

Some Homes to Note

1) 57 Pineywoods Avenue (1902)

Designed by Louis F. Newman and built for Dr. Harry C. Medcraft, this shingle style house presents a picturesque silhouette with its steeply pitched gables, recessed porch, two story bay window and large carriage house.



2) 45 Sumner Avenue (1911)

The local firm of Eugene and George Gardner designed the Sumner Avenue Elementary School. It was constructed on the site of a small burial ground whose remains and headstones were relocated to Oak Grove Cemetery.

3) 52 Sumner Avenue (1912)

Faith Church was also designed by the firm of Eugene and George Gardner. The English Gothic Style building replaced a small chapel which dated from 1872.

4) 115 Sumner Avenue (1898) *Shown on cover*

Designed by Louis F. Newman, the developer of the Forest Park Heights neighborhood, this Colonial Revival home was built for Mr. and Mrs. James Phillip Gray whose bequest led to the building of the Museum of Fine Arts and much of its collection. Seriously deteriorated, the house was restored by Concerned Citizens For Springfield in 2011.

5) 194 Sumner Avenue (1898)

This house is one of the few Mission Revival style houses in Springfield. Eugene Dexter, owner of a large bakery, had this house remodeled in 1912 with the stucco walls, tile roof, and broad veranda.

6) 61 Washington Road (1896)

Thornton Burgess (1874-1965) lived in this home from 1905 to 1955. It was here that he first told his son the bedtime stories which became "Old Mother West Wind", the first of his 169 children's books. Burgess also prepared here his weekly radio program that he broadcast from the Hotel Kimball between 1924 and 1936.

7) 191 Forest Park Avenue (1901)

The Shingle Style First Park Memorial Baptist Church was designed by local architect G. Wood Taylor, the architect for William McKnight's Mutual Investment Company that developed the north side of Sumner Avenue. Charles, John McKnight's son, was part of the company.

8) 14 Fairfield Street (1902)

This shingle clad house features an unusual three story corner tower and Dutch Gables as you might have seen in New York City in the 17th and 18th Century, as well as a variety of window shapes and sizes.



9) 74 Fairfield Street (1903)

This Shingle/Colonial Revival was built for Henry Russell. Its most famous resident was Theodore Geisel, who is known to the world as Dr. Seuss. His family lived here from 1906 to 1943 while his father was Superintendent of Parks.

10) 78 Riverview Terrace



This formal Tudor Revival Style home, with its half-timbering and use of stucco, was a popular style that harked back to Medieval England and was second only to the Colonial Revival style during this period. This style was easily adapted to both large and small homes.

History

The Forest Park area was sparsely settled until the late nineteenth century. Creation of Forest Park, which gave the neighborhood its name, and the extension of the trolley system, spurred growth in the 1890s. Over the next 30 years, the area became popular with Springfield's middle class.

One of the largest local historic districts in Massachusetts, Forest Park Heights received its designation in 1975. Its 600 homes reflect the most popular styles from the 1890s to the 1920s.

Abutting the neighborhood is Forest Park, an 800 acre park featuring walking trails, playing fields, children's zoo, lakes and ponds. The park also hosts the annual Bright Nights Holiday Light display.

As you tour the neighborhood, you may want to look for the various styles of architecture popular at the turn of the century.

Queen Anne (1880s-1890s) is the style most considered "Victorian." Irregular massing of house and roof, decorative shingles, and porches with turned columns and spindles are hallmarks of this English import.

Colonial Revival (1890s-1990s) America's most enduring style began after the 1876 Centennial Celebration renewed interest in early architecture. Revival houses often have multi-pane windows, fan lights and classically detailed doorways.

Shingle Style (1890s-1900s) featured plain shingles as wall cladding. This style spread across the nation from posh summer resorts in the northeast and has been called "the most original American style."

Tudor Revival (1900s-1940s) is second only to Colonial Revival in longevity. It harkens back to medieval England with half-timbering, stucco, diamond shaped windows, and elaborate chimneys.

Arts and Crafts (1900-1920s) is a romantic version of English country cottages with stucco finishes and sometime even curved roof shingles to resemble thatching. The traditional Bungalow also is part of the Arts and Crafts tradition.

A Guide to

Forest Park Heights

*Springfield's Largest
"Streetcar Suburb"*



A self-guided driving or walking tour to 19 homes

The Springfield Preservation Trust, Inc.
Forest Park Civic Association
Concerned Citizens for Springfield

Forest Park Civic Association

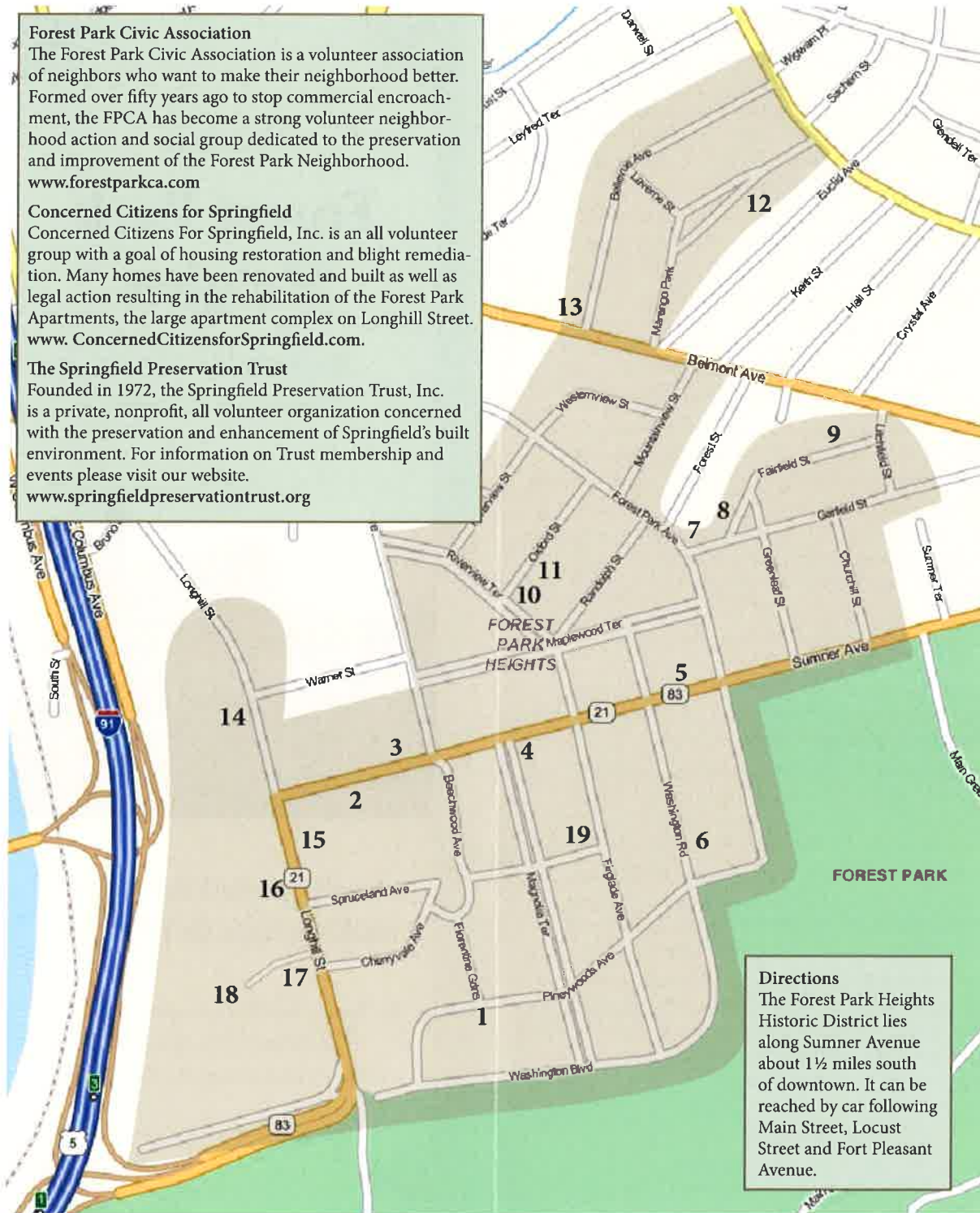
The Forest Park Civic Association is a volunteer association of neighbors who want to make their neighborhood better. Formed over fifty years ago to stop commercial encroachment, the FPCA has become a strong volunteer neighborhood action and social group dedicated to the preservation and improvement of the Forest Park Neighborhood. www.forestparkca.com

Concerned Citizens for Springfield

Concerned Citizens for Springfield, Inc. is an all volunteer group with a goal of housing restoration and blight remediation. Many homes have been renovated and built as well as legal action resulting in the rehabilitation of the Forest Park Apartments, the large apartment complex on Longhill Street. www.ConcernedCitizensforSpringfield.com.

The Springfield Preservation Trust

Founded in 1972, the Springfield Preservation Trust, Inc. is a private, nonprofit, all volunteer organization concerned with the preservation and enhancement of Springfield's built environment. For information on Trust membership and events please visit our website. www.springfieldpreservationtrust.org



Directions

The Forest Park Heights Historic District lies along Sumner Avenue about 1 1/2 miles south of downtown. It can be reached by car following Main Street, Locust Street and Fort Pleasant Avenue.

11) 17 Oxford Street (1913)



Designed by G. Wood Taylor, William McKnight's architect and son-in-law, Oxford Street features many homes in the Arts and Crafts style, the most modern style from 1910-1915.

12) 87 Marengo Park (1903)

Edward Perry, a travelling salesman, was the first occupant of this home. The turret, upper oriel window, and elaborate Doric columned porch show marvelous detail. The terraced street is one of several in the neighborhood.

13) 8 Bellevue Avenue (1907)



This house was built for Dr. George and Ada Foster. In 1923 Dr. Charles and Mabel Spaid purchased it and added an office designed by the firm of Kirkham and Parlett. After their deaths in the 1960's, the house was almost demolished for a gas station but it was stopped by neighborhood opposition. Note the brick Carriage House in the rear.

14) 146 Longhill Street (1907)

This stucco home was built for Frank Wesson, grandson of the founder of Smith and Wesson Gun Company. He lived here until his death in 1962.

15) 215 Longhill Street (ca 1855)

This vernacular home is the oldest known house in the area, dating from when this was a small

farming community clustered along Longhill Street and Sumner Avenue. The property was long in the hands of the Darling family.

16) 240 Longhill Street (1895)

This site has been known as Fort Hill where English settlers built a stockade fort for the local Indians in 1666. The Indians remained only until 1675 when they joined in King Phillip's War, burned the village of Springfield, and then left the area. During construction of the large Queen Anne style house, some of the earliest systematic excavations in the region found post holes, fire pits, pipes and other artifacts.

17) 276 Longhill Street (1899)



Louis Newman designed this house described as "modified French Renaissance of the Chateau period." It has long been the home of Joseph and Mary Napolitan. Joe, the noted political consultant, has advised numerous campaigns including JFK's successful bid for the Presidency.

18) 31 Buena Vista Place (1897)

This Tudor Revival Style house was designed by Louis F. Newman for his own home. Newman was the general manager of the Forest Park Heights Company, which developed most of the neighborhood south of Sumner Avenue.

19) 48 Magnolia Terrace (1898)

Noted Springfield builder Napoleon Russell built this classically inspired home featuring fluted corner pilasters with Corinthian capitals, an entrance portico with fluted columns and a rounded bay at the south corner façade. Truly a formal and imposing home facing the broad terraced street, the showcase street of the Forest Park Heights development.