

## Norwood Park

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Norwegian Old Peoples Home

### Overview:

Old Norwood Park was designed to be a park-like residential neighborhood with large lots, wide streets and elegant single-family homes. It curvilinear street pattern, unusual for Chicago, surrounds several large parks. The early Victorian homes were joined over time by Tudor, American four square, bungalow and ranch-style homes, many designed by noted architects such as Frost & Granger, George C. Nimmons, William C. Jones, George F. Lovdall, William Presto, Dewey & Pavlovich, Gustav Pearson, Benedict J. Bruns, Lyman J. Allison, Axel Teisen, Theis J. Reynertson and Olsen & Urbain.

A long-time cornerstone of the community is the threatened Norwegian Old Peoples Home designed by Giaver & Dinkelberg. The Chicago Historic Resources Survey lists 271 Norwood Park buildings as significant with 81 of them rated orange.

### History:

Old Norwood Park is a National Register district bounded by Harlem, Bryn Mawr, Nagle and Avondale, in the Northwest Corner of Chicago close to Niles. It was made a National Register District in 2002. It includes what some consider the oldest house in Chicago – the 1833 Noble-Seymour-Crippen House that is also home to the Norwood Park Historical Society. The December 2007 issue of Chicago

**Address: bounded by Harlem, Bryn Mawr, Nagle and Avondale**

**Date: Early 1830's-to date**

**Architectural Styles: Victorian, Tudor, American four square, Bungalow and Ranch.**

**National Register District in 2002**

## Chicago 7: Norwood Park Continued:

magazine includes an article about the “battle” between the Clark House and the Noble House for the title of oldest house in Chicago. On a yearly basis since 1980, the Norwood Park Historical Society has been seeking landmark designation for a district and individual buildings in the community. In 1986, the City of Chicago identified a large historic district, but forward movement stopped there despite ongoing work by neighborhood activists. In 1988, the Noble House became the only building landmarked by Chicago. The house was made a National Register Landmark in 2000.

### Threat:

The park-like layout and large lots that give the neighborhood its character also have made it a target for developers in recent years. The community lost three major houses in 2007, including the orange-rated James A. Low House that the Alderman had originally supported for landmarking. The 1909 Norwegian Old Peoples Home and its 1924 addition designed by Giaver & Dinkelberg, architects of the Jeweler’s Building at 35 E. Wacker, is slated for demolition. Norwood Crossing, current owner of the senior citizens center, plans to tear both down, along with a 1975 addition, to make way for a new center called Park View. Construction of the 1975 addition demolished the original 1870 hotel that was turned into the Norwegian Old Peoples



Eastlake Stick Style

Home. Norwood Crossing calls their plan “Building a ‘New’ Campus – Replacing an ‘Old’ One.” An historic Eastlake Stick Style house is also threatened by the development

### Recommendation:

Preservation Chicago applauds and supports the local activists and their efforts since 1980 to create a landmark district. We recommend reviewing the original district identified by the City of Chicago in 1986 and moving forward with its landmarking. We urge that this process be started before the community loses more of these historic buildings. A recent survey of the neighborhood shows that a relatively easy geographic grouping of buildings in the area roughly bounded by Harlem, Talcott, Interstate 90, Newark and Avondale would capture 223 of the 271 sites currently listed in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey. Expansion of the area to include all of the 271 buildings would be most desirable.