

HISTORIC NAME: Oscar Olson House

COUNTY: Isanti

CURRENT NAME:

CITY/TWP.: Braham

LEGAL DESC.: Block 1, lots 6 and 7, Grove's Addition to the city of Braham

ADDRESS: 309 Beechwood

CLASSIFICATION:

Building X
Structure _____
Object _____
District _____

CONDITION:

Excellent _____
Good X
Fair _____
Deteriorated _____

SIGNIFICANCE:

Local X
State _____
National _____

THEME/S:

Primary Commerce
Secondary Architecture
Others _____OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Yes ___ No X Restricted _____

PRESENT USE:

VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD: Yes X No _____

Residence

OCCUPIED: Yes X No _____

DATE CONSTRUCTED: 1914

ORIGINAL USE: Residence

ORIGINAL OWNER: Fred Soderberg

ARCHITECT/BUILDER:

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Arlys D. Goodman
309 North Beechwood
Braham, MN 55006ACREAGE: Less than one acre X

LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.:

UTM REFERENCE:

Cambridge Quad.

FORM PREPARED BY: Britta Bloomberg

15 / 486920 / 5063420

DATE: December 1979

DESCRIPTION:

The Oscar Olson House, is located in a residential neighborhood across the railroad tracks from the central area of Braham. The area includes other frame residences of the same period but of smaller proportions and more modest architectural design.

The Colonial Revival two-story frame house, constructed in 1914, is distinctive among the housing stock of Braham. Design features of the house include a two story entrance portico supported by columns, bevel siding, large three-part windows, corner pilasters, bay windows, a central entry adorned by side-lights, and a central second story balcony and doorway flanked by oval windows. Shutters adorn the windows on the front (west) facade. Two interior chimneys pierce the gable roof, one on the south end of the ridge line and the other towards the rear of the building.

A one story garage of more recent construction is located immediately northeast of the house. A small frame out-building (ca.1915) is also located on the property.

The house retains significant design integrity and has been very well maintained.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Oscar Olson House is significant as the home of one of Braham's long-time community leaders and as one of the county's most distinctive residences both in scale and design. The house was constructed in 1914 by Fred Soderberg, who sold it to Oscar Olson five years later. Olson resided in the house until his death in 1973. During that time he earned the reputation of being a "founder, leader, conservator" of the community's "economic progress, social well-being, and civic consciousness."¹ Olson was a prominent banker in Braham for over sixty years and a civic leader and enthusiast during most of the history of the community. Braham had been platted in 1899 when the Great Northern Railroad Line first crossed the county, the Olson House was constructed during the community's second decade of development. With its impressive size and Classical Revival design features, the house is distinctive among the housing stock of Braham and of the entire county. It has been well preserved and retains significant design integrity.

¹ Braham Journal, Sept. 30, 1965.