in the Department of Planning and Development.
- (b) The applicant shall submit a detailed description of the proposed construction, reconstruction or alteration together with any architectural drawings, if those services have been utilized by the applicant, and a sufficient description of the construction or alteration and use to enable the Commission to determine what the final appearance of the structure will be.
- (c) No owner or person in charge of a historic site or historic structure shall construct or alter all or any part of the exterior of such property or construct any improvement upon such designated property or cause or permit any such work to be performed upon such property until a certificate of recommendation has been issued by the Commission. The request for a certificate of recommendation



for such sites shall be accompanied by the payment of a fee in the amount established by resolution. Until such certificate of recommendation has been issued by the Commission, the Fire Department - Division of Fire Prevention and Building Safety shall not issue a permit for any such work.

- (d) Upon filing of any application with the Commission, the Commission shall within 45 days of receipt of the application consider and may give weight, in issuing its certificate of recommendation, to any or all of the following:
- (1) Whether the property will be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
  - (2) Whether the historic character of the property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
  - (3) Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall be discouraged.
  - (4) Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property should be preserved.
  - (5) Deteriorated historic features should be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature should match the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.
  - (6) Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials should not be used. The surface cleaning of historic structures shall be undertaken using the methods promulgated by Department of Safety and Professional Services pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 101.1215.
  - (7) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction should not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work should be differentiated from the old and should be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
  - (8) New additions and adjacent or related new construction should be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.
  - (9) The "Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation" (36 CFR 67 and 68 as amended).
- (e) The Commission shall issue the certificate of recommendation within 45 days of the filing of the application. The certificate of recommendation shall serve as a nonbinding recommendation only. During such period of review, the Commission shall work with the applicant to preserve the historical attributes of any structure or building.
- (f) The issuance of a certificate of recommendation shall not relieve the applicant from obtaining other permits and approvals required by applicable Federal, State or local code. Insofar as they are applicable to a historic site or historic structure designated under this section, any provision of the plumbing code, electrical code, or building or housing code of the City shall apply, unless waived by the appropriate State or City officials. The Commission may support or propose such waivers before the appropriate State or City appeals body.
- (g) Ordinary maintenance and repairs may be undertaken without a certificate of recommendation provided that the work involves repairs to existing features of a historic structure or historic site or the replacement of elements of a structure with materials similar in appearance and provided that the work does not change the exterior appearance of the structure or site and does not require the issuance of a building permit.

(Code 1980, § 2.27(F)(2); Ord. No. [4911](#), § I(attch.), 1-14-2016)

Sec. 20-93. - Regulation of demolition.

- (a) Prior to applying for a permit from the Fire Department - Division of Fire Prevention and Building Safety to demolish all or part of the exterior of a historic structure, historic site, or structure or contributing building in a historic district, an application for a certificate of appropriateness for demolition along with a fee as established by resolution shall be filed with the Commission, in the Department of Planning and Development.
- (b) The Commission may decide to grant the certificate of appropriateness for demolition or refuse to grant such Certificate. If the Commission fails to act on the application for the certificate of appropriateness for demolition within 45 days of the application date, it will be deemed an issuance of a certificate of appropriateness for demolition. During such period, the applicant and the Commission shall cooperate in attempting to avoid demolition of the property.
- (c) In determining whether to issue a certificate of appropriateness for demolition, the Commission shall consider and may give weight to any or all of the following:
  - (1) Whether the building or structure is of such architectural or historic significance that its demolition would be detrimental to the public interest and contrary to the general welfare of the City and the State;
  - (2) Whether the building or structure, although not itself a designated historic structure, contributes to the distinctive architectural or historic character of the district as a whole and therefore should be preserved for the benefit of the City and State;
  - (3) Whether the building or structure is of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture and/or material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty and/or expense;
  - (4) Whether the building or structure is in such a deteriorated condition that it is not structurally or economically feasible to preserve or restore it; provided, however, any hardship or difficulty claimed by the owner which is self-created or which is the result of inexcusable neglect to maintain the property in good repair shall not qualify as a basis for the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness;
  - (5) Whether the denial of the permit would result in the loss of all reasonable and beneficial use of or return from the property.

(Code 1980, § 2.27(F)(3); Ord. No. [4911](#), § I(attch.), 1-14-2016)

Secs. 20-94—20-114. - Reserved.

ARTICLE III. - ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Sec. 20-115. - Purpose and definitions.

- (a) The purpose of this article is to preserve the archaeological resources within the City of La Crosse and to ensure that such resources will be properly considered during development and construction activities occurring within districts or areas considered to be archaeologically significant.
- (b) Archaeological significant resources are defined as follows:
  - (1) Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history.
  - (2) Association with the lives of persons significant in the past.
  - (3) Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master or that possess high artistic values.

- (4) Representation of a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- (5) Yielding, or likely to yield, information important in history or pre-history.

(Code 1980, § 7.07(A))

**Cross reference**— Definitions and rules of construction, § 1-2.

Sec. 20-116. - Penalties.

Violations of this article, including those provisions of the Wisconsin Statutes, Wisconsin Administrative Code, or other materials which are incorporated by reference, are a Class B offense as provided in section 1-7.

(Code 1980, § 7.09(A))

Sec. 20-117. - Archaeological district boundaries.

The boundaries of an archaeological district are as defined by the Common Council or as how they are described in the latest determination of eligibility form for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Copies of a map of the boundaries of Archaeological Districts are on file with the Wisconsin State Historical Society, and the Department of Planning and Development.

(Code 1980, § 7.07(B))

Sec. 20-118. - Regional qualified archaeologist.

- (a) The Regional Qualified Archaeologist shall mean any individual who meets all of the following requirements:
  - (1) Has a graduate degree in archaeology, anthropology, or a close related field.
  - (2) Has at least one year of full-time professional experience or equivalent specialized training in archaeological or physical anthropological research, administration or management.
  - (3) Has at least four months of supervised field and analytic experience in the region.
- (b) The Mississippi Valley Archaeological Center may provide a regional qualified archaeologist, at no cost, subject to discretion of the landowner.

(Code 1980, § 7.07(C))

Sec. 20-119. - Demolition, excavating, building and development.

Any person performing demolition, excavating, building, or development requiring a permit from the City of La Crosse within an Archaeological District shall notify the City of La Crosse Fire Department - Division of Fire Prevention and Building Safety not less than two full working days prior to commencing activities disturbing more than 20 square feet of soil to a depth of two feet or greater except in the case of emergency excavations as approved by the Director of Public Works or the Fire Department - Division of Fire Prevention and Building Safety. Such notice shall be in writing and shall include a description and location of the proposed work, the depth and area of the proposed soil disruption, and the proposed date and time of commencement of such work.

(Code 1980, § 7.07(D); Ord. No. [4911](#), § I(attch.), 1-14-2016)

Sec. 20-120. - Regulations.

Any person, persons or entity receiving a permit for demolition, excavating, building or development to be done in an Archaeological District that includes soil disturbance of more than 20 square feet to a depth of two feet or greater shall as a condition of such permit:

- (1) Provide an archaeological survey by a regional qualified archaeologist of the site affected by the permit or provide unlimited and uninhibited access by the regional qualified archaeologist to the site of any such demolition, excavating, building or development that includes disturbing more than 20 square feet of soil to a depth of two feet or greater during any period when excavation or soil disruption is taking place, and after archaeological artifacts are found, subject to reasonable safety requirements.
- (2) The permittee and any agents of the permittee shall stop work immediately and notify the Department of Planning and Development or the regional qualified archaeologist if any artifacts, human remains, or other clear evidence of historic or prehistoric activity are discovered during excavation or earthwork activities. The regional qualified archaeologist shall evaluate the site by the end of the next week day, excluding holidays, following such notification. If significant archaeological resources are found, the regional qualified archaeologist shall have up to three additional consecutive week days, excluding holidays, after the initial notification as described above to continue investigation of the site. No additional work may be done by the permittee or permittee's agents during this period that would interfere with the archaeological investigation. If no significant archaeological resources are found by the regional archaeologist, work on demolition, excavating, building or development that includes disturbing more than 20 square feet of soil to a depth of two feet or greater may resume immediately and the parcel may be removed from the boundaries of the archaeological district, if such removal is approved by the Heritage Preservation Commission. If the regional archaeologist does not investigate the site by the end of the next week day, excluding holidays, following notification of the Department of Planning and Development of the presence of archaeological artifacts, human remains, or other clear evidence of historic or prehistoric activity, work may be resumed on the second day following such notification. If an archaeological survey performed by a regional qualified archaeologist finds no archaeological significant remains the parcel may be removed from the boundaries of the archaeological district upon approval of the Heritage Preservation Commission.
- (3) The permittee and any agents of the permittee shall agree that any archaeological artifacts discovered will remain the property of the land owner upon whose land the artifacts were found. No artifacts may be removed from the property of the land owner without the landowner's written permission unless an itemized inventory report of all artifacts removed is provided to the land owner signed by the regional qualified archaeologist. Such artifacts may be held by the regional archaeologist for a reasonable period, not to exceed 12 months, for study and identification, but shall be returned to the land owner at the end of such period. Any human remains discovered shall be dealt with in accordance with applicable State and Federal law.
- (4) The requirements listed for permittees in an Archaeological District in subsections (1), (2) and (3) of this section shall also apply to all City of La Crosse departments, utilities, contractors, and agents regardless of whether a permit is required for any proposed work in an Archaeological District, if the work will result in disrupting more than 20 square feet of soil to a depth of two feet or greater.

(Code 1980, § 7.07(E))

Secs. 20-121—20-138. - Reserved.

ARTICLE IV. - HISTORIC SHIPWRECKS<sup>[4]</sup>

Sec. 20-139. - Penalties.

Violations of this article are a Class B offense as provided in section 1-7.

(Code 1980, § 7.09(A)) Sec. 20-140. - Purpose.

It is hereby declared a matter of public policy that historic shipwrecks, which means a vessel or wreck, its cargo and other contents that have been deserted and to which the owner has relinquished ownership rights with no retention, shall be protected to the extent consistent with the provisions of Public Law 100-298, known as the "Abandoned Shipwreck Act of 1987," in order to:

- (1) Maximize the enhancement of cultural resources.
- (2) Foster a partnership among sport divers, fishermen, archeologists, salvagers and other interests to manage shipwreck resources of the City of La Crosse, State of Wisconsin and the United States.
- (3) Allow for appropriate public and private sector recovery of shipwrecks consistent with the protection of historical values and environmental integrity of the shipwrecks and the sites.

(Code 1980, § 7.04(V)(1))Sec. 20-141. - Permit.

- (a) *Permit required.* It shall be unlawful for any firm, person or corporation to salvage or otherwise remove any vessel or wreck, its cargo, or other contents of a shipwreck which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places or eligible for such registration which lies in the waters within the corporate limits of the City of La Crosse which has been deserted, and, to which the owner has relinquished ownership rights with no retention, unless a permit has been secured as provided for in this section.
- (b) *Application for permit.* Application for a permit to salvage or remove artifacts from any abandoned shipwreck defined herein shall be made by addressing a letter to the City Clerk, City Hall, La Crosse, Wisconsin. The letter shall indicate the name of the person or group of persons and/or the name of an organization which desires to secure a permit hereunder. The addresses and telephone numbers of each interested person shall be furnished along with a nonrefundable fee in the amount established by resolution. The application shall state the location of the proposed salvage and contain a statement, if applicable, from the riparian land owner authorizing the applicant to go upon their land or to utilize their riparian rights to carry on the salvage operation. The applicant shall furnish evidence of insurance as provided in section 2-2. The City of La Crosse and the riparian owner shall be named as additional insureds on such policy. While it is intended to permit diving and salvage operations on historic abandoned ships, it is likewise intended by this article that any artifacts salvaged from such ships shall be given to the City of La Crosse or any public agency designated by the City of La Crosse for the purpose of preserving any such salvaged artifacts.
- (c) *Granting of permit.* The Common Council may grant a permit to any firm, person or corporation who makes the proper application therefor under the terms of this article. Such permit shall state the time, place and terms and conditions under which such salvage operations may be conducted.

(Code 1980, § 7.04(V)(2)—(4))

