

**CITY OF CHICAGO
COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS**

October 5, 2023

**RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF CHICAGO THAT
CHICAGO LANDMARK DESIGNATION BE ADOPTED FOR**

2678 WEST WASHINGTON BOULEVARD

Docket No. 2023-08

To the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago:

Pursuant to Section 2-120-690 of the Municipal Code of the City of Chicago (the “Municipal Code”), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the “Commission”) has determined that 2678 West Washington Boulevard (the “Site”) is worthy of Chicago Landmark designation. Based on careful consideration of the history and architecture of the Site, the Commission has found that it satisfies the following three (3) criteria set forth in Section 2-120-620 of the Municipal Code:

1. *Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*
4. *Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.*
5. *Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.*

I. BACKGROUND

On May 19, 2023, the Historic Preservation Division of the Department of Planning and Development (“DPD”) received an application to demolish the main house at the Site. The main house was rated “orange” in the *Chicago Historic Resources Survey* and was therefore subject to the 90-day demolition delay ordinance. As is standard practice during demolition delay, staff evaluated the Site against the legal criteria for landmark designation and determined that it met the criteria.

The formal landmark designation process for the Site began on August 3, 2023, when the Commission approved a preliminary landmark recommendation (the “Preliminary Recommendation”) for the Site as a Chicago Landmark at its regular monthly meeting. The Commission found that the Site meets three (3) of the seven (7) criteria for designation, as well as the integrity criterion, identified in the Chicago Landmarks Ordinance (Municipal Code, Section 2-120-580 *et seq.*). The Preliminary Recommendation, incorporated herein and attached hereto as

Exhibit A, initiated the process for further study and analysis of the proposed designation of the Site as a Chicago Landmark. As part of the Preliminary Recommendation, the Commission identified the “significant historical and architectural features” of the Site as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the main house and dormitory; and
- The 2011 bronze “Passage” sculpture.

The current location of the “Passage” sculpture is not integral to the Site’s historic configuration, so the statue may be relocated elsewhere on the Site.

Also at the August 3, 2023, Commission meeting, as part of the Preliminary Recommendation, the Commission adopted a Designation Report, dated August 2023, the most current iteration of which is dated October 5, 2023, incorporated herein and attached hereto as **Exhibit B** (the “Designation Report”). At the same meeting, the Commission voted to preliminarily deny the application for demolition of the main house. Per the Municipal Code, the Commission’s preliminary disapproval of the demolition application triggered expedited consideration of both the proposed landmark designation and the demolition permit application.

In a letter dated August 7, 2023, the Commission notified the applicant that the Commission’s preliminary disapproval of the demolition application triggered expedited consideration of both the proposed landmark designation and the demolition permit application. The letter also notified the owner that a public hearing on the proposed designation, as well as the preliminary disapproval of the permit application, was scheduled for September 14, 2023, in accordance with the Landmarks Ordinance and the Rules and Regulations of the Commission. Notices of the time and date of the hearing were: (a) posted on signs in front of the Site, and (b) published as a legal notice in the *Chicago Tribune*, as required by the Landmarks Ordinance. A notice was also posted on the DPD website.

At its regular meeting of September 7, 2023, the Commission received a report from the DPD Commissioner, Maurice Cox, supporting the proposed landmark designation of the Site. This report is incorporated herein and attached hereto as **Exhibit C**.

II. PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing was convened in-person, as scheduled and noticed, on September 14, 2023, at 9:30 a.m., and was also livestreamed via a link on the Commission’s web page. Commission member Suellen Burns served as Hearing Officer, assisted by Suzanne Hilal, Assistant Corporation Counsel of the Real Estate and Land Use Division of the City’s Law Department, as legal counsel to the Commission, and Dijana Cuvalo, head of the Historic Preservation Division of DPD. The hearing was conducted in accordance with the Commission’s Rules and Regulations, specifically but not limited to Article IV of the regular rules regarding the conduct of public hearings for Expedited Consideration of Proposed Landmark Designations and Permit Applications.

The Commission staff’s presentation recommending the proposed landmark designation was given by Kandelyn Hahn, Project Coordinator of the Historic Preservation Division. At the conclusion of the staff presentation the Commission’s Rules and Regulations allow the property owner or their

representatives to question the staff. Neither the property owner nor a representative for the property owner was present at the hearing.

Four members of the general public made statements, in-person, in support of the proposed landmark designation and the Hearing Officer noted that a fifth person, who was unable to attend, had expressed his support of the proposed designation in writing.

The transcript (the "Hearing Transcript") and related exhibits from the public hearing are attached hereto.

III. FINDINGS OF THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 2-120-690 of the Municipal Code, the Commission has reviewed the entire record of proceedings on the proposed Chicago Landmark designation, including the Designation Report, the DPD Report, the Hearing Transcript, and all of the information on the proposed landmark designation of the Site; and

WHEREAS, the Site meets the three (3) criteria for landmark designation set forth in Section 2-120-620 (1), (4), and (5) of the Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, for over 80 years, the Site served a critical role in providing care and opportunity to Chicago's most vulnerable, including women and children who could not afford health care after being discharged from hospitals; homeless, destitute, or otherwise abandoned women without options; unwed mothers and their children; abused and neglected adolescent girls; and the larger homeless population of the city. The various populations served over the years often had little or no other alternatives available to meet their daily needs; and

WHEREAS, the Site has served as a care facility under four different organizations, including the Chicago Home for Convalescent Women & Children, the Florence Crittenton Anchorage, the Volunteers of America's Living Center for Girls, and Inner Voice, Inc., as the need for social services in the neighborhood and city evolved; and

WHEREAS, from 1923-1946, the Site served as the Chicago Home for Convalescent Women and Children. After purchasing the property in 1923, the charity built a dormitory, and used the property to care for women and children discharged from the charity wards of Chicago's hospitals. The home was "open to any one (sic), irrespective of religion or nationality." The facility was staffed by health care professionals and supported by donations from prominent Chicagoans, especially women. The Chicago Home for Convalescent Women and Children is said to have cared for more than 15,000 women and children during their existence; and

WHEREAS, from 1949-1973, the Site became the Florence Crittenton Anchorage, serving as a maternity home offering shelter and assistance to unwed mothers. Unwed mothers and their newborns typically resided at the Anchorage for approximately three months and care was provided by registered nurses and pediatricians. Florence Crittenton homes existed in dozens of cities across the United States. Licensed by the State of Illinois, the Chicago Anchorage was funded by private donations and public funds. In addition to housing and medical care, the

Anchorage provided education opportunities and mental health services. At a time when other organizations served only certain populations, the Florence Crittenton Anchorage had no racial or religious restrictions; and

WHEREAS, in the 1980s through the 2010s, the Site became the Living Center for Girls for abused and neglected teens, operated by Volunteers of America, and subsequently one of the shelters of Inner Voice, Inc. in their mission to help house and re-employ Chicago's homeless; and

WHEREAS, the Site's main house is an excellent example of a residential building in the Queen Anne architectural style. Built circa 1880, through a series of remodelings, the building was transformed from a small frame dwelling to a brick mansion. The complex roofline with front-facing gable and dormers, asymmetric composition, corner tower with conical bay, decorative richness and variety, and projecting bays exemplify the style; and

WHEREAS, the Site's dormitory and its sympathetic later addition reflect the Italian Renaissance and French Eclectic "period" styles popular in the 1920s during the second phase of the Eclectic movement in America. The building features distinctive masonry and stucco detailing with dark red brick window surrounds and quoining contrasting with flat, white fields of stucco. These unusual design motifs reflect the Eclectic movement's preference for "correct" architectural detail and give the building a distinctive presence in the East Garfield Park Community Area; and

WHEREAS, the Site's dormitory was designed by the noted Chicago architecture firm of Holabird & Roche, whose founders were recognized as major, innovative, and prolific practitioners of the Chicago School of architecture; and

WHEREAS, the architectural firm of Holabird & Roche was one of the most successful and prolific architectural firms in Chicago between 1883-1927. At the time the dormitory was constructed, the firm was responsible for five to ten percent of the construction in the city. Over a dozen of their buildings are designated as individual Chicago landmarks including the Old Colony Building, the Marquette Building, the Chicago Building, the City Hall-County Building, the Three Arts Club, and the Palmer House Hotel; and

WHEREAS, Holabird & Roche's successor firms of Holabird & Root and then Holabird, Root & McGee, the firm responsible for the 1948 addition to and remodeling of the dormitory, continued to shape the look of the City of Chicago over the course of the twentieth century, and they remain a major contributor to the city's architectural excellence; and

WHEREAS, consistent with Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code, the Site has a significant historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value, the integrity of which is preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express such historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value; now, therefore,

THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS HEREBY:

1. Incorporates the preamble and Sections I, II, and III into its findings; and

2. Adopts the Final Designation Report, as revised, and dated this 5th day of October, 2023; and
3. Finds, based on the Designation Report, DPD Report, the Hearing Transcript, and the entire record before the Commission, that the Site meets the three (3) criteria for landmark designation set forth in Sections 2-120-620 (1), (4), and (5) of the Municipal Code; and
4. Finds that the Site satisfies the "integrity" requirement set forth in Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code; and
5. Finds that the significant historical and architectural features of the Site are identified as follows:
 - all exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the main house and dormitory; and
 - the 2011 bronze "Passage" sculpture.

The current location of the "Passage" sculpture is not integral to the Site's historic configuration, so the statue may be relocated elsewhere on the Site.

6. Recommends that the Site be designated a Chicago Landmark.

This recommendation was adopted unanimously (7-0).


Ernest C. Wong, Chairman
Commission on Chicago Landmarks

Dated: October 5, 2023