



## 2014 *Annual Report*

The year 2014 was a busy year for the Waukesha Landmarks Commission. In addition to the regular duties of the board approving Certificates of Appropriateness and awarding Paint and Repair Grants, the Commission initiated an intensive survey of Historic Properties in the City and began important restoration work on the Silurian Springhouse Terra Cotta Tile Murals. What follows is a summary of all of the important work undertaken by the Commission in 2014.

### **Certificates of Appropriateness and Paint and Repair Grants**

In 2014 the Landmarks Commission approved thirteen (13) Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs). They also awarded eight (8) Landmarks Commission Paint and Repair Grants totaling \$10,000. Most of the grant awards went to individuals doing work on their historic homes but some grants were also given to commercial entities. The total value of projects that were issued COAs is an estimated 1,310,600, however it should be noted that a significant amount of that (\$1.2 million) was for the First United Methodist Church renovations, which is a multi-year phased rehabilitation and restoration project. Subtracting out the church project, there was still over \$110,000 in reinvestment into historic properties (primarily residential homes) in the City.

It should be noted that there were no Certificates of Appropriateness denied in all of 2014 (also there were no denials in 2013). The Landmarks Commission works with applicants to ensure they can do their projects within their budgets while still meeting the guidelines set forth in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties.

### **Intensive Survey of Historic Properties**

In 2013 the City received a \$12,000 grant from the State Historical Society to undertake an intensive survey of historic properties. The survey was the first since the initial survey for Waukesha that occurred in the early 80s. The primary focus of this survey was to look at buildings from the 1930s to the 1960s but it also looked at properties that may have been missed with the earlier survey. The project was completed in July 2014.

The final report identified an additional 20 properties and one potential district in the City that were thought to offer a sufficient degree of historical intrigue and/or architectural integrity to suggest listing in the National Register. The consultant did further research on these properties and determined that seven (7) are potentially eligible right now, eight (8) that would be potentially eligible once they were 50 years old, three (3) that were not eligible, and two (2) that warranted further research. Additionally they identified one potentially eligible new district, the Brickson and Dick Duplexes on Scott Avenue and W. Wabash Avenue.

It is the Landmarks intention to proceed with Local Landmark designations and National Register applications in 2016.

### **Landmarks Nominations**



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In 2014 the Les Paul Performance Center, a bandshell in Cutler Park, was nominated by Alderman Kathleen Cummings to become the City's 51<sup>st</sup> Local Landmark. While the Landmarks recommended in favor of the nomination, the Common Council voted against the designation.

### Historic Springs Work

The Landmarks Commission is responsible for the care and maintenance of several of the City's historic springs located on City property or on private property with easements granted to allow for public access and maintenance of the springs. Using CDBG funds the Commission authorized the commencement of work restoring the tile murals on the Silurian Springhouse. The first mural was successfully restored and work will continue on the remaining seven (7) murals over the coming years. Below are photos of the first mural restoration.



**Before**



**After**

In addition to Silurian, the commission authorized funds for a new decorative iron gate at Acme Spring and new cellar doors at Silurian. Those projects were completed in the spring of 2015.

### Outreach and Education

Staff began a monthly report to the Common Council in 2014. This report outlines the Landmarks actions from the monthly meeting, as well as educational information and updates on Landmarks and other Historical events. The Common Council has found these reports to be a valuable tool to better understand the scope of work the Landmarks Commission is responsible for. The Landmarks Commission also started a Facebook Page to communicate with the public on Landmarks Commission activities and to promote historic preservation in the City of Waukesha.

### State and Federal Tax Credits



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Two projects in the City took advantage of the increased State of Wisconsin Historic Tax Credits. The first project was the Volney Moore House at 307 E. Main Street. Tax Credits were approved for significant work, most importantly much-needed repairs to the existing three (3) story tower which needed to be stabilized. The stabilization required the careful removal of all of the bricks, stabilization work, then putting all of the bricks back on the tower in the same configuration.

The second project was the Kelleher-Weber House at 407 N. Grand Avenue. The house is a beautiful Gothic Revival with many original details. Built in 1879. It is now home to two businesses; Quality Fireplace and Good Friend, Inc., an Autism awareness organization.

In 2014 the State of Wisconsin increased their tax credit to 20% of the eligible project costs, which matches the 20% federal tax credit for historic rehabilitation. This increase has resulted in \$211 million dollars in direct private investment associated with 31 historic rehabilitation projects (including the two in Waukesha) in the State of Wisconsin. In addition to that financial investment there has been an estimated 1,158 new jobs created as a result of this program generating over \$53 million dollars in new wages. Waukesha's two projects, while on the smaller scale, still generated over \$260,000 in new investment in our City.