

Gary Preservation Tour 2018

Neighborhood Histories

HORACE MANN HISTORIC DISTRICT

Like most of the land in Gary, the land where Horace Mann Historic District (HD) now sits was originally hilly sand dunes. This historic district was developed from the 1920s into the late 1930s and was located only one mile west of the city center. It is made up of Roosevelt, McKinley and Cleveland streets, between 5th and 8th Avenues, and a portion of 7th Avenue between Garfield and Roosevelt. The location became an attractive neighborhood for middle and upper-class residents and remained one of the most desirable neighborhoods in Gary.

Horace Mann HD was the first neighborhood in Gary designed for the use of automobiles including wide street space and detached or integrated garages. Most of the detached garages you will see today, however, have been considerably altered and are no longer historically contributing structures.

While a number of homes within Horace Mann HD were designed by architects, the architects for some homes is unknown. Fortunately, for others, we still have a record of the architect. Some of those architects include Louis C. Hess (Hammond), L. Harry Warriner (Gary), Rissman and Hirschfeld (Chicago) J Ivan Dize and Amedeo Leone (Detroit). The majority of homes in the district were designed with English influence ie. in Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and English Cottage styles. You will notice other styles are scattered throughout the neighborhood as well though.

Homes in this historic district were designed taking many practices from the “Small House” movement which incorporated the growing use of machines in the home. In-home appliances like refrigerators, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, etc. made homes easier to manage and no longer required a hired staff.

With some homes occupying up to three lots, the area allowed residents ample space for large homes and lawns. Homes in Horace Mann Historic District vary in size from 5 to 10 rooms. Each home displays quality design work reflecting the prevailing styles of the 20s and 30s. The plan for one of the homes in the area won second prize in 1926 in the Chicago Tribune Small House contest. Many of the homes in the area are well-maintained and still look close to what they did during their time of significance. Most alterations have not compromised the integrity of the structures.

In building residential areas for Gary, U.S. Steel was aware housing and labor issues that had developed in other industrial towns and U.S. Steel sought to avoid those issues by controlling development and restricting it to areas between the Little Calumet River and the Wabash Railroad tracks. U.S. Steel created the Gary Land Company (GLC) which would control both industrial and residential land. GLC put regulations in place to prevent real estate speculation and limit occupants. Through GLC, property owners were required to develop structures within 18 months or GLC would reacquire the property deed. Owners could not purchase an additional lot until the first development was completed. Further, to receive approval to even begin building, owners had to submit architectural plans to be stamped and

signed by the GLC preceding construction. The regulations successfully limited occupants who could not meet the economic constraints, particular leaving out immigrant and black U.S. Steel laborers.

***600 McKinley. Renaissance Revival, c. 1927.**

- a. *Large 2½-story home. Mottled light and dark brown brick. Designed by Louis C. Hess.*
- b. *This home was approved for \$22,000 and specially designed for the Milbrath family. Benjamin Milbrath owned a large Ready Mix Concrete business in Gary and resided in the home for decades until the mid-60s.*
- c. *This structure is set with three bays. The center bay is the front entry door. The entry is constructed of a large arch, surrounded by terra cotta with twisted shafts on both sides of the door.*
- d. *The windows of the home are modern replacements that were reinstalled into the original wood frames. Each window still fits into its historic opening. The first floor windows are particularly interesting. They are framed with limestone and have thin engaged columns along the sides, which support a full entablature above each set of windows. The area between the windows and the foundation consists of molded terra cotta panels.*

2. *2100 W 6th Ave. Tudor Revival, c. 1930.

- a. *2½-story home. Covered in stone with rubble course.*
- b. *On April 16, 1930, Frank Oja received approval to build this house at a cost of \$10,000.*
- c. *This is a 2 ½ story structure with a 2 story front-gabled bay. The windows on the first floor are modern replacements that have been reset in their historic openings. The windows have limestone sills and you will notice flat arch headers constructed of narrow stones that have been vertically assembled. It is a beautiful detail that adds character to the structure. The opening at the attic is a round window with ventilation slats constructed of copper.*
- d. *The extended bay is intersected by a large fireplace chimney also constructed of stone. At the top, the chimney splits into two separate stacks, each topped with a red ceramic pot.*
- e. *The garage was constructed about 20 years after the home, contrary to Lake County Assessor's records. From 1945 garage records, we find that the current garage is larger and not made of brick. The room connecting the garage and the garage itself also have appear to be of a later period.*
- f. **Fun Fact:** *This home was bought by Charles (Charlie) Finley in 1950 who came to make a fortune in medical/health insurance and became the owner of the Oakland Athletics major league baseball team.*

3. 565 Roosevelt. Tudor Revival, c. 1927.

- a. *2½-story home. Brick, stone and wood construction. Designed by Louis C. Hess.*
- b. *This home was approved in 1927 for \$24,000. It was built for a salesman, Sidney Lee, who moved soon after between 1930 and 1935. The move could have been a result of the Great Depression.*
- c. *This home is one of the largest homes built in the Horace Mann historic district. This home is very interesting in that it was designed to have a variety of textures which make*

a younger house appear older than what it is. This effect was Louis Hess's specialty and common in Revival design.

- d. You will notice that the front facade of the home is constructed with 8 pieces of vertical timber. Between each piece, brick was laid to run in varying directions.*
 - e. The round arch main entry door is centered beneath the peak of the gable and surrounded by a stone archway.*
 - f. Despite having a number of homeowners, this home looks much like it did when first designed by Louis Hess. It has had some small changes, for example, the dormer window on the garage roof; but generally, the home is still very similar to its original structure.*
 - g. A curving sidewalk leads to the front door of the home starting at the public sidewalk. The lawn does not have any trees. Shrubs are at the tip of the walk where it meets the sidewalk.*
- 4. 591 Roosevelt. French Eclectic, c. 1929.**
- a. 2-story, red brick home. L-shaped plan.*
 - b. The original Gary Land Company files for this property have been lost. We do not know the original approval amount for this home's construction. It was noted as under construction by Blaz Lucas in 1929. The first owners were Jacob and Julie Bernsten who owned Stanley Jewelers in Gary and lived in the home until 1954.*
 - c. This home was designed with an L-shaped plan. The stem of the L runs east/west along 6th Avenue. The west face of the stem of the L has stone quoins at each corner. In the northwest corner of the cruz is a round tower entryway. The tower is topped at a cone-shaped roof.*
 - d. On the second floor, you will notice a window that opens to a small decorative wrought iron balcony.*
 - e. The facade also forms a gabled brick gateway to the back of the home. The gateway is opened by a brick arch.*
- 5. 611 Roosevelt. Tudor Revival, c. 1928 (N).**
- a. 2-story, three bay home. Red brick construction.*
 - b. This home was also built by Blaz Lucas. It was approved in 1928 but the cost is unknown.*
 - c. A 2-story wing extends from the front of this home creating a section for the entryway. This extended section is covered with cobbled limestone. The main entrance is a slightly recessed arch with a wooden door. Two narrow windows are placed on both sides of the front door.*
 - d. Across the width of the front wing is a shallow stoop. The stoop is surrounded by a wrought iron railing that stops where the sidewalk meets the stoop.*
 - e. A fireplace chimney rises several feet above the roof of the home.*
- 6. 633 Roosevelt. English Cottage, c. 1929.**
- a. 2-story, mottled red and dark brown brick. Remarkable stone tower.*
 - b. This land was approved in 1929 by Frank Oja at a cost of \$13,000.*
 - c. This home features a 2-story wing extending from the left end of its front-facing facade (north side). There are two windows in this section of the home. Both historic windows have been replaced with modern updates but were set in the original openings. There is*

a sliding glass window on the first floor and a narrow window on the second floor with a circular wrought iron balcony.

- d. The structure includes a stone tower, constructed where the extension leaves the facade. You can see three facets of the octagonal tower. All eight faces are visible from the tower covering. The tower has two windows which are also modern replacements within historical settings. At the peak of the tower roof is a brass wind vane with either the number 6 or letter G attached. What do you think it means?*
 - e. A curving concrete walkway leads visitors from the public sidewalk to the main entrance.*
- 7. 717 Roosevelt. Craftsman/Bungalow, c. 1930.**
- a. 1-story, tan brick home. Two bay design.*
 - b. This home was built in 1929 at an unknown cost as the original records can no longer be found.*
 - c. This house was rented in the early 1930s by a foreman with Inland Steel in East Chicago. In 1937, it was bought by Stephen and Mary Kurck, who sold it later to a Gary fireman John I. Kruck in 1945.*
 - d. It was built with a 2-bay design, with the south half being an open air porch. A double row of yellow bricks line the arch that opens to the porch.*
 - e. The large window on the main facade is the original Palladian window. It is separated into three sections. Two side, flat pilasters were constructed between the three windows. The middle window rises into an arch supported by the pilasters. Below the window is a geometric design using raised yellow brick in a chevron pattern.*
 - f. A small brick utility chimney can be seen on the south facade of the home.*

MORNINGSIDE

Morningside Historic District is a well-preserved residential area in the southern tip of Gary, IN within the West Glen Park neighborhood. Development in this neighborhood began in 1917 and continued until about 1953. The homes in Morningside exemplify 20th century architectural styles. The most common styles you will see are Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival styles, but you will also find English Cottage, Ranch, Moderne and Bungalow style homes. Stay on the lookout for unique designs.

Settlement in the Glen Park area began as early as 1822 when William Ressig settled there. Few people populated the area for decades; the first lots were not platted until 1984 and they were between 41st and 43rd Avenues. Before the town was called Glen Park, it was known as Kelley, named after a vice-president of the Nickel Plate Railroad built in 1882. By 1900 the area was known as Glen Park, likely taken from suburbs of Chicago. The City of Gary was founded in 1906. By 1909, Glen Park was annexed into Gary.

Morningside is historically significant due to its distinct curvilinear streets, inward-oriented homes, and deliberate community planning development. The homes in Morningside were built close to Gary's main thoroughfare, Broadway, which runs from Downtown to the southernmost part of Gary. Though not far from traffic, inward-facing homes separated the neighborhood from the surrounding traffic and provided a quaint atmosphere.

Previously, the land in the area was made of small hills and sand dunes, but this scenery was not conducive to a residential neighborhood. Without delay, the natural sandy habitats were leveled for construction. Homes were built with a 50 ft. setback that followed the curves of the streets and lawns were added to the landscapes. The addition of greenery and trees brought a neighborhood feel to the area and the curving streets brought deviation from the grid uniformity throughout Gary and much of Northwest Indiana.

Although Morningside was developed with characteristics that seemed intended to attract higher class residents than surrounding neighborhoods, modest 1-story and 1 ½-story homes were also built in the neighborhood. For example, the first home built in Morningside at 105 Morningside Avenue is a 1-story bungalow. As a result, the neighborhood was intermixed with lawyers, architects and other professionals as well as salesmen, masons, and grocers.

Interestingly, while it is clear that many homes in Morningside were designed by architects, the architects of specific homes are unknown. For example, it is certain that Louis C. Hess (a prolific Lake County architect) designed homes in Morningside, but the particular homes he designed is unknown.

In its early years of settlement, Glen Park was separated from the north side of Gary by the Little Calumet River and marsh, but by 1909 Broadway was extended from the north through Glen Park and into Merrillville. Additionally, around 1912, the streetcar system was built southward along Broadway. Around the same time, a local real estate agent pushed for a bridge over the river and built a sidewalk. Glen Park soon became accessible by foot, car and streetcar from Gary. Morningside became an

appealing area for workers who were attracted to its accessibility and unique home designs. Between 1920 and 1930, the Glen Park neighborhood grew from approximately 3,000 people to 16,000 residents.

The homes we are highlighting for the tours, you will notice, are restricted to Glen Park Avenue, West 46th Ave. and Washington St. Most of the homes are Colonial Revival styles, but each design is still very unique from the next. You will also notice the versatility in other homes along the way.

1. **128 Glen Park Ave.** Tudor Revival, c. 1928.
 - a. *We will be entering this home. The owners ask that we stay limited to the first-floor.*
 - b. *2-story home. Rectangular stone, polygonal tower.*
 - c. *We start off with a very interesting home on an interesting street. It is easy to notice the unique layout of Morningside with its curved streets. But another point that sets the neighborhood apart from others is the name of this street. Glen Park Avenue is unique to this neighborhood and will not be found anywhere else in Gary.*
 - d. *The home we are stopping at first is a 2-story Tudor Revival style residence. You will notice many of the homes in the neighborhood are constructed of brick or wood, but this home is fully covered in stone. The home features the only polygonal (not round) tower in the neighborhood.*
2. **206 Glen Park Ave.** Colonial Revival, c. 1941.
 - a. *2-story home with beige brick.*
 - b. *This home includes an attached, historically contributing garage. The home was built with a side gable roof. Fluted pilasters (made to resemble columns) emphasize the arched entryway.*
3. **216 Glen Park Ave.** Contemporary Colonial Revival, c. 1951.
 - a. *1-story brick home. Ranch.*
 - b. *This home was built in the later years of development in Morningside. This home is one of the few contributing Ranch style homes you will find in the neighborhood. It is constructed of brick and includes an attached 2-car garage. Notice the columns, chimney and multi-pane window openings.*
4. **234 W 46th Ave.** Colonial Revival, c. 1942.
 - a. *We will be entering this home. The owners will give us insight to the details built into their home.*
 - b. *2-story home, 1st floor brick, 2nd floor wood siding.*
 - c. *This Colonial Revival home was built with a Garrison-type structure. Accordingly, you will notice that the second story slightly overhangs in the front and there is a chimney on the end. The entryway is centered and somewhat set back into the front facade of the home. This home features a modern, 2-car garage which is not contributing.*
5. **151 W 46th Ave.** Colonial Revival, c. 1924 (N).
 - a. *2-story brick home. Distinctly east-facing rather than north.*
 - b. *As you can see, this outstanding home is not facing north, following the rest of the homes on its block. Instead it's front door can be found on the east-side of the home. The adjacent home was undeveloped for nearly 20 years. This home features a hipped roof,*

stone window sills and a 1-story sunroom. The first-floor windows are multi-pane casement windows and the 2nd floor windows have 6/6 pane configuration.

6. **33 W 46th Ave.** Eclectic, c. 1948.
 - a. *2-story stone home. L-shaped plan and corner tower.*
 - b. *This home was designed with a Chateausque, French eclectic style. It is constructed of stone and features a large stone chimney from the main level. This house is one of the few with a tower inspired by medieval design. It was built with an L-shaped plan and you will notice a round conical tower. The entry of the home is built into the tower. The rear wing includes a 3-car garage.*
7. **4615 Washington.** English Cottage, c. 1941.
 - a. *1½-story home. Brick and stone overlay.*
 - b. *This home was constructed with non-uniform stonework along the corners and decorative brickwork. It includes casement windows with concrete sills. The 2-car garage is detached and non-contributing. The roof includes two front-facing gables and a 3-sided hipped roof.*