

HISTORIC NAME: Center City Historic District

COUNTY: Chisago

80001996

CURRENT NAME:

CITY/TWP.: Center City

LEGAL DESC.: Multiple -- see attached

ADDRESS: Summit Avenue

CLASSIFICATION:	CONDITION:	SIGNIFICANCE:	THEME/S:
Building <u>X</u>	Excellent _____	Local <u>X</u>	Primary <u>Architecture</u>
Structure _____	Good <u>X</u>	State _____	Secondary <u>Commerce</u>
Object _____	Fair _____	National _____	Others <u>Religion</u>
District _____	Deteriorated _____		<u>Politics/Government</u>

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Yes ___ No ___ Restricted X

PRESENT USE:

VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD: Yes X No ___

Primarily residential

OCCUPIED: Yes X No ___

DATE CONSTRUCTED: Multiple

ORIGINAL USE: Primarily residential

ORIGINAL OWNER: Multiple

ARCHITECT/BUILDER:

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Multiple - see attached

ACREAGE: Less than one acre
approx. 9.4LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.: Chisago County Historical Society,
Taylors Falls Chapter, Taylors Falls, MNUTM REFERENCE:
Lindstrom Quad.

FORM PREPARED BY: Britta Bloomberg

15 / 514360 / 5026540

DATE: January 1980

DESCRIPTION:

The Center City Historic District is a residential area located on the east side of Summit Avenue, the street which connects the "Upper and Lower" portions of Center City. The district is situated on a hill that overlooks North Center Lake in central Chisago County.

Center City was first platted on a peninsula of the lake in 1857. The Northern Pacific Railroad line was built a mile south of the original plat in 1881, and the area known as "Lower Town" was developed. Many of the community's business establishments moved from their original locations in the original "Upper Town" to the area nearer the tracks.

The lots comprising the Center City Historic District were laid out in 1888 at the same time the Lower Town area was platted. All of the nineteen residences in the district were constructed after 1888; most were built during the first decade of the twentieth century.

The first Chisago Lake Evangelical Lutheran Church was constructed in 1856 on a site at the east end of Upper Town's Main Street. The present structure (1888) is the third building to occupy the prominent location. It replaced the earlier 1856 frame and 1882 brick church buildings. Its 1888 construction date makes it a contemporary of the district's residences.

The district's appearance is basically unchanged since the first decade of the twentieth century. The first residences to be constructed were those nearest Upper Town and the church: the Frank G. Lorens House (#2), S.J. Johnson House (#3), Solomon Peterson House (#4), and Fred Benson House (#7) were all constructed during the 1890s. Other early houses in the district include three buildings that were moved into the area around the turn of the century. The Elof Peterson House (#5) was allegedly moved from the declining river town of Franconia and the Oberg House (#12) was moved from Upper Town. All of the remaining residences except the Wennerberg House (1940) were built during the first decade of the twentieth century.

Many of the buildings in the district were constructed by William Carlson (#18), the town's resident carpenter/builder and owner of the local lumberyard. He also built numerous other structures in the area and did much of the woodwork in the Chisago Lake Evangelical Lutheran Church (#1).

The district is Chisago County's best preserved concentration of late nineteenth and early twentieth century residences, and is representative of the residential building stock dominating the Chisago Lakes area. Characteristic features include frame construction,

classical detailing, full front porches, emphasis on gable ornamentation, and extensive use of windows as primary decorative elements. Palladian windows, for example, are frequently found in the finer area homes (#14, #18), and irregularly shaped windows decorate houses of all sizes (#2, #6, #8, #10, #17, #18, #19, #20).

Descriptions of the district's twenty buildings follow. The numbers correspond to the attached map and progress south from the church to Schulze Avenue.

1. Chisago Lake Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1888, Romanesque, buff colored brick, gable roof, rectangular with entrance tower, round arched stained glass windows, buttresses, decorative brickwork defining bays and boxed pediment, tower with louvered belfry and spire capped by gold cross, clocks located on each side of tower above belfry. A large new addition (1976) is located off of the northeast facade of the church.
2. Frank G. Lorens House, 1892, Queen Anne, 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ story white frame, intersecting gable roof, two story tower, pedimented windows, angled corners with triangular windows and decorative corner brackets.
3. S.J. Johnson House, 1896, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ story red frame, intersecting gable roof, pedimented second story windows, bay window, alteration in siding and a large window on street facade.
4. Solomon Peterson House, ca.1897, 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ story gray frame, intersecting gable roof, angled corner on north side, south bay window, palladian window and fish scale siding in gable end facing street, entry porch with turned posts.
5. Elof Peterson House, moved from Franconia ca. 1900, 2 story white frame, hip roof with slightly flared eaves, dormer facing street, enclosed front porch, square plan with rear additions.
6. Andrew Holtman House, ca.1901, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ story white frame, rectangular in plan, intersecting gable roof, full front porch supported by turned posts, spindle and spool-like balusters, small diamond shaped windows flanking central window in front gable.
7. Fred Benson House, ca.1896, 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ story beige and white frame, intersecting gable roof, pedimented window frames, screened front porch.
8. Mary Andrews House, 1902, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ story white frame, intersecting gable roof with steep pitch, gable ends featuring fish scale siding and fanned bevel siding in a recessed half circle area, rounded front porch with turned posts, entry flanked by elliptical window and large paired window.
9. Peter S. Carlson House, ca.1905, 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ story white frame, steeply pitched intersecting gable roof, full front screened porch, oriel window on south side.
10. J.E. Melin House, ca.1900, 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ story white frame, rectangular plan with intersecting gable roof, oriel window on lower half of front gable end flanked by small circular windows, three arched openings in peak of front facade gable end, diamond-shaped windows flanking central windows on north and south gable ends, bay window.

(see continuation sheet)

11. Wennerberg House, ca.1940, 1 story white frame, low hip roof, groups of four windows with four over four lights, side entry, central chimney. (Intrusion).
12. Oberg House, moved from Upper Town ca.1900, 2 story white frame with one story wing on south side, gable roof, front screened porch across both sections, double hung windows.
13. A.P. Stolberg House, ca.1910, 2 story white frame, low hip roof with deep overhanging eaves, square plan with additions, paired double hung windows with one over one lights.
14. V.L. Johnson House, ca.1910, 2½ story frame painted gray, complex hip and gable roof, pent roofs across gable ends, palladian window in front facade gable end, two story bay window, central entry porch, leaded glass in upper window sashes.
15. Dr. Gunz House, ca.1910, 2½ story white frame, steeply pitched hip roof with slightly flared eaves, dormer window on street facade, enclosed side entry, paired windows flanked by shutters.
16. Lilly Lorens House, ca.1895, 2 story white frame, truncated hip roof with bracketted cornice, L-shaped plan, wrap-around front porch with turned posts and balusters, tall narrow paired windows, side entry, decorative chimney crown.
17. Alfred B. Slattengren House, 1901, 1½ story white frame, steeply pitched intersecting gable roof, enclosed front porch, central bay flanked by small circular windows in front facade gable end.
18. William Carlson House, 1904, 2½ story white frame, gabled hip roof, balconied wrap-around porch with turned posts and balustrade, pent roof across gable ends, palladian window, two story bay window on south facade, front entry framed by side lights.
19. C.J. Wahlstrom House, 1902, 1½ story tan frame, steeply pitched intersecting gable roof, circular windows flanking central windows in gable ends, bay window, projecting wall dormer on north facade, frame addition to northwest.
20. A.B. Holm House, ca.1904, 1½ story white and black frame, steeply pitched intersecting gable roof, full front porch with columns and balusters, three part window in front gable end framed by a half round window above and quarter round windows on either side, oriel window on north facade.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Center City Historic District is significant as a link to the Swedish Lutheran population of the Chisago Lakes region during the area's most important period of development and as the county's finest concentration of late nineteenth

(see continuation sheet)

and early twentieth century residences. The coming of the railroad to the Chisago Lakes region in 1881 marked a period of accelerated growth. The county seat at Center City was affected by considerable building activity, increased stability, and the platting of new additions (including the district property). The residences lining Summit Avenue which housed Center City's merchants, tradesmen, professionals, politicians, and retired farmers, are reflective of the growing prosperity of the region. They were among the first domestic structures to be built with an orientation towards the area's lakes. The Chisago Lake Evangelical Lutheran Church, the central parish of the county's Swedish Lutheran population, has played a central role in the religious and social life of the area since it was organized in the early 1850s. The 1888 church building reflects the growth of the parish during the late nineteenth century and continues to serve the Swedish Lutheran population of the Chisago Lakes region.

Ownership List

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Chisago Lake Evangelical Lutheran Church
1888 | Chisago Lake Lutheran Congregation
Center City, MN 55012 |
| 2. Frank G. Lorens House
1892 | LaVerna Johnson
c/o Lorens E. Johnson
100 Summit Avenue
Center City, MN 55012 |
| 3. S.J. Johnson House
1896 | Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Johnson
Center City, Minnesota 55012 |
| 4. Solomon Peterson House
ca.1897 | Mr. and Mrs. Theodore A. Johnson
Center City, Minnesota 55012 |
| 5. Elof Peterson House
moved in ca.1900 | Mr. and Mrs. Lyndon A. Shogren
Center City, MN 55012 |
| 6. Andrew Holtman House
ca.1901 | Bernice I. Peterson
c/o LeeVerne Peterson
Center City, MN 55012 |
| 7. Fred Benson House
ca.1896 | Julia A. Bjornson
Center City, MN 55012 |
| 8. Mary Andrews House
1902 | Lois Johnson
Center City, MN 55012 |
| 9. Peter S. Carlson House
ca.1905 | Amy R. Madden
c/o Wallace L. Johnson
Center City, MN 55012 |
| 10. J.E. Melin House
ca.1900 | Mr. and Mrs. Thomas C. Strandmark
144 Summit Avenue
Center City, MN 55012 |
| 11. Wennerberg House
ca.1940 | Mavis Kent
Center City, MN 55012 |
| 12. Oberg House
moved in ca.1900 | Genevieve B. Paul
c/o Douglas Jurek
Center City, MN 55012 |
| 13. A.P. Stolberg House
ca.1910 | Rev. and Mrs. Gordon Robert Grimm
Center City, MN 55012 |
| 14. V.L. Johnson House
ca.1910 | Mr. and Mrs. Gordon R. Dodge
Center City, MN 55012 |

Center City Historic District Ownership List - cont.

Chisago County
Center City, Minnesota

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------|---|
| 15. | Dr. Gunz House
ca.1910 | Dorothy Ann Burg
c/o Paul R. Sommer
Box 264 |
| 16. | Lilly Lorens House
moved in 1895 | Mr. and Mrs. Edward E. Wayne
Center City, MN 55012 |
| 17. | Alfred B. Slattengren House
1901 | Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd C. Hackl
216 Summit Avenue
Center City, MN 55012 |
| 18. | William Carlson House
1904 | Mr. and Mrs. Robert B. Porter
Box 134
Center City, MN 55012 |
| 19. | C.J. Wahlstrom House
1902 | Mr. and Mrs. James M. Kirvida
Center City, MN 55012 |
| 20. | A.B. Holm House
ca.1904 | Mr. and Mrs. William C. Amundson, Jr
Center City, MN 55012 |

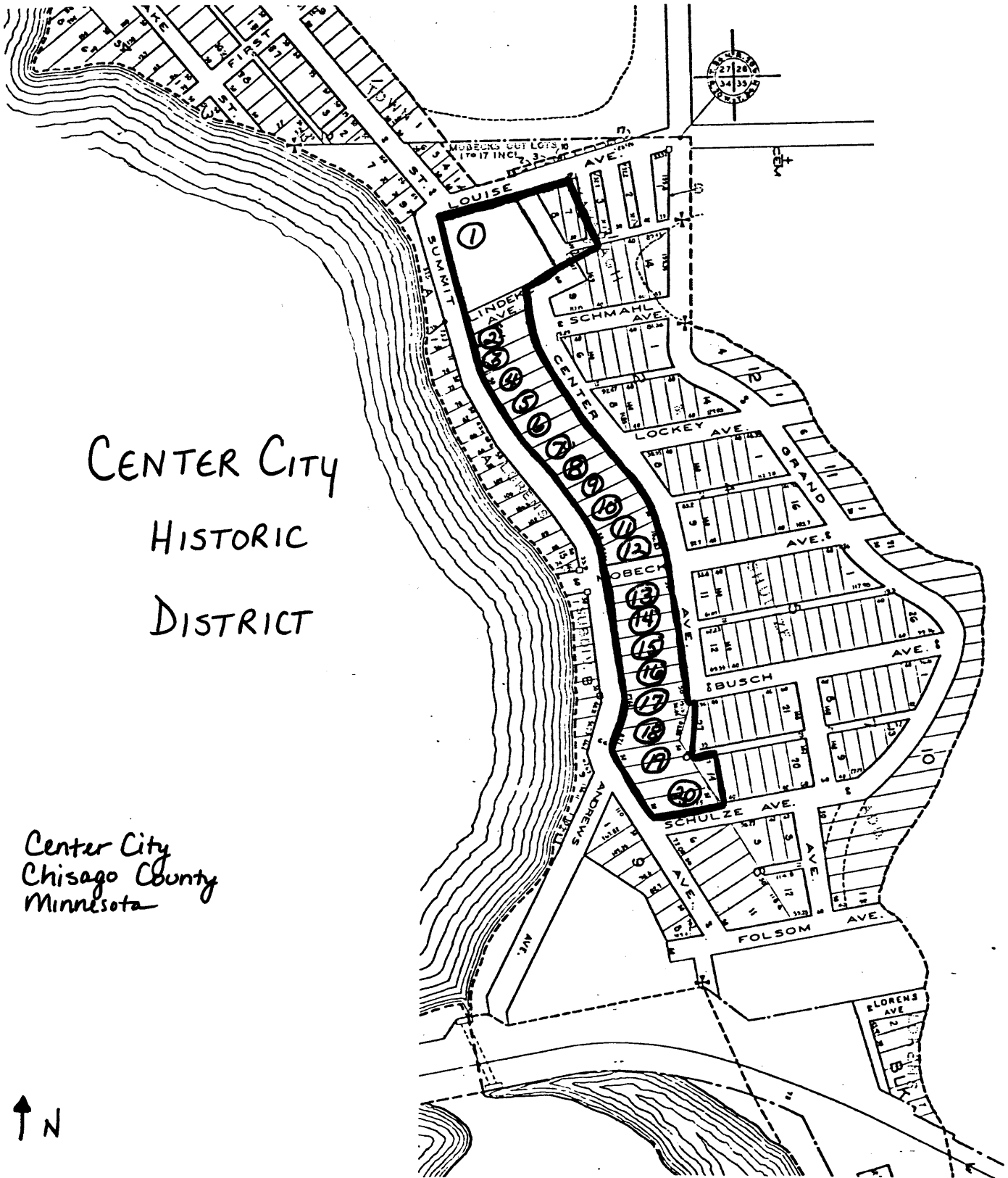
Center City Historic District

Center City, MN
Chisago County

Legal Description:

The boundaries of the Center City Historic District extend from Schulze Ave. to Louise Avenue and include the nineteen residences facing the lake along Summit Ave. and the Chisago Lake Evangelical Lutheran Church at the corner of Summit and Louise. The boundaries are described as follows:

Begin at the southwest corner of block 6, Kavanagh and Schutze Addition. Commence northerly along the western edge of block 6 to Mobeck Ave.; cross Mobeck Ave. to the southwest corner of block 3, Kavanagh and Schutze Addition; thence northerly along western side of block 3 to Lindeke Ave.; cross Lindeke Ave. and continue along eastern side of Summit Ave. to corner of Summit and Louise; thence easterly along southern side of Louise Ave. 350 feet; thence southerly parallel with Summit Ave. 212 feet more or less to an extension of the north side of Lindeke Ave.; thence westerly along northern side of Lindeke Ave. to a point 175 feet east of Summit Ave.; thence southerly across Lindeke Ave. to the northeast corner of block 3, Kavanagh and Schutze Addition; thence southerly along eastern side of block 3 to Mobeck Ave.; cross Mobeck Ave. to the northeast corner of lot 1, block 6, Kavanagh and Schutze Addition; thence southerly along eastern side of block 6 to northwest corner of lot 27; thence easterly along northern lot line of lot 27 to a point 42 feet west of the NE corner of lot 27; thence southerly to the south lot line of lot 27 at a point 60 feet west of the SE corner of lot 27; thence southerly across alley to north line of lot 14; thence easterly to NE corner of lot 14; thence southerly along east line of lot 14 to Schulze Ave.; thence westerly along northern side of Schulze Ave. to point of beginning.



CENTER CITY
HISTORIC
DISTRICT

Center City
Chicago County
Minnesota

