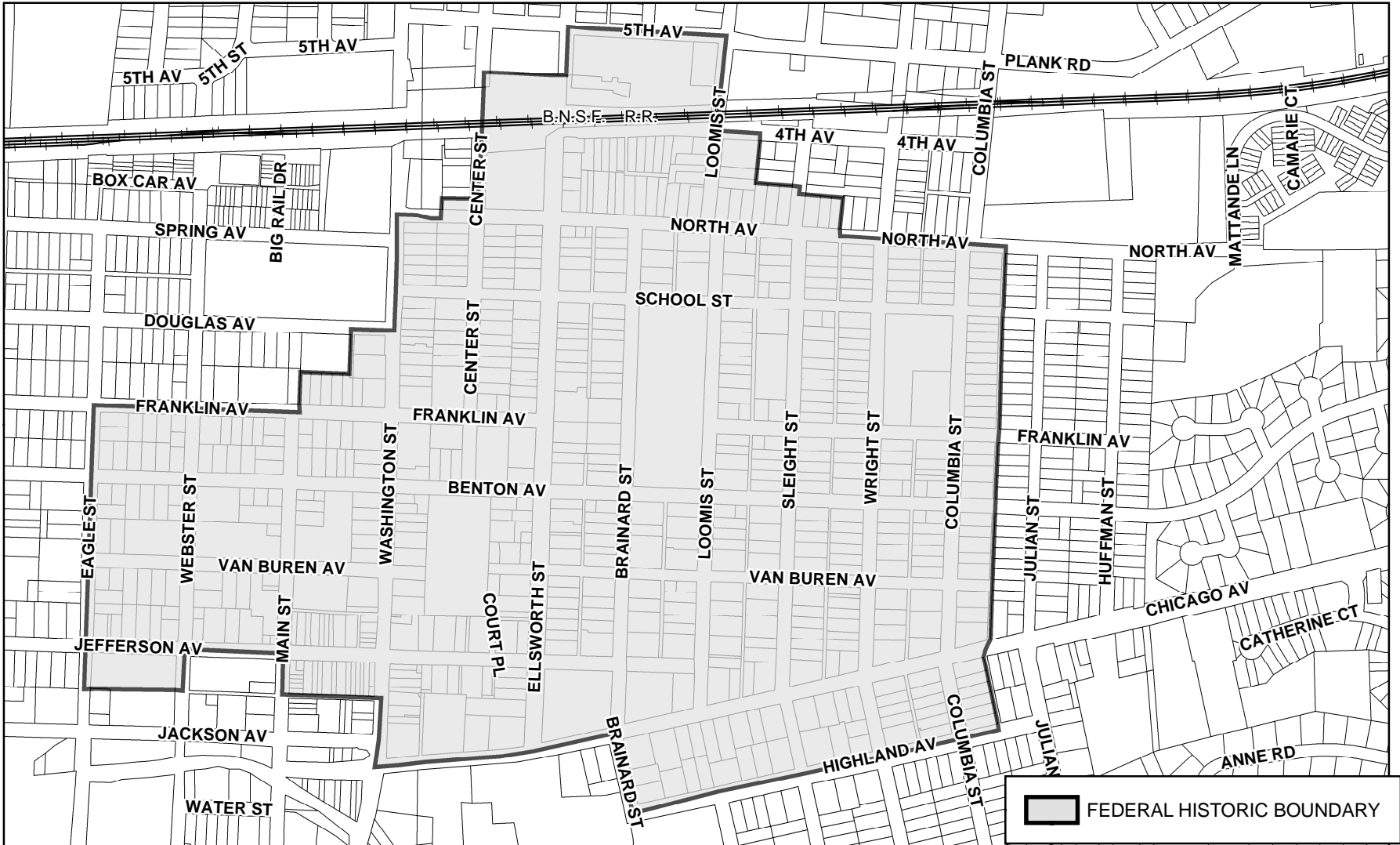
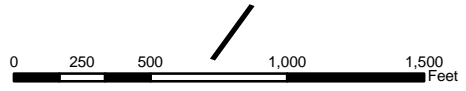


# City of Naperville FEDERAL HISTORIC DISTRICT



Transportation, Engineering and  
Development Business Group  
Questions Contact (630) 420-6694  
[www.naperville.il.us](http://www.naperville.il.us)  
September 2006



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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1** NAME

HISTORIC Naperville Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

**2** LOCATION

Most of the older section of Naperville within Juilian, Highland, Chicago, Jackson, Eagle and Fifth streets.

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Naperville

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Illinois

VICINITY OF  
CODE

COUNTY

Du Page

CODE

**3** CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDE
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4** OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

**5** LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Du Page County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Reber and Liberty Streets

CITY, TOWN

Wheaton

STATE

Illinois

**6** REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Illinois Historic Structures Survey

DATE

1974

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Illinois Department of Conservation

CITY, TOWN

Springfield

STATE

Illinois

# DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT       DETERIORATED  
 GOOD             RUINS  
 FAIR             UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Naperville lies on the West Branch of the Du Page River near the southern boundary of Du Page County, approximately 28 miles southwest of Chicago. The town-site is generally level with only minor variations in contour. The surrounding area was originally mixed prairie and timber, was later extensively farmed, and is now subject to ever-increasing subdivision for suburban expansion. It, too, presents few outstanding topographic features.

The Naperville Historic District roughly corresponds to the old core of the city and includes most of the town-site as originally platted and its early additions north of the river and the old Galena Road (Chicago Ave.). The district boundaries were drawn with an eye to circumscribing the maximum extent of an architecturally and visually cohesive area bearing the imprint of Naperville's history as a self-sufficient municipality as unaffected as possible by its most recent development as a Chicago suburb. The eastern boundary follows the interior property lines east of Columbia from Fourth to Highland, the area east of this line being characterized mainly by more recent construction. The southern boundary follows Highland, Chicago, and the property lines south of Jefferson or Jefferson itself. The area immediately south of the boundary is marked by recent redevelopment, particularly west of Washington and thus effectively severs an interesting section south of the river from inclusion in the district. The western boundary follows Eagle, the line of Main, and Washington, excluding areas to the west with little remaining visual interest. The northern boundary is determined by the railroad and the Kroehler Furniture factory, as the area farther north is largely new.

Land use within the district is varied. Commercial usages are centered on Washington, Jefferson and Main, their traditional location, but are beginning to crop up throughout the district west of Ellsworth. North Central College and the Evangelical Theological Seminary occupy much of the area east of Ellsworth, especially the blocks between Brainard and Loomis. Industrial development is limited to the proximity of the railroad. The area of residential use, once continuous around the town's commercial and educational concentrations, is now effectively broken into two sections, a large district east from center and a smaller one west from Main. The only Federal property in the district seems to be the post office at Washington and Benton. Transportation depends on the private automobile locally and on the automobile and the Burlington-Northern commuter service for inter-city travel. Washington and Chicago are the busiest arteries.

Density in the district does not radically depart from the norm of small midwestern towns. Land parcels are larger west of Washington, but the potentially greater density east of Washington is completely offset by the greater number of religious and educational structures located there. Two-story, single-family detached frame residences are the most numerous building type, though there are some masonry structures of the same description. Commercial structures are densest on Jefferson, forming a closed wall between Washington and Main. These are mostly of one and two-story masonry construction, although there are some of frame, particularly on Washington and mainly converted residences. There are few buildings of any great height, the tallest being North Central College's original building and the spire of St. Peter and Paul Catholic church at Ellsworth and Benton. Most residences are of substantial proportions; the largest houses are along Chicago and near the intersection of Ellsworth and Jefferson.

Architectural styles popular from circa 1830 to 1920 are represented in the district, though many are not present in any great significance. Based on numbers and strength of design, Italianate is the dominant style (v. Nos. 1, 3-5, 7, 15 below). The earliest houses are Greek Revival and at least one (v. No. 8 below) is an outstanding example for Northern Illinois. Queen Anne is a factor (v. No. 12 below), as is the Prairie School. Three houses (Nos. 2, 6, 16 below) can be attributed to Harry Robinson, chief draftsman for Frank Lloyd

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CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

Wright during World War I, and an architect whose independent work is otherwise poorly documented. There are also several examples of the various Medieval Revival styles, of very high quality (v.Nos.18, 19 below).

Of approximately 615 structures in the Naperville Historic District, excluding garages and other incidental buildings, 71 have been evaluated as possessing special architectural and/or historical significance and an additional 81 were photographed in the Illinois Historic Structures Survey. This relatively large number of additional (81) indicates the consistently high niveau of the secondary structures in the district. Most of the remaining 392 older structures reflect this standard. Also, several are Medieval Revival residences of considerable age, unfortunately sided or otherwise unsympathetically treated, that could add significantly to the character of the district if restored with care. Intrusions (20) and other recent structures (49) together account for roughly 11% of those extant. However, intrusions in the district are steadily growing in number as new suburban developments place increasing pressure on the older core. The commercial district has begun to spread into previously residential precincts along Washington, Jefferson and Van Buren, leaving demolition scars and tawdry functional structures in its wake. The most noticeable intrusion in this category is a new office building at the northwest corner of Van Buren and Webster of a totally unsympathetic scale and character. The commercial expansion has also been attended by the placement of parking lots that are unsightly in themselves, also open up incongruent vistas at several key spots. Two residence halls built by North Central College on Chicago between Ellsworth and Loomis are completely out of keeping with that street's character and another college building at Brainard and Franklin badly detracts from the school's 1870 main building.

# SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW.			
REHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Naperville Historic District embraces an area where one can trace the history of one small piece of an immense metropolitan region from its earliest settlement, through the stages of small town and city, up to its recent suburban role on the basis of visual reminders alone.

The older building stock, though subjected to losses in the last thirty years, is still relatively intact and well above average in quality. There are a number of outstanding individual sites and structures (Nos. 1-20 below) and a considerably larger group of buildings only slightly less significant. Background buildings, often of quality, enhance the impression of period and place stressed by these major sites, indeed it is the number and quality of these secondary structures which account significantly for the characteristic flavor of Naperville as an old town suddenly become a suburb.

Despite encroachments that have threatened to degrade Naperville into just another link in the chain of bedroom communities encircling Chicago, the town has managed to retain the unmistakable aura of an independent place that grew to maturity during the 19th century.

## HISTORY

Permanent settlement of Naperville and its surrounding area began relatively late, even for Northern Illinois, but, when once underway, proceeded with considerable alacrity. The first settlers in the vicinity were Stephen Scott and his son, Willard, who, in the fall of 1830, established themselves on the Du Page River in what is now northern Will County. Almost simultaneously, in December, Bailey Hobson and Lewis Stewart explored the Du Page River country and selected a site three miles north of Scott, wintering with him until completion of Hobson's cabin in March 1831. Meanwhile, Captain Joseph Naper had visited the region in February 1831 and claimed a site at what is now the southeast corner of Mill and Jefferson. He returned in June with his family, his brother John and his family, and a number of others and established the Naper Settlement, the central feature of the early history of Du Page County.

A trading house, sawmill, grist mill and a school were erected almost immediately, the latter opening November 15 with 22 pupils. The small community proved thriving and, by the end of the following spring (1832), numbered 180 inhabitants. The Black Hawk War occasioned the temporary abandonment of the site in favor of the security of Fort Dearborn (Chicago) 17 May 1832, but the construction of Fort Paine in June and the massacre of the Indians at the Battle of Bad Axe 2 August re-established tranquility and the Naper Settlement resumed its growth. 1833 produced three indicators of permanence: erection of the first frame house, establishment of a post office (v. No. 11 below), and efforts to organize a religious society.

A major stimulus to the town was the location of two important roads through it, that between Chicago and Ottawa and the Galena road between Chicago and Galena. The latter,

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CONTINUATION SHEET Significance

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opened in 1834 and one of the most important early thoroughfares in Northern Illinois passed through Naperville on the route now followed by Chicago Avenue.

The town was first surveyed and platted by Joseph Naper, 14 February 1842, when name was also changed from Naper Settlement to Naperville. It was organized as a village 7 February 1857, Joseph Naper serving as first president, and incorporated as a city 17 March 1890.

In 1839, Du Page County was stricken off from Cook County, Naperville selected as the county seat, and a courthouse built for \$5,000. The first challenge to the town as the seat of the county government came in 1857, when an election was held to decide whether that honor should be transferred to Wheaton. The proposition was defeated, but only temporarily: a second election in 1867 was carried in favor of Wheaton. Naperville however, refused to deliver up the county records, which were then forcibly removed in 1868 by a band of Wheaton citizens in a dawn raid. Awaiting the outcome of litigation between the two towns, the records were subsequently stored at the Cook County courthouse where they were destroyed in the Great Fire of 1871. The county seat, though, remained in Wheaton, and on 30 March 1877 the site of the old courthouse was transferred by the county to Naperville and is now in use as a city park (v.No.14).

Through the years, Naperville has enjoyed considerable success as a commercial and industrial center. The first tavern/hotel, the Pre-Emption House, was built in 1834-5 and remained in operation far into the 20th century, eventually falling victim to demolition. The Naperville Agricultural works was established in 1836 and was quite successful in the manufacture of steel scouring plows, production reaching 2,500 units annually by 1856. Stone quarries in the vicinity produced high quality limestone from the town's beginning until at least 1904. Tree and shrub nurseries flourished: the Du Page County nursery (1849), Du Page Eclectic Nurseries (1853), and Naperville Nurseries (1866) represented the three major establishments doing business throughout the northwest. By 1857, there were two breweries producing 186,000 gallons a year both for local consumption and as Naperville's chief article of export. The brick and tile works of Martin & King, later Martin & Van Oven, were another important early firm. At mid-century, Naperville, with ca. 2,000 population, about 20 commercial establishments, and 18 manufactories and other industrial firms, presented a very prosperous picture. The completion of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad through Naperville in 1864 added yet another incentive for growth, providing easy access to Chicago and more distant markets.

Naperville's most important industrial establishment was organized for the manufacture of lounge frames as the Naperville Manufacturing Co. in 1887. By World War I, this was the city's largest employer, with about 500 workers. It was re-incorporated as the Kroehler Manufacturing Co. in 1915 and has gone on to become one of the nation's largest furniture manufacturers. During the 1920's and later, Kroehler was so dominant that Naperville assumed many of the aspects of a company town.

Education has been a second strong force in the city's history. The Naperville Academy was incorporated in 1851 and opened the following year. It remained a private academy until merged into the public school system in 1863. The major institution in town is North Central College, organized as Plainfield College in Plainfield, Illinois in 1861, later changing its site to Naperville and its name to North Western College.

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The present main building was built in 1870 on land donated by the city as an enticement. The campus has expanded considerably since then and now covers a substantial portion of the city's east side, including 41 acres on the site of Fort Paine just south of the Historic District. The Union Biblical Institute, now Evangelical Theological Seminary, was organized and incorporated in 1873 and, though supporting its own faculty and buildings, is closely affiliated with North Central College. Its main building was raised in 1912.

Naperville's development was generally sure and steady, with few great spurts of activity for over 100 years. Early settlers were mostly of English extraction and there was a strong influx of Germans, many from Alsace, beginning in the mid 19th-century. At the 1910 census, with a population of 3,449, it was still easily identifiable as a distinct municipality within the Chicago metropolitan area, certainly no suburb and hardly even a satellite city. This remained true until the mid-1950's, since when Naperville has been increasingly inundated by the waves of suburban expansion. Population in 1960 was 12,933, rising to 23,885 in 1970 and over 30,000 in 1975 -- figures that accurately reflect the city's demotion to just another Chicago suburb. Most of that development, however, has occurred in newly-annexed territory so that the older sections included in the Historic District still reflect Naperville's development as a small city largely independent of any larger entity.

SITES AND STRUCTURES OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE

Numbers refer to corresponding map. Area of primary significance listed first for sites with multiple import.

1. WILLARD SCOTT, JR. HOUSE

109 North Washington

Built in 1867

Willard Scott, Jr.'s father was one of the original Scott family settlers on the Du Page River (see History) and an early pioneer of Naperville, moving there in 1838. Willard, Sr., operated the Naperville Hotel and Scott's General Store (1846), and later opened a bank and exchange office (1854). The Scott house was for years the center of Naperville's social life.

ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

• ROLLO M. GIVLER HOUSE AND GARAGE -- "ELMHOLM"

144 South Sleight

Built before 1917 by Harry Robinson, architect

R.M.Givler owned and operated the Clarion, an early and important Naperville newspaper.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

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3. RESIDENCE

205 North Wright

The house was purchased by the Evangelical Theological Seminary in 1908. It was moved to its present site in 1912 and has been successively used by the seminary as a dormitory and married students' apartments.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

4. RESIDENCE

122 South Brainard

Built in 1874

The house was occupied for many years by the Hammerschmidt family, prominent in the local quarrying business.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

5. NORTH CENTRAL COLLEGE

North Brainard at East Franklin

Built in 1870 by John Van Osdel, architect; south wing added in 1890.

The building was dedicated as North Western College on 4 October 1870. The town of Naperville donated a site of 8 acres as well as \$25,000 for the construction, hoping that such an institution would become a factor in the growth of the town. They were not mistaken.

ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

6. NICHOLS HOUSE

401 Highland

Built in 1917 by architect Harry Robinson

The Nichols family have, traditionally, been one of Naperville's most prominent.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

7. RESIDENCE

227 East Jefferson

Built in 1866 by G.N. Gross

Little is known of Mr. Gross. This was later the home of Mae T. Watts, a noted ecologist and author.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

8. DEITER HOUSE

12 North Main

Built in 1846 by Dr. David Hess

The house originally stood on Washington Avenue, having been moved to its present site in 1898.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE



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9. RESIDENCE (WILSON HOUSE)

32 East Jefferson  
Built ca.1879 (?)

Documentary evidence points to ca.1879 as the date of construction, but the structure seems stylistically considerably earlier.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

10. KROEHLER MANUFACTURING COMPANY

Loomis at C.B.& Q.RR

Built in 1905; alterations and additions in 1909, 1913.

Organized as the Naperville Lounge Company in 1893, the firm was reincorporated as the Kroehler Manufacturing Co. in 1915. A major employer in Naperville throughout the company's history, the firm became one of the nation's largest manufacturers of upholstered furniture. See also No.20.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

11. PAW PAW STATION

143 West Jefferson

Built in 1833, considerably modified since

Paw Paw Station was the Naper Settlement's first post office and thus the first public building in the county.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

12. J.L.NICHOLS HOUSE

320 Chicago

Built ca.1890

J.L.Nichols was one of Naperville's most prominent citizens. He was active in civic and educational affairs, donating funds for the public library (v.No.18) and for North Central College's gymnasium. Nichols also compiled a popular "Business Guide" and was one of the founders of the Naperville Lounge Co.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

13. GENERAL STORE

ca.218 South Main

Built in 1847-9 by Joseph Naper

Joseph Naper was the town's founder and this store represents only one of his many enterprises, but the only extant one within the district. It has been in use as a store since it was erected.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

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14. PUBLIC SQUARE (CENTRAL PARK)  
Benton & Center

The present park is the site of the original Du Page County courthouse. After the county seat was removed to Wheaton in 1868, the courthouse and square were deeded to Naperville. It has been a city park ever since.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

15. RESIDENCE  
221 West Jefferson  
Built ca.1870

The house also has notable interiors.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

16. DR. TRUITT HOUSE  
48 East Jefferson  
Built ca.1917, Harry Robinson, architect

Dr. Truitt was one of the city's most prominent physicians, practicing for over 50 years and having been instrumental in establishing the city's hospital.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

17. RESIDENCE (KREGER FAMILY HOUSE)  
37 West Van Buren  
Built ca.1860

The Kreger family were not the original occupants of the house, but did live here for many years. They were quite prominent in the city.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

18. NICHOLS LIBRARY  
ca.100 South Washington  
Built in 1898, M. E. Bell, architect

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

19. FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
Northwest Corner Benton and Center  
Built in 1905

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

20. P.E. KROEHLER HOUSE  
126 North Wright  
Built before 1917

P.E. Kroehler began his association with the Naperville Lounge Factory Co. in 1893, became the company's secretary in 1894, the major stockholder in 1899,

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N on Ellsworth to 5th, E on 5th to Loomis, S on Loomis to 4th, E on 4th to the interior property lines E of Loomis, S on these to the interior property lines N of North, E on these to the E line of 515 East North, S on this to North, E on North to the interior property lines E of Columbia, S on these to Highland, W on Highland to Brainard, N on Brainard to Chicago, W on Chicago to Washington, N on Washington to the interior property lines S of Jefferson, W on these to Main, N on Main to Jefferson, W on Jefferson to Webster, S on Webster to the interior property lines S of Jefferson, W on these to Eagle, and then N on Eagle to the point of commencement.

N.B.: Unless otherwise specified, all boundary segments on streets follow the mid-line of those streets.