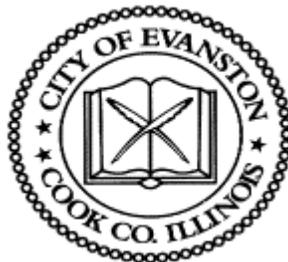


Exhibit A:

A report of the Preservation Commission's findings regarding
Landmark designation for 2715 Hurd Avenue.

PRESERVATION COMMISSION



Report to the Evanston City Council Recommending that the Property at 2715 Hurd Avenue be Designated an Evanston Landmark by Ordinance

Recommended Action:

The Preservation Commission recommends that the City Council designate the lot of record and church structure at 2715 Hurd Avenue (subject property) as an Evanston Landmark. The subject property meets the designation criteria in City Code, Section 2-8-4 Criteria for Designation (A) 3.; (A) 4.; and, in accordance with subsection 2-8-4 (B), the building retains excellent integrity in location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling.

The subject property refines traditional ecclesiastical design in a modern neo-colonial style stripped of typical classical ornamentation – creating an exemplification of early mid-century design movements executed by an internationally recognized master of his craft – Larry Perkins. The individual significance and rarity of the property as an Evanston resource, as well as its ability to skillfully demonstrate a continued evolution of a foundational movement in American ecclesiastic architecture resolves that Landmark designation is not only a necessary means of protection for future generations, but further provides deserved acknowledgement, celebration, and a viable path for adaptive use and future vibrancy which do not exist outside of a Landmark designation.

Address:

2715 Hurd Avenue

Integrity:

Excellent

Construction Date:

1946

Architect of Record:

Perkins, Wheeler, and Will

Architectural Style:

Modern Colonial Revival

Landscape Architect:

Franz Lipp

Use:

Institutional - Religious

Builder:

Ragnar Benson

Condition:

Excellent

Status:

Threatened

Setting:

2715 Hurd Avenue is located in Northwest Evanston on the corner of Park Place and Hurd Avenue with the primary elevation fronting Park Place and the secondary elevation fronting Hurd Avenue. The building is substantial in size, being sited on five individual parcels (that have since been consolidated to two) and is surrounded on the north, east, and south by low density, single-family residential uses and Willard Elementary School on the west. The structure is two blocks north of the west Central Street merchant district. The building was commissioned by the Church of Christ, Scientist and has been owner occupied since construction in 1946.

This portion of the city was the westernmost terminus of the streetcar system, which significantly aided in the viability for residential, commercial, and institutional growth. The merchant district in this location is still largely intact, with many well preserved traditional mixed-use structures, predominately between Lincolnwood Drive to the west and Bennett Avenue to the east. The neighborhood north of Central Street and west of Ewing Avenue was largely developed beginning in the 1930s, shortly before streetcar service was terminated in 1935. Although no historic district was ever formed, much of Northwest Evanston contains a significant concentration of individual Landmarks – a testament to its architectural heritage and significant built environment including a prominent street network and a purposeful system of expansive parkways (Park Place to the north and Lincoln Street to the south) and public parks (Independence Park, Howell Park, Dwight Perkins Woods, Quinlan Park, Ellingwood Park, Ackerman Park), connecting various merchant districts and institutional resources.

Explanation of the significance or lack of significance of the nominated landmark or district as it relates to the criteria for designation:

On May 11, 2021 and subsequently resolved on July 13, 2021, the Preservation Commission found that the nominated property and building at 2715 Hurd Avenue, meet criterion 3 and 4 for Landmark designation by ordinance (City Code, Section 2-8-4 (A)).

Criterion 3:

Its exemplification of an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

The form and plan of the structure are equally as important as the exterior design elements, materiality (general composition of exterior building materials), and workmanship. The form and plan take reference from the English architect James Gibbs's St. Martin-in-the Fields prototype. The general form is a simple temple-front exterior with classical portico, pediment, and steeple in the center of the façade directly behind the portico. In Gibbs's original example, and most subsequent examples across the world and in the United States, the compositions are embellished with applied ornamentation and rich details at the primary elevation temple front portico and steeple.

The typology (classification of common physical characteristics) became a preeminent archetype of ecclesiastic design in America – still widely recognizable and produced to this day. In Evanston, a significant example of the traditional Gibbs typology exists at the First Congregational Church at 1437 Hinman Avenue, an Evanston Landmark designed in 1926 by Tallmadge and Watson (left below).



First Congregational Church (Left)

and 2715 Hurd Avenue (Right).

The connection between the subject property (2715 Hurd) and the Gibbs typology is unmistakable and purposeful; it is simple in plan, with prominent temple-front portico, pediment, and significant central steeple. However, the associated feeling of the subject property is appropriately representative of 20th Century concerns. This is true in terms of both the architects unique explorations at the time, and the continued evolution of architectural trends which replaced historicism and over-ornamentation with simplified forms and materials. The First Congregational Church, for example, was only constructed 20 years prior to 2715 Hurd Avenue but architects Tallmadge and Watson chose to follow precedent rather than experiment with it as Perkins did. What makes the subject property especially unique and a particularly rare example of mid-20th century architectural trends is Perkins' purposeful choice to not completely reject classicism and ornamentation, but rather to convey classical form and ecclesiastic reverence through the use of modern materials and novel applications. The building is notably not devoid of all ornamentation. Rather, ornamentation is applied sparingly and decisively with traditional classical elements interpreted uniquely through vernacular materials and modernist refinement. The church conveys exaggerated and enlarged classical motifs which are reminiscent of much later postmodern movements in architecture and emphasize innovation of design which for the period were particularly bold. The application of classical motifs is a unique harbinger to postmodern combinations of modern and traditional forms and compositional ideas that would only become widespread decades later.

The choice and combination of materials for the subject property were done with intention and purpose, effectively integrating traditional architectural form into a discernable mid-20th Century modern building. The building utilizes vernacular

building materials including common brick, wood cladding, and glass but highlights their simplicity to great advantage to create the refined classicism that clearly references the building's architectural typology while honoring the Church of Christ, Scientist's purposeful reduction of religious symbols and liturgical objects. Nearly all of the original design elements and exterior material applications have been preserved in excellent condition. As such the property retains a unique ability to demonstrate a consistent and purposeful design vocabulary that harmoniously combines centuries-old tradition, new and evolving modern sensibilities, and the client's distinctive qualities.

Criterion 4:

Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Evanston, the State of Illinois, the Midwest region, or the United States.

The structure was designed and constructed in 1946 by the architecture firm Perkins, Wheeler, and Will, the predecessor to today's Perkins & Will. Newspaper clippings from the time supplied as evidence in the nomination indicate that local resident and founding partner Larry Perkins designed the church himself, which has been corroborated by leadership at Perkins and Will indicating Larry was the Partner In Charge with final say over the design of the structure. The spare/modern classicism it presents is typical of Perkins's style at the time -- utilizing simplicity of form and vernacular materials to great advantage. The structure is a rare example of ecclesiastic design by Larry Perkins and may be the only Church he designed during his acclaimed career. Landmark structures in Evanston designed by Perkins and Will include:

1. Evanston Township High School additions (1600 Dodge Ave.) by association,
2. Noyes Street School addition (927 Noyes St.) by association,
3. Phillip Wills home (2949 Harrison Street)
4. Larry Perkins home (2940 Harrison Street),
5. Portions of Foster School (2010 Dewey Avenue)

Larry Perkins (1907-1997) was a significant local, regional, and national architect, a native son of Evanston, and a lifelong resident. Perkins was a founding partner of the Chicago architectural firm Perkins and Will and the son of Dwight H. Perkins, a significant architect who helped pioneer the Prairie and Chicago Schools of architecture. Perkins Woods in North Evanston is named after Dwight Perkins, and is a testament to his effort to establish the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, the first of its kind in the country. Larry Perkins is a significant and influential part of Chicago and Evanston's architectural heritage, not exclusively for his own architectural contributions, although they are significant and many. Moreover, Larry Perkins is part of a family lineage of distinguished architects including his father, Dwight Perkins, a foundational influence of the Chicago and Prairie Schools of Architecture, his cousin, Marion Mahony Griffin, a famous Prairie School architect and co-designer of the City of Canberra, Australia, and his son Bradford Perkins, founder of the International architecture firm Perkins Eastman.

Larry Perkins graduated from Cornell University in 1930 where he met Philip Will. The two formed their own firm, Perkins and Will in 1935, and were later joined by E. Todd Wheeler in 1936, forming Perkins, Wheeler, and Will. Although never a partner, architect and urban planner Bill Brubaker was a significant force for the firm, joining in 1947. In the early years the firm primarily designed residences on Chicago's North Shore. During the Depression and World War II the firm had difficulty finding commissions. It wasn't until the post war years and subsequent "baby boom" that the firm would find significant success. At this time, the firm transitioned from residential design to the design of schools and institutional buildings, which were in short supply at the time. Their first major institutional and nationally significant success was the Crow Island School in Winnetka (1940 in collaboration with Eero Saarinen). The Crow Island School was the recipient of the Twenty-Five Year Award by the American Institute of Architects in 1971 and dedicated a National Historic Landmark in 1990.

During the late 1940s and 50s Perkins, Wheeler, and Will grew significantly, and in 1951 it opened its first satellite office in New York state. By 1960, the firm had opened its Washington D.C office, designed nearly 400 school projects in twenty-four states, and became nationally known as a leader in institutional design that emphasized a human-centered approach and modern, simple design aesthetic. Shortly before Larry Perkins and Todd Wheeler's retirement in 1972, their firm established an office in Florida and New York City. In 1975, Larry Perkins earned the Distinguished Service Award from the American Association of School Administrators, the first person outside of the education field ever to receive the award. Perkins's vision for the design of education facilities was transformative, leaving a lasting legacy and influence on school typologies across the globe. Locally, Larry Perkins was the Chairman of the Evanston Plan Commission for many years, and was one of the City's most prominent residents until his death in 1997. Today Perkins & Will is an internationally prominent architecture firm with over 2,000 employees and significant commissions across the globe.

The property owner has offered anecdotal evidence that Dwight Perkins, Larry's father, was a consulting architect on the project. Dwight Perkins died in 1941, five years before the church was built and a year before the design was completed in 1942. He was in poor health, was almost entirely deaf by the mid 1920s, and had long since retired to California, making it very unlikely that he had any significant involvement with the design. However, if Dwight Perkins was involved in the design of the Church, rather than being evidence against criterion 4, it would be additional evidence in its support -- suggesting that the design of the church was done in partnership between two of Evanston and the Region's most influential architects.

The evidence provided in the nomination includes the building permit which indicates Perkins, Wheeler, and Will as the architect of record as well as multiple newspaper articles dated from the mid 1940s and early 1950s which identify Perkins Wheeler and Will and Larry Perkins specifically, as the architect and lead designer who drew the plans for the structure. This has been corroborated by leadership at Perkins and

Will in Chicago who stated Larry Perkins was the Partner in Charge of the project with final say over all aspects of its design. 2715 Hurd Avenue is also listed on a typed and hand written document which lists all projects designed by either Larry Perkins or Philip Will in Evanston. This document was created in the late 1950s by Larry's wife and makes no reference to Dwight's involvement.

Explanation of the integrity or lack of integrity of a nominated landmark or district:

On July 13, 2021, the Preservation Commission found that the nominated property and building at 2715 Hurd Avenue, in accordance with subsection 2-8-4 (B), retain excellent integrity. The property retains all of the particular style's architectural features, detailing, and spare ornamentation, with no historic building materials covered or removed, and no large and unsympathetic additions.

According to the National Register evaluation guidelines, historic integrity is the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's historic period. Qualities of historic and architectural integrity include:

1. Location
2. Design
3. Setting
4. Materials
5. Workmanship
6. Feeling
7. Association

Historic integrity enables a property to illustrate significant aspects of the past. All seven qualities are important to understand a buildings integrity but they need not all be present. It is recognized that changes occur over a particular building's lifespan, but its integrity can be maintained if the overall sense of past time and place are evident. Each of the seven qualities have been evaluated for the subject property and are included in detail below.

Location: Integrity of location refers to the place where the historic property was constructed or the place a historic event occurred.

The subject property remains in its original location with original principal, secondary and tertiary façade orientations. As such, the relationship between the property and its historic associations has been maintained.

Design: Integrity of design refers to the consistency and composition of design elements and original and cohesive design vocabulary which together formulate the basis for the structures historic identity. These elements are manifested in form, plan, space, structure, and style.

The subject property's form, spatial arrangement, pattern of fenestration, textures and colors of exterior surface materials, and type and style of applied ornamentation have been remarkably maintained.

Setting: Integrity of setting refers to the physical environmental features that taken together create compositional sense of place. Setting includes both the lot of record, as well as the surrounding built and natural environment.

The character of the place in which the subject property was constructed has been largely unaltered since construction in 1946. At that time, the majority of the surrounding properties had been platted and built out including the many proximate Colonial Revivals of the 1930s, on Hurd Avenue, Park Place, and Lincolnwood Drive, as well as the more vernacular bungalows along Lincolnwood Drive north of Park Place, which remain remarkably intact. The setting's designed features, such as the street network, paths, and alleyways remain largely unchanged. Notably, the relationship between the subject property and adjacent buildings, other features, and open space has changed little due to the block-long Willard Elementary School complex to the west.

Integrity of setting is particularly important for District designations and less so for individual Landmark designations. The surrounding neighborhood has evolved in the last 80 years, but remains predominately similar in land use, density, and overall character.

Materials: Integrity of materials refers to the physical characteristics combined in a purposeful pattern or configuration which form the historic property.

The chosen historic exterior materials are not only extant but significantly preserved and in good condition.

Workmanship: Integrity of workmanship refers to the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture, trade or combination of trades which existed during the property's historic period.

The workmanship is evidence of Ragnar Benson and associated contractors labor and skill in constructing the subject property and is a testament to its lasting viability. The property's workmanship, similar to the materials chosen, are expressed in vernacular methods and plain finishes, which in combination with the chosen form, create a unique composition. Significant extant features of note include the colored brick masonry and associated tooling as well as the subject property's joinery including window moldings, wooden Greek Revival relief panels, wood clad pediments, wood frieze, and particularly the temple fronts vertical wood clad masonry piers which interpret traditional column fluting in a modern aesthetic.

Feeling: Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular time or cultural movement.

The design, materials, and workmanship noted above, when taken together as a composition, convey the property's historic character and significance with full effect.

Association: Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. Association is not relevant to the designation criteria the Commission determined were met.

Identification of critical features of the nominated Landmark or areas, properties, sites, and objects in a nominated District to provide guidance for review of alteration, construction, demolition or relocation:

South Elevation:

The south elevation is primary and contains no noticeable alterations from the original design. Critical extant features include:

1. Symmetrical temple front portico with minimized fenestration including a centered entryway with narrow entablature below a large nine-lite fixed window.
2. Prominent wood clad pediment with corner acroteria (architectural ornament placed at the outer corners) supported by four substantial brick piers with inside faces cased in vertical wood cladding.
3. Prominent steeple with narrow wood clad base, inset belfry with corner acroteria and tapered spire
4. Wood frieze board
5. Atypical brick hue treated with soda-ash.

Photos on subsequent page



South Elevation Photos

West Elevation:

The west elevation is secondary and has minimal alterations limited to mechanical ventilation in the wood clad pediment, a non-original access stair and altered access door at the rear-volume.

1. Prominent wood clad pediment with corner acroteria
2. Prominent bay window with large-scale center fifteen lite wood divided lite window between two, two-over-three vertical single-glazed wood divided lite windows and lower six lite wood divided lite window between two one-over-one wood single-glazed windows with prominent joinery. The top and bottom portions of the bay are bisected by large Greek Key motifs.
3. Large vertical expanses of single-glazed four-over-six wood divided lite windows and lower one-over-one double windows with prominent joinery and bisecting Greek Key motifs.
4. Distinctive soda-ash treated common brick of atypical hue
5. Wood frieze board

West Elevation Photos



East Elevation:

The east elevation is secondary with minor alterations including ventilation louvers at the pediment, and a non-original access point at the southeast volume. Critical extant features include:

1. Prominent wood clad pediment with corner acroteria
2. Prominent bay window with large-scale center fifteen lite wood divided lite window between two, two-over-three vertical single-glazed wood divided lite windows and lower six lite wood divided lite window between two one-over-one wood single-glazed windows with prominent joinery. The top and bottom portions of the bay are bisected by large Greek Key motifs.
3. Large vertical expanses of single-glazed four-over-six wood divided lite windows and lower one-over-one double windows with prominent joinery and bisecting Greek Key motifs.
4. Distinctive soda-ash treated common brick of atypical hue
5. Wood frieze board

East Elevation Photo:



North Elevation:

The north elevation is tertiary with minor alterations including a mechanical enclosure at the northeast corner as well as one missing window at the northwest corner. Critical extant features include:

1. Wood Greek Key motifs.
2. Distinctive soda-ash treated common brick of atypical hue

North Elevation Photo:

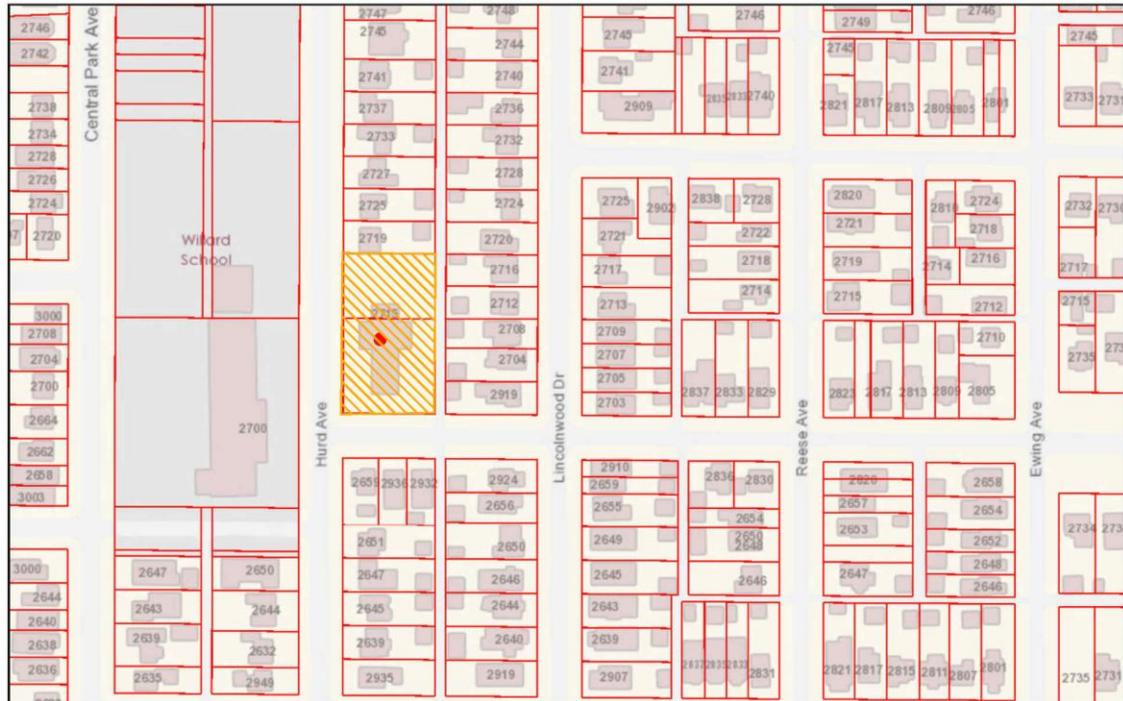


Proposed Design Guidelines, if any, for review of alteration, construction, demolition, or relocation:

If designated as Evanston landmark, the church structure at 2715 Hurd Avenue would be subject to review for exterior work requiring a permit and when visible from the public way under City Code, Section 2-8-9, Standards for Review of Alteration, Construction, Relocation and Demolition. The Commission recommends the following guidelines:

1. Adaptive use of the existing structure is encouraged and alterations which practically facilitate future re-use should be approved so long as the architectural integrity of the structure is retained.
2. Subdivision and development of the north parking lot is appropriate so long as new construction is subordinate in height and mass.

Map showing the location of the nominated Landmark



April 13, 2021

drawGraphics_poly Tax Parcels
 User drawn polygons
● User drawn points

1:2,000
 0 0.015 0.03 0.06 mi
 0 0.0275 0.055 0.11 km

Adaptive Use Potential:

The adaptive use potential for the structure is limited without a Landmark designation. A list of all proposed and special uses in the R1 Single-Family Zoning District that would not necessitate demolition of the structure include:

- Bed and Breakfast Establishments
- Child Residential Care Home
- Cultural Facility
- Daycare home – adult or child
- Dwelling – Single-Family Detached
- Education Institution Private
- Planned Development
- Religious Institution
- Residential Care Home

If Landmarked, the structure would be an excellent candidate for Code Section 6-3-7, “Unique Preservation Use”, which would significantly increase the potential for the property to be adapted as multi-family residential – the most common adaptation for religious structures. Additionally, the Unique Preservation Use would allow for the subdivision and conversion of the parking lot for a single-family residence while maintaining adequate parking off the alley for the multi-family residences. Qualification for the Unique Preservation Use would require minimal modification of the existing codes criteria to extend the provision to individual Landmarks outside of Historic Districts. Planning staff believes it is an amendment which aligns with best planning practices, and the City’s Climate Action Plan -- strengthening the adaptive use potential for historic character defining structures by giving them new life, preserving their embodied energy, and eliminating unnecessary construction and material-based emissions and landfill waste.

Legislative History:

On April 13, 2021 Andrew Nebel (applicant), an individual meeting the criteria under City Code, Section 2-8-5 (A), filed a completed nomination form initiating Landmark nomination proceedings for the property located at 2715 Hurd Avenue. The nomination sought to list the property under criterion 2, 3, 4, and 6. The nominator later revised the nomination to exclude criterion 6 from consideration.

Pursuant to City Code Section 2-8-5 (C) 1., the Second Church of Christ, Scientist (owner of record), was notified by regular mail and e-mail on April 14, 2021. Pursuant to City Code Section 2-8-5 (C) 2., a public hearing was held on May 11, 2021 -- within 90 days of the date the nomination was received. The hearing was conducted in accordance with the Commission's rules and procedures, during which, the Commission heard and considered all testimony and evidence related to the designation criteria from both the applicant, and the owner of record. No members of the public gave testimony during the hearing. Finding that the nomination of the subject property had met designation criteria 3 and 4, the Commission closed the public hearing, initiating proceedings under City Code, Section 2-8-5 (E) in which the Commission's formal report and resolution are to be completed and adopted within 70 days of the close of public hearing. (by Tuesday, July 20).

Applicant presentation and testimony:

The applicant Andrew Nebel presented testimony primarily focused on the importance of Larry Perkins as an Evanston resident, and his prominence as a regional and nationally acclaimed architect. The applicant nominated the property under three criteria: 2, 3, and 4. The applicant presented background information on the structure including the Church of Christ, Scientist, who created a building fund for a new church in 1929 due to capacity issues at their main location at Chicago Avenue and Lake Street (still extant but now the home of the Music Center of the North Shore). The church ultimately selected the site in northwest Evanston due to its proximity to Central Street, at the time a major thoroughfare to downtown, which included a well-traveled streetcar system, and an area which was rapidly growing but still contained large undeveloped parcels.

In regards to criterion 2, and 4, the applicant presented testimony on the life and work of Evanston resident Larry Perkins including his work with Eliel and Eero Saarinen for the Crow Island School in Winnetka (1941), for which he would receive the American Institute of Architects 25 Year Award. The work Perkins undertook at Crow Island was unprecedented, where the form of the school was a result of the internal function and needs of not only adults, but more importantly of the children. Perkins continued to have a successful career designing schools across the country until his retirement in the early 1970s. The applicant made a case that the work at Crow Island and collaboration between the Saarinins influenced the work at the subject property although it was later more accurately stated that the work at Crow Island and the work at the subject property were simply representative of Perkins commitment to design and his abilities as a modern architect, including his collaboration with other architects of the time exploring similar trends.

The applicant went on to describe the life of Larry Perkins outside of his architectural legacy, including his being a native son of Evanston, and son of influential prairie school architect Dwight Perkins. The applicant noted many of Larry's civic achievements including being associated with many structures in Evanston, Chicago and the nation, member and chairman of the Plan Commission, member of the Cook County Building Codes Commission, and ambassador for Evanston. The applicant cited the late Mayor Joan Barr who called Perkins, "an individual and an institution in our City." Perkins was voted Chicagoan of the Year in 1963, received the American Association of School Administrators Distinguished Service Award in 1975, authored two books, (*Schools* in 1949 and *Workplace for Learning* in 1957) and after his retirement continued his legacy by sharing his deep knowledge and desire to teach with future architects as a professor at the University of Illinois – Chicago, the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and at the University of Arizona.

At the time of his death, Evanston's City Council honored Larry Perkins with resolution R-97 noting his significance to the city.

Notable commissions of Perkins, Wheeler & Will include:

1. Adlai Stevenson home in Libertyville
2. First National Bank in Chicago
3. The US Gypsum Building in Chicago
4. Rockford Memorial Hospital in Rockford
5. The Dawes School in Evanston
6. Washington School in Evanston
7. Chute Middle School in Evanston
8. Notes School addition in Evanston
9. First Congregational Church in Evanston (remodel)
10. Methodist Building in Evanston
11. Foster Field House in Evanston
12. Phillip Will, Jr. Home in Evanston
13. The Leonard Wall House in Evanston
14. Skiles School Additions in Evanston
15. ETHS Additions in Evanston

It can be said, although debated, that no greater and more influential architect has called Evanston home than Larry Perkins. His firm went on to become the second largest in the world by 2019 with offices and commissions worldwide.

In regards to Criterion #3, the applicant described the structure as a unique representation of mid-century and classical architectural influences, which are uniquely conveyed due to the condition of the church's exterior design intentions and material applications. These include its original cruciform shape, what the applicant called a typical western church form, more aptly identified as the Gibbs church typology, and its ability to represent reverence through common and

simplified materials – primarily brick, glass, and wood. The applicant supplied the following key features:

1. Greek key reliefs on panels
2. Original wood windows
3. Recessed bay windows
4. 84-foot-tall steeple
5. Acroteria on all corners and mirrored in the steeple
6. Prominent columns and front entry
7. Original inscriptions, and lighting fixtures
8. Brick hue as treated with soda ash

The applicant and consultant Susan Benjamin stated that the bricks are a “Chicago Common Brick” crafted from clay from the Chicago River. The applicant also retrieved from the Church’s archives quotes from J. Frank Grives, Chairman of the church’s Building Committee in 1946 who said, “the church would vary from the conventional church in some respects and will pioneer some ideas that may be the forerunner of a style”.

The applicant continued noting that other significant individuals had contributed to the design of the church including Ragnar Benson Construction, LLC that would receive the Horatio Alger Award, and acquired other notable commissions including the Three Mile Island Towers, Chicago CNA Building, and Harbor Point Towers. The workmanship of Ragnar Benson has been maintained in excellent condition.

Additionally, the Landscape Architect for the project, Franz Lipp, completed a significant project at the subject property in 1968-1972 including the general site plan seen today. Unfortunately, other than some of the property’s larger ornamental trees, the landscaping has not been maintained to the same standard as that of the building. The Art Institute of Chicago has over 57 Franz Lipp drawings in its collection; he was also a prominent photographer. He completed significant landscape projects across the country, including the Brooks McCormick home, and the Kohler Memorial.

The applicant’s nomination is attached.

Owner of record testimony:

A representative for the owner of record, Garry Shumaker, provided testimony against the nomination noting that the applicant had not discussed the nomination with the owner of record, that designating the structure a Landmark was unnecessary, and that the designation criteria were not met. Mr. Shumaker alleged that in regards to criterion 2 and 4, the work at 2715 Hurd Avenue was not significant in the formulation of Larry Perkins’s career or body of work as an architect who rather focused primarily on the design of educational resources, and that the church did not represent or expand on broader movements in religious architecture.

In regards to criterion 3, Mr. Shumaker stated that the refined classicism of the church was not unique but was representative of larger design movements during the mid-20th Century including the International Style and later successions still popular today, but were not significant in their formulation or evolution. Additionally, Shumaker stated that the nominations reference to the Saarinens' work at the Cranbrook Educational Community, and 2715 Hurd Avenue and any continued collaboration between Perkins and Saarinen which may have influenced the design of the church, was conjecture. Shumaker continued to argue that the structures common materials, forms, and refinement were influenced not by thematic design movements, but by a cost conscious Second Church of Christ, Scientist and their preference to reduce emphasis on ornamentation, liturgical objects, and sacred spaces. The church is not unique in this respect with similar design treatments and philosophies for Church of Christ, Scientist structures constructed across the country. The design, materials, and means and methods of construction were common for both Larry Perkins, the architect, and Ragnar Benson, the contractor, and remain in common use today.

Finally, Mr. Shumaker stated that the owners object to any additional oversight and the protections sought for the property and afforded through the Preservation Ordinance and that they were unnecessary and unwarranted (notably overlooking that the property was recently proposed for demolition).

Additional Testimony on June 8, 2021

At the June 8 meeting, the Public Hearing was re-opened to allow representatives of the church the opportunity to provide additional testimony and submit additional evidence for consideration at their request.

Representatives of the church indicated that the church archives contained letters from the 1930s indicating that Dwight Perkins had a role in the design of the building but provided no evidence to that effect. Additional concerns were raised with the ability to market the property as well as the structures adaptive use potential which is addressed by the Commission in its aforementioned proposed guidelines for designation and section on adaptive use. Previous versions of this report included all permitted and special uses which were perceived by the owner as a list of potential adaptive uses. This has been corrected to avoid confusion and clarification has been made that subdivision of the parking lot for development would be advantageous as a component of multi-family adaptation of the principle structure.

Finally, representatives stated that aspects of previous drafts and commission memos regarding the property were inconsistent, but in reality the versions evolved as further evidence was presented and reviewed and individual Commissioners provided input on the report. It was further asserted that facts and the basis of the recommendation were flawed and incorrect, but evidence to support those assertions were not presented by representatives of the church.

Additional Testimony on July 13, 2021

At the July 13 meeting, legal counsel retained by the owners of the church provided additional testimony. The owners legal counsel disagreed with criterion 4 being met and the evidence provided and finding of fact by the Commission that Larry Perkins designed the church. It was said that the Commission, Landmarks Illinois, and Perkins and Wills leadership in the Chicago office presumed this to be true without providing evidence. However, the owners legal counsel failed to address the two newspaper articles which indicate that Larry Perkins drew the plans for the structure (included in the nomination) and that this fact was corroborated by Perkins and Will which agreed that given the timing in the firms history, Larry Perkins would have been the Partner in Charge for the project with final say over all aspects of its design. The owners representative further provided an oral history of Larry Perkins as new evidence, making the presumption that he did not design the church because the structure was not mentioned during the interview. The owners representative then claimed that even if Larry Perkins had in fact designed the structure, criterion 3 was not met because the structure was not high-style, was not innovative, and was not a seminal work for Larry Perkins career or the firm of Perkins and Will. This is well disputed in the Commissions Report. Finally, the owners representative expressed frustration with City Staff for not discussing preservation of the structure during review of a withdrawn application for Planned Development at DAPR. City staff believes this is a misunderstanding of the role of DAPR and the objection was responded to in a memorandum included in the July 13 packet. It is common for a resources significance to be unknown, and nomination for designation to not occur until a resource is significantly threatened – as was the case for the subject property, which was only nominated and extensively researched by the nominator following a proposal for demolition.

Owner Consent:

Owner consent, although welcome, is not required for nomination or designation as a Landmark by ordinance. This is true of any well-drafted preservation ordinance and is consistent with legal determinations and best planning practices nationwide. Owner consent provisions result in the demolition of otherwise qualified and deserving properties – properties which are highly adaptable and contain significant embodied energy which even under best circumstances are replaced with buildings that take decades to offset waste, construction, and material based energy impacts on the climate. A significant possibility in this instance as well considering the subject property was recently proposed for demolition and the owners representative claims it cannot be repurposed despite its excellent condition. If designated, the property owner retains their right to due process, and can continue to propose construction, alteration, demolition, or relocation in accordance with City Code Section 2-8-8 and 2-8-9. If concerns are raised to the designation limiting the use or value of the property, the owner is afforded due process through City Code Section 2-8-10, Economic Hardship and City Code Section 2-8-11, Special Merit, allowing the argument of an economic burden to be thoroughly considered by the Commission and ultimately determined by the City Council with documentation and evidence rather than hearsay.

Preservation is not a means of stopping change – rather it is a means of managing change at the benefit of the public good. This year, and similarly across subsequent years, the Commission has approved over 95% of cases brought before it. In the last twenty years (as far as the City’s digital records go), the subject property has not applied for a single permit which would have necessitated review by the Commission. The Commission believes that the property would have increased marketability and adaptive use potential as a Landmark. Notably, Landmark designation is the only viable path for adaptive use as multi-family residential -- the most common for religious structures. Many churches in Evanston have been adapted for a residential use including the recently approved adaptive use of the Evangelical Covenant Church at 1101 Church Street near the downtown and additional structures. Additionally, owners of historic properties are afforded unique incentives which make adaptive use and associated financing more attractive and feasible for developers. These include offering residents valuable technical assistance and expertise not offered to residents outside of Historic Districts or of properties not designated as Landmarks as well as significant financial incentives for local Landmarks and Historic Properties including:

1. Preservation Easements;
2. Property Tax Assessment Freeze; and,
3. Class L Designation
4. Illinois Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program (requires NRHP designation)
5. Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program (requires NRHP designation)

Conclusion:

Preservation plays an indispensable role in shaping and maintaining the visual character, social fabric, and resiliency of Evanston’s distinct neighborhoods. Evanston’s architectural heritage is inexorably linked to its past, including its many distinguished religious buildings such as 2715 Hurd Avenue. These resources bind Evanston’s residents to their neighborhoods and physical environments, and provide opportunities for current and future generations to tell stories of Evanston’s historic and architectural legacy -- including prominent architects and civic leaders such as the Perkins family and in this case Larry Perkins individually. It is easy and common, as the owner’s representative has done, to minimize the importance and quality of mid-20th century architects and the resources they left behind. However, these resources are now eligible for the National Register, are at the forefront of Preservation Planning, and are becoming increasingly acknowledged for their quality, character, and adaptive use potential. Evanston’s early Modern, Mid-Century, International Style, and Brutalist expressions of architecture are worthy of protection and reflective of Evanston’s continued vibrancy and economic relevance from the late 1930s through the 1970s. To that end, the church structure at 2715 Hurd Avenue is irreplaceable and represents evolutionary trends in architecture, high quality design and innovation, and high craftsmanship, which in composition offers visual interest and curiosity in materials and forms not commonly used in today’s construction.

The Commission resolves with unanimous agreement that the nominated property meets criterion 3, and 4 for designation, that the property retains excellent integrity, and therefore recommends that City Council designate the property and church as a Landmark as a means of safeguarding the City’s historic, cultural, and architectural heritage.