



# WILL COUNTY

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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### FREQUENTLY ASKED WILL COUNTY LANDMARK NOMINATION QUESTIONS

- **What may be nominated as a landmark?**  
Any property, structure, or natural feature located within the unincorporated area of Will County which is worthy of preservation, rehabilitation, or restoration because of its historic, scenic, or architectural significance may be considered by the Will County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC).
- **Who can propose landmark designation?**  
Any individual or group of individuals as well as HPC may propose landmarks or preservation districts for designation by the Will County Board.
- **What fees must be paid to nominate a landmark?**  
No fees are required to submit an application for the nomination of a property for landmark designation.
- **Will the owner of the property be notified of pending designation?**  
Yes, in accordance with legal requirements of public hearings. Additionally, adjacent landowners will be notified of pending action.
- **What is the difference between “common name” and “historic name”?**  
“Common name” refers to any name by which the property is generally known by at the present time. “Historic name” refers to any name(s) by which the property was previously known either officially or unofficially.
- **Are photocopies acceptable for the required submittals?**  
Yes, photocopy reproductions of maps, photographs, historic views, and printed materials (such as diary accounts) are acceptable. However, current photographs are required and digital photographs are encouraged with each application. The Commission and its staff will complete additional photography for record and any presentations.

- **Is “owner consent” required when nominating a property?**  
The Will County Preservation Ordinance does not require owner consent.
- **Must the applicant(s) include his/her/their address, telephone number, and signature?**  
Yes. The application will not be considered complete and will not be processed without the inclusion of this information.
- **What is the process for landmark designation?**  
Upon the receipt of a completed Historic Landmark Nomination Form, HPC shall provide within fourteen days an initial report stating if the nominated property meets the criteria for designation. Within thirty (30) days of the completion of the initial findings, HPC shall schedule a public hearing on the nomination. Within sixty (60) days from the close of the public hearing shall make a recommendation to the County Board. Within sixty days (60), the County Board shall either 1) designate the landmark; 2) take no action which automatically institutes landmark status; or 3) seek further information from HPC within forty-five (45) days for action by the County Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Upon designation as a landmark, the owner of the property shall be notified as well as the Recorder of Deeds, the County Clerk, and HPC.
- **What effect will landmark designation have on a nominated property?**  
The Will County Preservation Ordinance protects designated landmarks from any alteration, construction, or demolition and requires the maintenance of any designated landmark. All work must be completed after a Certificate of Appropriateness has been granted by the Commission according to the established Standards for Review. Failure to comply with the Ordinance shall be subject to financial penalties. In certain cases and upon documentation, the Commission may issue a Certificate of Economic Hardship.
- **Where can the Will County Historic Preservation Ordinance be reviewed?**  
The Ordinance can be reviewed at the Will County Office Building or the Will County Land Use Department.
- **What is a Certificate of Economic Hardship?**  
According to the Will County Historic Preservation Ordinance, a Certificate of Economic Hardship is a certificate issued by the Preservation Commission authorizing an alteration, construction, removal or demolition even through a Certificate of Appropriateness has previously been denied or may be denied.
- **What is a Certificate of Appropriateness?**  
Per the Will County Historic Preservation Ordinance, a Certificate of Appropriateness is a certificate issued by a Preservation Commission indicating its approval of plans for alteration, construction, demolition, or removal affecting a nominated or designated landmark or property within a nominated or designated preservation district.
- **How does landmark designation affect my right to demolish my historic building?**

The Will County Historic Preservation Commission and/or its staff review all demolition applications of buildings 30 years and older regardless of whether or not it is a designated landmark. In the event that a demolition is the only option for a historic building, documentation of the building will be conducted prior to demolition approval.

- **Does landmark designation mean that I cannot alter my property without the consent of the Will County Historic Preservation Commission?**

Yes. Proposed alterations of designated properties must be submitted and reviewed by the Will County Historic Preservation Commission. However, because the Commission views historic preservation as a collaborative effort, at all times, the Commission and its staff work with the property owners to ensure that the proposed alterations meet not only the design guidelines as specified by the Historic Preservation Ordinance, but also the needs and expectations of the property owners.

- **Does landmark designation mean that I am obligated to rehabilitate my property?**

Landmark designation does not obligate a property owner to rehabilitate his or her property. However, in the event that rehabilitation is necessary, once a property is designated an historic landmark, it becomes eligible for various low-cost loans, tax credits, and grants to assist with its rehabilitation.

- **Will landmark designation affect your property value or surrounding property values?**

No. Typically, landmark designation does not guarantee an increase or decrease in the value of your property or surrounding properties.

- **Will landmark designation make your property more difficult to sell?**

In most cases, designated historic properties are sold without any conflict over the sale price.

- **Will landmark designation increase your homeowner's insurance?**

Generally, landmark designation will not affect your insurance rates.

- **Who should be contacted to answer questions about completing or the status of a nomination application?**

Contact the Will County Land Use Department Historic Preservation Manager (815-774-3321) The Commission is also available to provide informal reviews of a proposed landmark nomination prior to the completion of the form.