Fort Wayne, Indiana

Introduction

The Lafayette Place Historic District is significant as an innovative development conceived by the Wildwood Builders Company released this right-of-way to the City of Fort Wayne to Decatur, Indiana. The Fort Wayne and Decatur Traction Company had name changes since the original plat also provide financial incentives for appropriate rehabilitation. The National Register is the nation's official list of properties which describe the distinctive feature of the plat will be after establishing the first four-year landscape program in 1899. After establishing the forme...eighty-two stories high. A new development and prepared plans for homes to be built

Acknowledgements

City of Fort Wayne
Tom Henry, Mayor
Community Development Planning Department
Pam Holscher, Director
Donald Orban, Preservation Planner
Cragger Smith, Preservation Planner
ARCH, Inc., Consultant

For more information about historic preservation in Fort Wayne, call [260] 427-1127 or visit
www.fwcommunitydevelopment.org

This project was funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service's Historic Preservation Fund and the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1400 C Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20040.
Introduction

The Lafayette Place Historic District is significant as an outstanding example of a suburban development that reflects principles of design important in the history of community planning and development. It is also significant for its design, completed by nationally significant landscape architect Arthur A. Shurcliff, and for an outstanding collection of homes with a variety of early to mid-twentieth century architectural styles. For these reasons the Lafayette Place Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2013.

The National Register is the nation’s official list of properties considered worthy of preservation. Listing on the National Register gives a degree of protection from any potentially adverse effects of state and federally funded projects, and may also provide financial incentives for appropriate rehabilitation.

For more information about historic districts please call the Division of Community Development at (260) 427-1127 or visit www.cityoffortwayne.org/preservation.

History

Lafayette Place is an innovative development conceived by the Wildwood Builders Company and nationally known landscape architect Arthur Shurcliff in 1915.

The Wildwood Builders Company was incorporated in 1910 with Lee Ninde as president and Lee’s wife Joel Roberts Ninde and architect Grace Crosby as the design team. Joel and Grace were among the earliest women in Indiana to work as architects and developers. By 1918, the Indianapolis News reported that over 300 homes had been built to their designs. The Wildwood Magazine, published by the company between 1913 and 1917, became a nationally known publication on the subjects of architecture, city planning, and interior design.

In addition to being a builder, promoter, realtor, magazine editor and developer, Lee Ninde was also a nationally and regionally significant proponent of city planning, serving as a founding Fellow of the American Institute of City Planning, a member of the National Association of Real Estate Exchanges, president of the Indiana Real Estate Association, and first president of the Fort Wayne Plan Commission. In 1926, local historian Bert Griswold noted: “That Mr. Ninde believes in the beautiful as well as in the practical in the creation of residential subdivisions is shown in the platting of Wildwood Park, Brook View, and Lafayette Place, all planned by the eminent Boston landscape architect, Arthur Shurcliff, and Sherwood Place, his original realty development. All are striking examples of the best in modern residential developments.”

Born in Boston in 1870, Arthur A. Shurcliff studied landscape architecture at Harvard University where he later teamed with Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. to found the country’s first four-year landscape program in 1899. After establishing his own practice in 1901, Shurcliff focused on town planning, highway studies for the Boston Metropolitan Improvement Commission, and the development of industrial and residential communities. He designed three Fort Wayne subdivisions for Wildwood Builders: Wildwood Park in the curvilinear style in 1914, Lafayette Place with an esplanade, modified grid and formal pattern in 1915, and Brookview, which was designed around Spy Run Creek in 1937. He was also hired by the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department to complete a master plan for Swanney Park in 1916 and a master plan for Franke Park in 1924. In the 1930s, he served as the chief landscape architect for the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg.

Lafayette Place is unique among Shurcliff’s designs in Fort Wayne in its use of formal French landscape architecture concepts in the plat. Shurcliff is known for his mastery of the “informal” naturalistic style of landscape architecture as seen in the curvilinear designs of both Wildwood and Brookview. But his design for Lafayette Place proves not only his ability to master formal French traditions, but his ability to successfully combine formal and naturalistic designs.

Although his career spanned over 50 years, the only known residential subdivisions designed by Shurcliff are the three Fort Wayne subdivisions planned for Wildwood Builders, during the period 1914-1917, and his work in Massachusetts on the Oak Hill Village development from 1924-1931. Lafayette Place is the only one of these designed with a formal rectilinear design, perhaps to make the greatest advantage of the generally flat terrain of the land.

The Lafayette Place plan was announced to the public in the Spring 1915 issue of Wildwood Magazine, which describes the new addition: “The distinctive feature of the plat will be what is known as an Esplanade. This is an unusual feature in Fort Wayne platting, but as this tract is oblong, extending one-half mile north and south, and a quarter of a mile wide, the shape of the ground lends itself perfectly to a street two hundred and ten feet wide, placed directly in the middle of the Addition, extending one-third of a mile nearly to the end. This is the Esplanade. Branching off from each corner of this new thoroughfare is a diagonal street leading out to each of the four corners of the piece.” Later articles comment on the neighborhood’s easy access from the city; the lack of alleys providing “for a cleaner and healthier community; and the curves and diagonals of the streets resulting in blocks of varying shapes.”

The range of lot dimensions has produced advantages in both frontage and depth of the lots, and the generous streets combine formal and naturalistic designs. The new thoroughfare is a diagonal street leading out to each of the 4 corners of the plat. You will notice that Calumet is the only street in Lafayette Place that runs diagonally through the neighborhood. That’s one-half mile north and south, and a quarter of a mile wide, across the esplanade and out Calumet, across Pettit Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20240.

Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20240. The Lafayette Place Historic District is a significant example of community planning and development. It is also significant for its design, completed by nationally significant landscape architect Arthur A. Shurcliff, and for an outstanding collection of homes with a variety of early to mid-twentieth century architectural styles. For these reasons the Lafayette Place Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2013.

Acknowledgements

The Lafayette Place Historic District is a significant example of community planning and development. It is also significant for its design, completed by nationally significant landscape architect Arthur A. Shurcliff, and for an outstanding collection of homes with a variety of early to mid-twentieth century architectural styles. For these reasons the Lafayette Place Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2013.
Lafayette Place Historic District

Please respect the occupants’ privacy by viewing all listed homes from the street.

Leo & Marie Kabone House
4443 South Calhoun Street
Dutch Colonial Revival, c. 1926
The Dutch Colonial style is easily identified by the gambrel or hump-back roof. This home features a full-width portico with Doric columns, large brackets under the eaves, and an arched roof over the front steps that extends to the main entry. Other notable details include windows with decorative muntins, and a large chimney on the south side.

Clarence & Garret Jacobs House
457 E. Maple Grove Ave.
Tudor Revival, c. 1932
The steep, pointed gables; streets and half-timbered decoration; large chimney; and arched door are classic Tudor Revival features. Wonderful details include the diamond-pane leaded glass windows; short wing-wall at the southeast corner; and rays of decorative brick at the entry. Mr. Jacobs worked as a salesman for Fort Wayne Printing.

Wheeler & Bertha Ling House
4010 Kenilworth St
American Foursquare, c. 1925
This style is easily identified by its box-like shape, hipped roof, deep porch, and square plan which allowed use of all available interior space. The raked brick of this excellent example adds texture and pattern to the walls. Mr. Ling was captain of Engine Co. #8 which was located on Winter Street.

William & Selma Todd House
4636 Calumet Ave.
Tudor Revival, c. 1930
The recessed doorways repeat the sharp gable shapes of the main roofline. Finely cut shutters and a recessed panel accent the double window over the west window and also the garage door. Incorporating the garage as part of the house plan illustrates the growing importance of the automobile in suburban development.

Wayne & Opal Ferguson House
204 E. Sherwood Terrace
Neo-Classical, c. 1925
Neo-classical homes are identified by the full-height porch with classical columns. The front facade is typically symmetrical with a center door. Note the elaborate capitals, columns, and brickwork on the facade. Decorative brick banding and arched entry. Original owner Wayne Ferguson was a building contractor.

A. Ralph & Sadie Todd House
4502 Wilmette St.
Craftsman, c. 1925
This bungalow enjoys a slanted, gable roof over the west window and the wall-former above, which pops through the gable roof, add additional interest to the design of this home. Random stones inserted into the brick wall illustrate the skill of the masons. Mr. Todd was a sales manager at Magnavox.

Clara & Paul Lantz House
4807 Montrose Avenue
Minimal Traditional/Ranch, c. 1942
This unique home combines the simplicity and scale of the Minimal Traditional with the forms and detailing of the Ranch style. The recessed panels on the streamlined chimney, raised bands on the block walls andcorbelled eaves. An open terrace is at the northeast edge of the house and the original garage at the opposite and has been converted to living space. Mr. Lantz was a railway signalman.

Wendell A. & Doris Summers House
425 E. Pettit Ave.
Ranch, c. 1980
With its one-story rambling profile, low-pitched roof, and attached garage, this house is an excellent example of the Ranch house which was the dominant style of residential architecture in the 1940s and 1950s. Mr. Summers worked for the International Harvester Company.

Guy & Alice Coderick House
4082 Coliseum Avenue
Tudor Revival, c. 1937
The rectangular slate roof; half-timbered wall decoration; diamond pane windows, hipped decorative chimney, small triangular dormer, and arched roofline over the entry all combine to give this house a stately but graceful appearance. Carole Lombard and Clark Gable supposedly stayed at the house shortly after their wedding in 1919.

Moellering House
4321 S. Calhoun St
(Lloyd Larimore, architect)
This classic side-gabled bungalow is a Low T raditional with the Craftsman rear porch which has short square supports clustered on wide, battered exposed rafters and knee braces. A broad cross gable shelters the front gables. The deep eaves have part picture windows with multi-pane leaded glass. The entrance portico has an unusual, gracefully arched roof resting on Doric columns. The shingle siding is laid in alternating wide and narrow rows, and the windows have Craftsman style muntins.

Frank & Mary Jacobs House
4483 Chapman Drive
Craftsman, c. 1929
The recessed doorways repeat the sharp gable shapes of the main roofline. Finely cut shutters and a recessed panel accent the double window over the west window and also the garage door. Incorporating the garage as part of the house plan illustrates the growing importance of the automobile in suburban development.

Clarence & Garret Jacobs House
457 E. Maple Grove Ave.
Tudor Revival, c. 1932
The steep, pointed gables; streets and half-timbered decoration; large chimney; and arched door are classic Tudor Revival features. Wonderful details include the diamond-pane leaded glass windows; short wing-wall at the southeast corner; and rays of decorative brick at the entry. Mr. Jacobs worked as a salesman for Fort Wayne Printing.

Volody & Theresa Tuttle House
4701 Lafayette Esplanade
Colonial Revival, c. 1942
This yellow brick Colonial has quoins at each corner and blind arches over the first floor windows which are also flanked by raised horizontal bands. The main entry is set within a recess that is framed by quoins and topped by a corbeled arch. Both the entrance and the garage have flat facades of solid brick. Mr. Tuttle was chief engineer at the local General Electric Works.

Paul & Elizabeth Bixler House
232 McKinlon Circle
Colonial Revival, c. 1929
Featured in the 1926 Better Homes Show held in Lafayette Place, this house was constructed to illustrate the “101 Points of Excellence” promoted by developers Hilgeman & Schaaf. The “points” included everything from the number of electrical outlets inside to the quality of materials used on the front porch. Simpson Parkinson worked with Hilgeman & Schaaf from 1925 to 1928.

Frank & Louise Vevia House
328 E. Fremont Ave.
Craftsman Bungalow, c. 1925
Building contractor Frank Vevia likely constructed this rambling bungalow. The stepped entry is flanked by half-timbered walls which are topped by large crown moldings with dentils. Decorative panels and shutters add visual height to the adjacent facade, the wide eaves, and the over-lapping gables on the front facade. The deep eaves have part picture windows with multi-pane leaded glass. The entrance portico has an unusual, gracefully arched roof resting on Doric columns. The shingle siding is laid in alternating wide and narrow rows, and the windows have Craftsman style muntins.

George & Jennie Gander House
4418 Champlain Drive
Craftsman, c. 1929
This classic side-gabled bungalow has a slanted, gable roof over the west window and the wall-former above, which pops through the gable roof, add additional interest to the design of this home. Random stones inserted into the brick wall illustrate the skill of the masons. Mr. Gander was a sales manager at Magnavox.

Walter & Lucille Moellering House
4521 S. Calhoun St.
Tudor Revival, c. 1926
Local architect Lloyd Larimore designed this home and five others that were featured in the 1926 Home Show held in Lafayette Place. The prominent chimney, steep gable; streets and half-timbered dormers, and stone detailing around the front entry are classic elements of the Tudor style. Moellering was president-treasurer of the Moellering Supply Company, builders suppliers.

Frank & Mary DeWood House
4527 Lafayette Esplanade
Minimal Traditional/Colonial Revival, c. 1948
This one and one-half story brick house has a side gabled roof with minimal eaves and rare returns. The main entry is set in a gabled wall vestibule with decorative raised brickwork around the front door and an open, concrete entrance with inset doors. The windows have solid brick lintels and brick sills. A matching garage is flanked by brick pilasters supporting an unusual arched pediment with cyma molding. Decorative paneling and shutters add visual height to the adjacent windows that are topped by large crown moldings with domes.