

**CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS  
CPED PLANNING DIVISION  
HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

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FILE NAME: 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway

CATEGORY/DISTRICT: Historic Resource

CLASSIFICATION: Historic Resource

APPLICANT: City of Minneapolis, CPED- Planning

PUBLICATION DATE: November 25, 2008

DATE OF HEARING: December 2, 2008

APPEAL PERIOD EXPIRATION: December 12, 2008

STAFF INVESTIGATION AND REPORT: Brian Schaffer (612) 673-2670

REQUEST: Designation Study

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**A. BACKGROUND**

On September 11, 2007 the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission approved an application to allow for the demolition of 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway. This action was appealed by the Lowry Hill History Committee and was subsequently heard by the Zoning & Planning Committee of the City Council. On November 2, 2007, the Minneapolis City Council denied an application to allow for the Demolition of a Historic Resource at 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway and directed the commencement of a designation study for the property. CPED-Planning placed the burden of the study on the applicant. CPED-Planning staff advised the applicant in the scoping of the study. In June of 2008 the applicant hired Landscape Research LLC to conduct research on the property and on September 17, 2008 staff received a report entitled "Determination of Eligibility of Heritage Preservation Designation" prepared by Landscape Research LLC for the property at 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway.

The following report gives further analysis and means to the report prepared by Landscape Research LLC, materials provided by the Lowry Hill History Committee, and previous studies including the "Lake of the Isles Historic District-Draft National Register Nomination." The following study satisfies the City Council directive to conduct a designation study of 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway.

**B. DESCRIPTION**

Located at 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway the subject property is a one and one-half story frame single family structure. The vernacular style house has features suggestive of the Mission architectural style with its exterior stucco, "Juliet" balcony, red roof, and arched front porch openings. Originally located at 2867 East Lake of the Isles Parkway, the house was built for Henry Waldron in 1900 and was moved to its current location in 1911 when Charles Waldron had a new house constructed at 2867 East Lake of the Isles Parkway.

George Cook built the 24 feet by 25 feet structure at 2863. It was designed in a simple Queen Anne architectural style with a clapboard exterior. Several modifications have occurred to the building to make it seem more suggestive of the Mission architectural style than its original Queen Anne style. In 1936, day laborers replaced the windows on the house and added a rear addition. In 1948, day laborers altered dormers and completed a 10 by 10 by 8 foot rear addition. In 1948 and 1949 the Perma Stone Company of Minneapolis covered the clapboard exterior with stucco. It appears that during this time the porch was remodeled and arches added in its openings.

### **C. ANALYSIS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Section 599.210 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances identifies seven criteria which shall be considered in determining whether a property is worthy of designation as a landmark. They include:

- (1) The property is associated with significant events or with periods that exemplify broad patterns of cultural, political, economic or social history.
- (2) The property is associated with the lives of significant persons or groups.
- (3) The property contains or is associated with distinctive elements of city identity.
- (4) The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural or engineering type or style, or method of construction.
- (5) The property exemplifies a landscape design or development pattern distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or quality of design or detail.
- (6) The property exemplifies works of master builders, engineers, designers, artists, craftsmen or architects.
- (7) The property has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### **1. The property is associated with significant events or with periods that exemplify broad patterns of cultural, political, economic or social history.**

In their appeal materials the appellant, Lowry Hill History Committee, suggest that the structure at 2863 East Lake of the Isles meets this criterion for designation.

“The Waldron Houses reflect a certain period of Social History (1900-1912) when the Lake of the Isles area was sprinkled with wood frame cottages and populated with middle-class small business families. By the late 1930’s the modest residences had been replaced with larger and more stately buildings. The ‘twin’ Waldron Houses are ‘survivors’ of this early Minneapolis period of economic and social development.”

The September 2008 Landscape Research report states:

“The Waldron House was not alone on Block 4; building permits suggest that two houses on lots to the east at 2862 and 2854 James Avenue South were also constructed in 1900. Nearby, 2850 James Avenue South was built in 1906 and three others were built in 1907 including 2838 James Avenue South and 2847 and 2841 East Lake of the Isles Parkway. 2825 East Lake of the Isles Parkway was

competed in 1909. All eight early 20<sup>th</sup>-century houses remain today, with major exterior alterations.”

The Landscape Research report also states that “at the time of a 1915 photograph, the \$500 house at 2863 appeared typical of the small, simple houses built around the city’s lakes.” The report goes on to hypothesize that the “uncertainty of about future land use along the rail corridor and proximity to a developing commercial area along West Lake Street and the streetcar hub at Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street may have been factors that attracted builders of inexpensive dwellings” to the area.

The “Lake of the Isles Historic District Manual” from 1984 also speaks to the modest or inexpensive dwellings built in the southeast corner of Lake of the Isles. The Lake of the Isles area “experienced two definitive periods of accelerated building activity; the first on the east parkway from 1905 to 1915, and the second on the west parkway from 1910 to 1929. The east parkway residences were primarily of frame and frame stuccoed construction whereas the west parkway expansion was dominated by masonry and frame stuccoed structures.”

The structure at 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway was constructed in 1900 and appears to be part of an early cluster of modest homes in the area. The 2008 report by Landscape Research states that 2863 is one of a handful of properties constructed in the area during this time period, it also indicates that like the subject structure, these remaining structures have been highly altered from their original state. The structure at 2863 was moved to its current location in 1911 and significantly altered in 1936 and then again around 1938. These modifications significantly impair the historical integrity of the structure and its association with the modest dwellings built in the southeast corner of the Lake of the Isles in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## **2. The property is associated with the lives of significant persons or groups.**

The structure at 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway was built for Harry B. Waldron in 1900. The report prepared by Landscape Research provides an analysis of the inhabitants of the structure at 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway. The following are highlights from the information prepared by Landscape Research.

Harry B. Waldron and his brother Charles J. Waldron operated a grocery store at 2256 Lyndale Avenue South. They were both born in Ohio in 1864 and 1867 respectively. Harry was married to Harriet Waldron and Charles Waldron was married to Eva Waldron. In 1909 Harriet, Harry’s wife, died. Charles, Eva, and the recently widowed Harry Waldron then moved to Fruit Valley in Klickitat, Washington where in 1910 they were listed as owners of a fruit farm. In 1911 Charles and Eva returned to Minnesota where they obtained a building permit to move the house at 2867 East Lake of the Isles to the neighboring lot at 2863 East Lake of the Isles and construct a new house at 2867. Charles continued to be a proprietor of a grocery store until 1920 where he appears to have become a travel agent. Harry died in 1919.

It appears that Charles and Eva continued to live at 2867 East Lake of the Isles Parkway and rented the house at 2863 to several individuals. In 1922 they moved to Los Angeles and in 1925 they sold the property at 2863 to Fred N. and Dorothy Furber; Fred was a lawyer. In 1929 John C and Hilda Jacobson purchased the property; John was an engineer with the Water Power

Company. George W. Meyers, a railroad or streetcar conductor, and his wife Manita purchased the house in 1936. George died in 1956 and Manita died in 1987. The house was transferred to a family member, Bernita Meyer and then sold to Christopher Horty, in 2002.

Though all the inhabitants contributed to our society in their own significant ways, none of their contributions can be considered significant enough to warrant the local designation of this property.

**3. The property contains or is associated with distinctive elements of city identity.**

The property at 2863 East Lake of the Isles is associated with the creation of Lake of the Isles out of the swamp lands and the subsequent creation of the parkway and the “Grand Rounds.” The structure has been identified as contributing to the Lake of the Isles Potential Historic District which was brought forward as a nomination 1984 and identified again in the 2006 Mead & Hunt Historical Property Survey of the Calhoun-Isles Area. The focal point of the proposed District is the lake itself, which contains three islands and is bordered by parkland and a system of parkways, pedestrian paths, and bridges which are in turn bordered by a ring of private residences. The more than 100 private residences, with associated secondary structures and landscapes, lend architectural significance to the proposed district. The residences also provide the district’s visual and physical boundaries.

Although the property at 2863 East Lake of the Isles contributes to the potential Lake of the Isles Historic District; which is distinctive to the identity of Minneapolis, there is no evidence that this individual property, itself, is distinctive to the City’s identity.

**4. The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural or engineering type or style, or method of construction.**

The structure at 2863 is a one and one-half story wood framed structure. It was originally designed in a simple Queen Anne architectural style. The historical architectural integrity of the structure is impaired by the numerous alterations that have resulted in the structure’s style being now suggestive of the Mission architectural style. There is no evidence that suggests the structure embodies distinctive characteristics that are significant enough to warrant designation under this criterion.

**5. The property exemplifies a landscape design or development pattern distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or quality of design or detail.**

The structure was moved from its original site at 2867 East Lake of the Isles to allow for the construction of a new structure in 1911. The movement of a house on a lot to accommodate another is not particularly unique in Minneapolis or necessarily rare. It is interesting to note that a driveway was not added to this property, this lack of driveway allowed for the retention of what appears to be natural grade or at least the grade after the platting and subdivision of Russel’s Third Addition. There is no evidence that suggests the design of the structure or the site is significant enough to warrant designation under this criterion.

**6. The property exemplifies works of master builders, engineers, designers, artists, craftsmen or architects.**

The materials provided by the Appellant states that the structure at 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway was designed by John W. Lindstrom, “Minneapolis’ most prolific bungalow and pattern

house builder of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.” Building permit data indicates that the structure at 2867 East Lake of the Isles Parkway was designed by the architect Lindstrom and constructed in 1911. In fact, the materials provided by the Lowry Hill History Committee include a pattern for a bungalow that appears to be an exact replica of the structure at 2867.

The building permit on record for the construction of 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway does not include an architect, only a builder- George Cook. None of the research provided by Landscape Research or the information of file at the City of Minneapolis indicates that there was an architect on record for this structure that was constructed in 1900. The absence of an architect on a building permit is not uncommon and there is no evidence to suggest that there was an architect attributed to the structure. Based on the appellant’s research Lindstrom, the alleged architect of the structure, did not open up his architectural office until 1902.

Even if evidence was produced showing that Lindstrom was the architect for the structure at 2863 the architectural integrity of the structure is poor. The structure at 2863 has been altered through various remodeling projects that were not designed by an architect or Lindstrom. The current structure at 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway does not exemplify the work of Lindstrom or the original architect (if there was one) as a master architect and does not warrant designation under this criterion for its association with Lindstrom.

George Cook, the builder of 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway, was born in Canada. He arrived in the United States in 1880 and started his construction company in 1885 with partner Willard Pike. Cook completed several important projects in Minneapolis, including the Lakewood Cemetery Memorial Chapel (1908), Dunwoody Institute (1916, 1923) and Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church (1913). In the 1920s he also completed Lake Minnetonka residences for the Crosby, Harrington, and Van Dusen families.

George and his wife lived at 2400 Colfax Avenue South between 1900 and 1920. In 1930 they moved to 2400 Bryant Avenue South. They had two sons, and in 1940 George F. Cook, one of George’s sons, incorporated the firm. The George F. Cook Construction Company is presently located in Golden Valley, Minnesota.

The Harry B. Waldron House at 2863 East Lake of the Isles and George Cook’s other highlighted projects illustrates the diversity of the projects Cook undertook. The evidence suggests that George Cook became a talented and sought after builder over his career with works such as the Lakewood Cemetery Memorial Chapel, a locally designated landmark, in his portfolio. The structure at 2863 has been altered through various remodeling projects that were not supervised or completed by George Cook. The current structure at 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway does not exemplify the work of George Cook as a master builder and does not warrant designation under this criterion for its association with him.

## **7. The property has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.**

The subject property is located in Russell’s Third Addition, which was platted in 1886 and the structure constructed in 1900. The Lake of the Isles and the surrounding parkway was created through property acquisition in 1887 and the dredging and filling operations the transformed the

swampy areas and stagnant water into the present day lake continued until 1911. There does not appear to have been any structures or development on the site prior to the structure being constructed in 1900 and moved to its current location in 1911. Based on the available research there is no reason to believe that property is likely to yield any more important prehistory information than any other site in the area.

#### **D. INTEGRITY**

The structure at 2863 East Lake of the Isles was moved to its current location 11 years after it was constructed in 1900. Through various remodeling projects, the structure has undergone a transformation from its original Queen Anne style to a style more suggestive of the Mission style of architecture. The interior does not retain notable historic fabric such as light fixtures, woodwork, tile or fireplaces and many of the walls have been stripped to the lath.

In their evaluation of integrity, Landscape Research, consulted the U.S. Department of Interior, National Register Bulletin “How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation” which was revised in 1998. Landscape Research makes the following conclusion about the integrity of the structure citing this bulletin:

The property was moved from its original location and has also undergone major alterations to the siding and porch as well as poorly constructed additions to the rear, compromising historic location, design, setting, materials, and workmanship. While the building remains in residential use (although vacant) and the feeling and association remain generally intact, the NRHP states “their retention alone is never sufficient to support eligibility of a property.”

#### **E. APPLICABLE ORDINANCES:**

##### ***Chapter 599. Heritage Preservation Regulation***

#### **ARTICLE V. DESIGNATION**

599.200. Purpose. This article is established to promote the preservation of historic resources by providing the commission with authority to recommend the designation of landmarks and historic districts and to adopt design guidelines for designated properties. (2001-Or-029, § 1, 3-2-01)

599.210. Designation criteria. The following criteria shall be considered in determining whether a property is worthy of designation as a landmark or historic district because of its historical, cultural, architectural, archaeological or engineering significance:

- (1) The property is associated with significant events or with periods that exemplify broad patterns of cultural, political, economic or social history.
- (2) The property is associated with the lives of significant persons or groups.
- (3) The property contains or is associated with distinctive elements of city identity.
- (4) The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural or engineering type or style, or method of construction.

- (5) The property exemplifies a landscape design or development pattern distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or quality of design or detail.
  - (6) The property exemplifies works of master builders, engineers, designers, artists, craftsmen or architects.
  - (7) The property has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. (2001-Or-029, § 1, 3-2-01)
- 599.220. Nomination of property. Nomination of a property to be considered for designation as a landmark or historic district shall be submitted to the planning director on a nomination application form approved by the planning director and shall be accompanied by all required supporting information. A nomination may be made by any of the following:
- (1) A member of the heritage preservation commission.
  - (2) A member of the city council.
  - (3) The mayor.
  - (4) The planning director.
  - (5) Any person with a legal or equitable interest in the subject property. (2001-Or-029, § 1, 3-2-01)
- 599.230. Commission decision on nomination. The commission shall review all complete nomination applications. If the commission determines that a nominated property appears to meet at least one of the criteria for designation contained in section 599.210, the commission may direct the planning director to commence a designation study of the property. (2001-Or-029, § 1, 3-2-01)
- 599.240. Interim protection. (a) Purpose. Interim protection is established to protect a nominated property from destruction or inappropriate alteration during the designation process.
- (a) Effective date. Interim protection shall be in effect from the date of the commission's decision to commence a designation study of a nominated property until the city council makes a decision regarding the designation of the property, or for twelve (12) months, whichever comes first. Interim protection may be extended for such additional periods as the commission may deem appropriate and necessary to protect the designation process, not exceeding a total additional period of eighteen (18) months. The commission shall hold a public hearing on a proposed extension of interim protection as provided in section 599.170.
  - (b) Scope of restrictions. During the interim protection period, no alteration or minor alteration of a nominated property shall be allowed except where authorized by a certificate of appropriateness or a certificate of no change, as provided in this chapter. (2001-Or-029, § 1, 3-2-01)
- 599.250. State historic preservation office review. The planning director shall submit all proposed designations to the state historic preservation officer for review and comment within sixty (60) days. (2001-Or-029, § 1, 3-2-01)
- 599.260. City planning commission review. The planning director shall submit all proposed designations to the city planning commission for review and

comment on the proposal within thirty (30) days. In its review, the city planning commission shall consider but not be limited to the following factors:

- (1) The relationship of the proposed designation to the city's comprehensive plan.
- (2) The effect of the proposed designation on the surrounding area.
- (3) The consistency of the proposed designation with applicable development plans or development objectives adopted by the city council. (2001-Or-029, § 1, 3-2-01)

599.270. Designation hearing. Following completion of the designation study the commission shall hold a public hearing to consider the proposed designation, as provided in section 599.170. Any person having a legal or equitable interest in a nominated property shall be allowed reasonable opportunity to give testimony or present evidence concerning the proposed designation. (2001-Or-029, § 1, 3-2-01)

599.280. Commission recommendation. Following the public hearing, the commission shall make findings with respect to the proposed designation and shall submit the same together with its recommendation to the zoning and planning committee of the city council. In making its findings and recommendation, the commission shall consider the designation criteria contained in section 599.210, the information contained in the designation study, the state historic preservation officer's comments, the city planning commission's comments, the planning director's report and all testimony and evidence received at the public hearing relating to the designation. (2001-Or-029, § 1, 3-2-01)

599.290. City council decision. The city council shall make the final decision on all designations. (2001-Or-029, § 1, 3-2-01)

599.300. Design guidelines. The commission shall adopt design guidelines for landmarks and historic districts. Prior to adoption, the planning director shall submit all proposed design guidelines to the state historic preservation officer for review and comment within sixty (60) days. (2001-Or-029, § 1, 3-2-01)

## **F. FINDINGS:**

1. The research provided by the Landscape Research, the research provided by the Lowry Hill History Committee, and the staff analysis within this report satisfy the requirement of a designation study.
2. The structure at 2863 East Lake of the Isles was constructed in 1900 by George Cook; there is no specific evidence that identifies an architect attributed to the design of the structure on the building permit.
3. The structure was moved to its current location from 2867 East Lake of the Isles Parkway in 1911. The structure has had several modifications including additions, stucco, new windows, and a new front porch that have transformed the architectural style of the structure from Queen Anne to a style suggestive of Mission.
4. The historical integrity of the location, materials, workmanship, and design of the individual structure are severely impaired by two factors. First, being moved from its original site. Second, it's numerous additions that were not supervised by an architect or the original builder, George Cook.

5. The structure is one of a handful of modest structures that were constructed along the East Lake of the Isles Parkway. However, the modifications to the structure significantly impair its historical integrity and its association with those modest dwellings built in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
6. The property at 2863 East Lake of the Isles does not meet any of the seven criteria for local designation as an individual landmark.
7. The structure at 2863 East Lake of the Isles has been identified as a contributing structure to the potential Lake of the Isles Historic District.
8. The parcel at 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway remains within the boundaries of the potential Lake of the Isles Historic District. Any new construction at the site will be a part of the ring of structures around the Lake of the Isles that have potential significance and will be evaluated at such time when the entirety of the potential district might be considered for nomination.

**G. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission **approve** the demolition of the Harry B. Waldron House located at 2863 East Lake of the Isles Parkway.

Attachments

- A. "Determination of Eligibility of Heritage Preservation Designation" prepared by Landscape Research LLC
- B. Materials provided by the Lowry Hill History Committee at the Zoning & Planning Committee of the City Council on October 25, 2007
- C. City Council Actions from November 2, 2007
- D. Heritage Preservation Commission Actions from September 11, 2007
- E. Heritage Preservation Commission Staff Report from September 11, 2007