

Rationale

Historical preservation and thoughtful home improvements enrich La Crosse by safeguarding the unique architectural character that defines our community. These efforts boost property values, foster civic pride, and draw tourists to explore our walkable residential neighborhoods, beautiful downtown and other historic districts; thus supporting local businesses and generating economic activity. By celebrating owners who maintain original architectural elements and unique features like porches, trim, siding, doors, roofs, windows, storefronts, etc., while making conscientious updates, the city strengthens community identity and ensures our built heritage inspires future generations.

Nomination Criteria

Owners qualify if their property is at least 50 years old and shows excellent exterior care in, but not limited to, the following areas:

- **Original style preserved:** Siding, roof, windows, porch, or trim that matches the home's or building's age and architectural essence is properly maintained.
- **Historically sensitive fixes:** Repaired or replaced damaged parts (like windows, roof, chimney, stonework, doors, porches, etc.) closely resemble the original and fit the overall character of the neighborhood. Any new additions (decks, ramps, awnings) fit the scale and style without hiding key features.
- **Landscape, plantings, fences, etc:** Yard, walks, fences, and paint are all in good shape, serving as a positive example for the block.
- **Curb appeal:** The front and side exteriors clearly show the building's historic character to passersby. The property blends in well with the overall character of the neighborhood.

Simple Nomination Process

1. **Anyone can nominate:** Nominations will be initiated by commissioners who become informed of property improvements via personal observations, referrals from neighborhood associations, city council members, interested citizens, etc.
2. **Documentation:** The nominating commissioner is to take relevant photos from the public right of way of the exterior improvements and complete a short written narrative on what was done and why they feel the property and owner(s) deserve recognition.
3. **Vote:** The Historical Preservation Commission is informed of said improvement(s) and the rationale for nomination. Discussion/questions on the merits of the referral shall take place by commissioners during official HPC meetings. A simple roll-call vote shall take place with unanimous approval required.

Recognition

Approved nominees will personally be awarded a yard sign for homes or a window sign for businesses. In addition, a printed letter of appreciation signed by members of the commission will be featured on the city's website.