



DOWNS GROVE HISTORIC HOME PROGRAM



The Downers Grove Museum and the Downers Grove Historical Society are proud to present the Downers Grove Historic Home Program. This program aims to preserve the history and integrity of Downers Groves' homes and educate the community about research and preservation. This packet describes the requirements that need to be met in order for a home to be recognized by the Museum and the Historical Society and for a plaque to be purchased.

The Downers Grove Historic Home Program is not affiliated with the Village of Downers Grove's Historic Landmark Program. The Downers Grove Historic Home Program is strictly honorary and does not limit the homeowner from making alterations to the home. Additionally, the Program does not qualify homeowners for any type of financial incentives such as property tax assessment freezes or tax rebates.

Name of Applicant: _____

Address: _____

Street

City

State

Zip

Phone Number

Email

Architectural Classification of Home:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greek Revival | <input type="checkbox"/> Gothic Revival | <input type="checkbox"/> Italianate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Second Empire | <input type="checkbox"/> Queen Anne | <input type="checkbox"/> Colonial Revival |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classical Revival | <input type="checkbox"/> Tudor Revival | <input type="checkbox"/> French Eclectic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Craftsman | <input type="checkbox"/> Prairie | <input type="checkbox"/> Chicago Bungalow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish Revival | <input type="checkbox"/> Art Deco/Art Moderne | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal Traditional | <input type="checkbox"/> International Style | <input type="checkbox"/> Mid Century Modern |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Late Modern Eclectic | <input type="checkbox"/> Neo Revival | |

Please review the Architecture portion of the Downers Grove 2013 Historical Building Survey. It provides brief descriptions and photos of the various architectural styles that can be seen in the Village:
http://www.downers.us/public/docs/historic_preservation/SurveyReport_110513_DownersGroveArchitecture.pdf

Description of Home:

Foundation:

- Limestone
- Field Stone
- Brick
- Other: Specify

Exterior Walls:

- Wood siding
- Stucco
- Stone
- Brick
- Other: Specify

Roof:

- Asphalt
- Wood
- Metal
- Other: Specify

Criteria

A home must be at least fifty years old to apply for recognition. Additionally, the following criteria will be used to determine if a home qualifies. Please check all categories that apply.

_____ **Historic Significance:** The home has significant historic or cultural value.

_____ **Significant Person:** The home was owned or occupied by someone of historic significance.

_____ **Architectural Significance:** The home possesses the typical characteristics of an architectural style or type.

_____ **Significant Architect or Builder:** The home was designed or constructed by a notable builder and/or architect.

Alterations:

Does your home retain the original character from when it was built? Yes No

If alterations have been made, please describe them below.

Please include as part of your application a non-returnable photograph of your home.

If you possess an old photo, please include.

Identify the resident/s associated with the home along with the years:

Original Owner/s and Year Home Built: _____

If you need more space, please continue to write information on an additional page.

STEPS FOR RESEARCHING YOUR HOME'S HISTORY

The sources that you will need for your research are accessible at the Downers Grove Museum, Downers Grove Public Library, and the DuPage County offices located in Wheaton. Some sources, including maps of Downers Grove and census records can be accessed online. Before you go to these locations, write down what you know about your home already. Use a notebook or blank sheet of paper to write your name at the top along with the years you resided in your home. Below your name, write the name of the person you bought the property from and any additional information you may know. Do you know how long they lived there? If you are uncertain how long they owned the property, leave a space so you can fill it in once you discover the information.

Example:

2015-2002 Kelly Smith
2002- Jake Keller

Note: If you do not have any more information about your home, that is okay. You may be able to find information about your property in the Village of Downers Grove Historic Resource Application. The link below provides a GIS map that allows you to select a property and view historic information that might be available as part of previous Village surveys:

<http://vdg.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html>

You can also ask your neighbors if they knew any families who lived in your home. Although neighbors may not be able to give you exact years, they can at least give you a name to look up during your research process. Once you gather what you can on your own, follow the steps below to continue your house research.

STEP 1: DOWNERS GROVE MUSEUM, 831 MAPLE AVE., DOWNERS GROVE, IL 60515

Come to the Downers Grove Museum to look at city directories, which date as far back as 1903. The directories are a great source because they list past residents who owned your property and sometimes they will list the person's occupation. The Museum also has DuPage County atlases, which can show you where your property is and if it was divided up into sections. Learning if your property was divided into sections is important because it can explain some land transactions that took place, which you will learn more about once you begin to look at property tax records.

Note: Addresses in Downers Grove changed in 1927 to adapt to Chicago's address system. The number of your property will be different and the street name may differ, as well. If you do not know your property's old address, it will be difficult to look at directories prior to 1927. However, if the old owner of your property was there prior to 1927, you can look at the 1925-1926 city directories and learn your old address number. Once you have the old address, you can continue to look at older city directories using the old address number.

If there was a different owner prior to the address change in 1927 and you don't know your home's old address number, the only way you will be able to learn your old address and previous owner/s would be to look at the deed books located at the DuPage County Recorder's Office in Wheaton. Your property's description never changed, so when you look up your property description in the deed books, write down the name of the person who purchased your property for that given year. After you have a name, come to the Museum to look that person's name up in the directories to learn your property's old address number. Unfortunately, deed books do not provide addresses.

The Museum contains directories for the years 1903, 1905, 1907, 1908, 1910, 1911, 1916, 1922, 1923, 1924-25, 1926, 1927-28, 1934, 1935, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1944, and 1945.

STEP 2: DOWNERS GROVE PUBLIC LIBRARY, 1050 CURTISS ST., DOWNERS GROVE, IL 60515

The library also has city directories and may have years that the Museum does not have, including more recent directories. Useful genealogical and local history databases are also available at the library. You can either use a public computer or your own laptop to access these databases, such as ancestry.com. These are great sources if you want to learn more about some of the families who owned your property.

STEP 3: DUPAGE COUNTY OFFICE OF RECORDS, 421 N. COUNTY FARM ROAD, WHEATON, IL 60187

The Office of Records contains grantor/grantee records from 1839 to the present. The earlier dated records are on microfilm. Other years can be found in books, and more recent property transactions can be found on the public computers at the Recorder's Office. The grantee books contain the names and dates of property transactions along with the property description. The grantee books list property transactions by the name of the grantee, or the buyer of the property. Grantor books list property transactions by the name of the grantor, or the seller. When you are researching the grantee/grantor books, make sure that your home's property description matches what is written in the books. Property descriptions never changed. The description of your property today is the same as it was at the turn-of-the-century.

The grantor/grantee books show transactions between previous buyers and sellers of your property and will provide you with an accurate date of when your property was sold. By looking at the city directories first, you will have a better idea of who owned your property during certain years, giving you a starting point for when you go to the Office of Records. You can also look at the mortgage books that are available. If a previous owner was a mortgager, that is a strong indicator that a home or building was located on the property for that year.

Attached to this packet is a chart that you can fill out when you visit Wheaton to research. After the chart has been completed, the Museum will keep a copy to place in the research library.

Note: Before you begin to research deed books or view microfilm, go to the public computers first at the Recorder's Office and type in your property's address. When you look at the digitized deeds, you will see a description of your property, which would be the same as the description written when your home was erected. The property description describes the parcel number, subdivision, lot number, block number, and section number.

STEP 4: DUPAGE COUNTY OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK, 421 N. COUNTY FARM ROAD, WHEATON, IL 60187

The Office of the County Clerk is near the Office of Records and contains property tax records. The older tax records are available on microfilm and other years are in books. Property tax records are important to your research because it validates a time frame when your home or commercial building was most likely built. If a home or building was built, the assessed value of the property should increase for the year after it was completed. However, keep in mind that an increase does not always mean a home or building was erected, but it is important to document that increase. Once you compile your notes all together, including the information from the directories, deeds, mortgage records, and tax records, you should be able to pinpoint a year your property was erected.

****Please remember to make a copy of your research to keep for your personal records. All information and images submitted as part of this application will become part of the permanent records in the Downers Grove Museum. By participating in the Downers Grove Historic Homes Program, you acknowledge that any information and images provided in the application may be used by the Downers Grove Museum and the Downers Grove Historical Society.***

Property Deed Research

Property Description (including township, range, and section):

Grantor	Grantee	Date Filed	Amount Considered	Document # Book/Page #

Property Tax Assessments Research

Property Description (including township, range, and section):

Year	Name	Subd., Lot, and Block	Valuation and Total Tax

Mortgage Transaction Research

Property Description (including township, range, and section):

Mortgager	Mortgagee	Date Filed	Consideration	Document # Book/Page #

According to the criteria selected on Page 3, please fill out the appropriate chart.

Historic Significance

If you believe your home has significant historic or cultural value, please use the space below to explain.

A large rectangular area for writing, bounded by a thick black border. Inside the border, there are 15 horizontal lines spaced evenly down the page, providing a template for a long-form answer.

Significant Person

If you believe your home was owned or occupied by a person(s) of historic significance, please use the table below to explain. Please attach research sources, as well.

Individual's Name	Year(s) the individual resided in the home	Individual's Significance

Architectural Significance

If you believe your home possesses typical characteristics of an architectural style or type, please use the table below to explain.

Architectural Style	Typical Features	Features your home possesses

Significant Architect or Builder

If you believe your home was designed or constructed by a notable architect or builder, please use the table below to explain. Please attach research sources, as well.

		Individual's Significance
Architect Name (if applicable)		
Builder Name (if applicable)		

Once Your Research is Complete...

After you have completed your research, bring in the completed worksheets to the Museum to let the Museum Curator, Sarah Konzen, and the designee from the historical society, Liz Chalberg, to review your findings. After the review process, the two designees will present your research to the Downers Grove Historic Home Program Committee.

Once your research is reviewed and accepted, the Museum will keep a copy of your findings and place the research in the research library, and a letter will be sent out informing you that your home is accepted and recognized. You will also be eligible to purchase a plaque that is specifically designed for this program and has the Museum's and Historical Society's logos. The plaque is optional.