

**United States Department of Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Columbus Fireman's Park Complex
other names/site number Fireman's City Park

2. Location

street & number 1049 Park Avenue N/A not for publication
city or town Columbus N/A vicinity
state Wisconsin code WI county Columbia code 021 zip code 53925

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Alecia L. Gorkin December 30, 2003
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Columbus Fireman's Park Complex

Columbia

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
- entered in the National Register.
- See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
- See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall

2/25/04

Edson H. Beall

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	2	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		objects
			0 total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources is previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation

RECREATION AND CULTURE/ music facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation

RECREATION AND CULTURE/ music facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Prairie School

Late Victorian

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Concrete

walls Weatherboard

Brick

roof Asphalt

other Stone

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

Columbus Fireman's Park Complex
Columbus, Columbia Co., WI

Description

Fireman's Park is located at the southwest end of Park Avenue near the southern boundary of the city of Columbus.¹ The City purchased the land for the park in 1916 and construction on the site began the same year, making it the oldest of all the existing public parks in this city. The Fireman's Park Complex consists of a portion of the larger Fireman's Park that contains the park's two oldest buildings, which are also the oldest extant buildings in Columbus that were specifically constructed for the purpose of public recreation. These two buildings are locally significant and eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion A (History) because of their historic and ongoing associations with the theme of Entertainment and Recreation in Columbus. These two buildings are also eligible for inclusion in the NRHP under Criterion C (Architecture) for their architectural significance because of their fine, highly intact state, excellent design, and as fine examples of increasingly scarce resource types. In addition, the Complex also includes a stucco and rock-faced concrete block wall and associated gate structures that were built just after the Pavilion and which run along the edge of the sidewalk that separates Park Avenue from the Pavilion and the park.

The oldest building in the Complex is the Fireman's Park Pavilion Building, constructed in 1917 by the Columbus firm of Callahan Bros. for about \$15,000. The rear elevation of this large, two-story, rectilinear plan, wood frame building faces northwest onto Park Avenue, from which it is separated by a mown grass strip and a low stucco and concrete block wall that abuts a sidewalk. The building rests on a concrete foundation, has exterior walls clad in clapboard, and is sheltered by an asphalt shingle-clad jerkinhead roof that has wide overhanging eaves. Windows are mostly tall six-over-six-light wood sash and are used either singly or in groups throughout, depending on whether they face northwest onto Park Avenue or southeast onto Fireman's Park. The most notable exterior feature of the building, though, is the broad, two-story, hip-roofed open verandah that completely encircles both of its end elevations and the main southeast-facing facade. The floor of the first story of this verandah is the ground itself and this story is sheltered by its equally tall and equally deep second story. This second story has a wooden board floor that is encircled by a simple wood balustrade, and it is sheltered by the verandah roof, which is upheld by simple wood posts supported by wood corner braces. Wide wooden staircases centered on each of the building's two end elevations lead up to the second story of the verandah. This building has been used for innumerable exhibits, dances, concerts, and a myriad of other social events since it was built, yet it is still in excellent, highly original condition today.

¹ The population of Columbus in 2000 was 4093.

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Columbus Fireman's Park Complex
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The second oldest building in the Complex, the Rest Haven, is located almost in the center of the park and it is a much smaller H-plan, one-story, brick building that was constructed in 1923 with a donation of \$10,000 from Columbus druggist James Quickenden. The building was intended to be a home away from home for the the many visiting automobile campers who used the park in the summer months. It contained bathrooms, showers, kitchen, and laundry facilities and an indoor dining room/playroom. What makes this building significant architecturally is the fact that it is a late Prairie School style design designed by Alfred C. Clas, the senior partner in the well known and important Milwaukee architectural firm of Clas, Shepherd, and Clas. The whole building rests on a concrete pad foundation and its main block contains a single rectangular room that originally served as an indoor dining and living room complete with brick fireplace and terrazzo floor. The exterior walls of this portion of the building are made up almost entirely of groups of large windows (three windows on each of the northeast and southwest-facing end elevations and four on the main northwest-facing facade). Each window originally had a multi-light transom placed above the larger single light below. Behind this portion is a narrower hyphen that contains a kitchen, and behind this, in the wider rear wing, are bathroom and shower facilities. Both front and rear portions of the building are sheltered by flat roofs whose very wide overhanging eaves have a fascia that is covered in either metal or tile that features a simple repeated circular design element. The two projecting brick and stone pedestals that are still attached to the corners of the main facade originally each supported a flattened circular stone planting urn; all of these features being distinctive Prairie School design elements. The building is still in largely original condition today although the planting urns have been removed and the transoms have since been removed and covered over with solid materials. Otherwise, this distinctive building continues to be used as a snack bar and rest room facility for the park in the summer months and it is one of the very few Prairie School design public park buildings known to have been built in Wisconsin.

Fireman's Park is surrounded by residential neighborhoods on all sides save for the south, where it butts up against the grounds of the Columbus Country Club. The main entrances to the park are through gateways on either side of the Fireman's Park Pavilion building that open onto Park Avenue but most of the park is hidden from the view of drivers on this street by the building itself. The park setting that surrounds the Fireman's Park Complex contains a variety of other buildings and structures, most of which were built after World War II and were thus not considered to be part of the Complex. The landscape of the park is mostly flat and consists primarily of mowed grass and mature trees that are scattered about the park grounds, some of them being clustered in groups. Early photos show that there were once a number of other buildings, gardens, and other attractions in the park that have either now been removed (such as a small zoo) or replaced with larger, more modern facilities, such as the current swimming pool and its attendant pool house, the latter of whose design was purposely intended to compliment the nearby Fireman's Park Pavilion.

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Columbus Fireman's Park Complex
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Fireman's Park Pavilion

The Pavilion is a large rectangular plan two-story building that measures approximately 166-feet-long by 54-feet-wide. The building rests on a poured concrete foundation (it has no basement story) and its frame walls are clad in drop siding. The building is sheltered by an asphalt shingle-covered jerkinhead gable roof whose ridgeline runs northeast-southwest and the building's northwest-facing Park Avenue elevation is sheltered by its wide overhanging eaves. The remaining three sides, however, are sheltered by the roof of the building's most distinctive feature, a two-story verandah that wraps around all three of these sides. The roof of this 12-foot-deep verandah was formed by extending the slopes of the main roof downward to cover the verandah and this roof is upheld by two-story-tall wood posts that are placed at regular intervals around the verandah's edge and which rest on battered concrete plinths. Also helping to support the verandah's second story floor and its roof are simple wooden angle braces placed at the tops of these supporting posts. The floor of the first story of this verandah is the ground itself, which has been graveled from the building's walls out to the verandah's outer edge. The floor of the second story of the verandah also forms the ceiling of its first story and it is made out of tongue-and-groove boards. Edging this floor is a wooden balustrade that consists of square bottom and top rails and square balusters.

The Pavilion's northwest-facing Park Avenue elevation is eight bays wide. An analysis of the numerous changes found in the siding of this elevation contained in a recently completed Historic Structure Report by River Architects has demonstrated that most of the changes to the Pavilion over time have taken place on this side of the building.² Mostly these changes have consisted of the removal and filling in of original window openings. When first built, this elevation was nearly symmetrical in design and all the windows in both stories of the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh bays from the left were placed in triple groups (the first and eighth bays from the left each contained just a single window in their second story). First story windows were six-over-six-light double-hung wood sash that were placed in rectangular openings, while second story windows were taller nine-over-nine-light examples of the same type and design, the difference in size reflecting the fact that the building's second story is taller than its first. In later years, however, many of these windows were removed and their openings covered over with clapboard. Today, only the left-hand of the three original windows located in each bay's second story still exists. The only windows of the three original ones located in each bay's first story are solitary survivors that are located in the second,

² River Architects. *Fireman's Park Pavilion Historic Structure Report*. La Crosse, WI: River Architects, 2003, p. 36.

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Columbus Fireman's Park Complex
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third and seventh bays from the left. The surviving windows, however, are all original and in good condition and new ones could be easily, if not cheaply, replicated.

The Pavilion's northeast-facing side elevation is asymmetrical in design, although this asymmetry is diminished by the addition of the verandah to the overall design. The principal feature of this elevation is a broad wooden staircase that ascends from ground level to the second story of the verandah and which is centered on the elevation of the building itself. This elevation's first story features three window openings (two located to the left of the staircase and one to the far right) and these openings originally contained six-over-six-light double-hung windows. In addition, a single solid three-panel entrance door is located just to the right of the staircase. All three of these windows and the door are still extant but the windows have since been covered over with opaque sheet material. Located at the head of the staircase at the second story level is a double door opening that contains its original pair of solid three-panel wooden doors. Two oblong window openings that originally contained six-light windows are located on each side of these doors, while a single door opening that contains another solid three-panel entrance door is located at the extreme right. Here once again, the windows themselves are intact but are now covered with opaque material. Placed in the gable end that crowns this elevation is a quadruple window group that now contains just three of its four original small six-light windows.

The Pavilion's southwest-facing side elevation is also asymmetrical in design and is nearly identical to that of the northeast-facing side elevation. This side's principal feature is also its broad wooden staircase, which is also centered on the building and also ascends from the ground to the second story of the verandah. This elevation's first story, however, contains all four of its original six-over-six-light double-hung window openings (two to the left of the staircase and two to the right). Located at the head of this staircase at the second story level is another double door opening, although this one has now lost its original pair of solid three-panel wooden entrance doors, these having been replaced with infill and a later single door. Two oblong window openings that contain their original six-light windows are located on either side of this door opening and single door openings are also located on either side of these windows as well, although both of these have now lost their original solid three-panel doors. Placed in the gable end that crowns this elevation is another quadruple window group that contains all of its original six-light windows, although the two middle ones have now been covered over with opaque sheets of an unknown material.

If one removes the two-story verandah from the Pavilion's main southeast-facing park facade, one discovers that the resulting facade is nearly identical with the northwest-facing Park Avenue elevation described above. Unlike its near twin, however, this eight-bay-wide facade has lost few of its original

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features. Here too, all of the nine-over-nine-light double-hung wood sash windows in the second story of the second, third, fifth, sixth and seventh bays from the left are placed in triple groups (only the first bay from the left on this side contains a single nine-over-nine-light window in its second story).³ First story windows are also arranged for the most part in triple window groups as well, those in the second, fifth, and seventh bays being still intact and still containing their original six-over-six-light double-hung wood sash. The third and sixth bays from the left on this story are different, however, because both of these bays contain just a single six-over-six-light window as well as a pair of what were originally solid three-panel wooden entrance doors, of which only those in the sixth bay still survive intact. The other notable change to this story is to the fourth bay from the left, whose original triple window group has now been replaced by a modern overhead door.

The first story of the Pavilion's interior is currently divided into two almost equal-sized 82-foot-long by 52-foot-wide rooms by a centrally placed wooden partition wall. The entire story has a poured concrete floor that also extends up the exterior walls as far as the first story window sills. The remainder of these walls are covered in largely intact tongue-and groove boards that are believed to be the original covering. The ceiling of this story is also covered in tongue-and-groove boards. This ceiling and the floor above it are supported by two massive, approximately 12-inch-square wooden beams that run in parallel for the length of the building and which are supported by eleven pairs of equally massive wood posts that are placed at regular intervals along the beams' lengths.

Both of the first story's principal rooms can be used as dining halls and both have kitchen facilities and bars. The lack of original blueprints, however, makes it impossible to know exactly how this story was originally configured. It is known, for instance, that at least a part of this story was used as a dining hall when the building was first built and it is also known that kitchen facilities were also provided. It is also known that the separate men and women's rest room facilities that are located in the northern end of this story are original to the building, but it is not known if this story was always divided into two principal rooms. Neither is the history of the other small rooms that have encroached on the two largest rooms known. Fortunately, most of the essential fabric of the room has survived intact and the essential integrity of the room is still intact as well.

Four internal stairways make their way to the Pavilion's second story, although the three principal ones all begin their runs from the north end of the first story.⁴ Upon ascending these stairs, one finds

³ The fourth bay from the left contains a single six-light oblong window, next to which is a pair of solid wood three-panel doors.

⁴ Two of these stairways are accessed from the two first story bathrooms while the third starts between these two rooms and is accessed directly from the northern dining hall itself.

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oneself gazing into the nearly 145-foot-long second story dance hall that takes up almost the entire second story. The north end of this story is occupied by a cloak room and by a lady's withdrawing room, but it is the dance hall that dominates. The floor of the hall consists of polished and varnished wood boards. The walls were originally covered in decorative pressed tin sheets, although the original tin wainscot has now been replaced with knotty pine tongue-and-groove boards. The hall's flat ceiling is divided into a grid by large beams and the 28 squares that resulted are also clad in decorative pressed tin sheets. A later addition to the room is a band shell containing a raised stage that is located at the southern end of the hall. Despite the small changes that have been made to the hall from time to time, this story is also largely intact as well and the hall in particular is still an impressive and well used room today.

Rest Haven

The Rest Haven building was constructed in 1923 at a cost of \$10,000 and it was designed by Architect A. C. Clas of Milwaukee. The building is sited at some distance south-southeast of the Fireman's Park Pavilion and is located at the south end of a roughly oval-shaped field that is covered in closely mown lawn and which is circumscribed by a paved ring road.⁵ This building was intended to provide public rest rooms and a comfort station for the citizen's of Columbus and also for visiting motorists and tourists. It is an H-plan structure that measures 35-feet-wide by 42-feet-deep, it is one story high, its walls are built of brick, and these walls are sheltered by the wide overhanging eaves of the building's flat roofs. The exterior walls are fashioned of dark brown wire cut bricks and they rest on a poured concrete pad foundation (there is no basement story) that was originally more visibly expressed on the exterior as a slightly projecting water table. The eaves that shelter these walls are horizontal, have plastered soffits, and are edged by a broad fascia that is clad in a band made of either metal or terra-cotta. Ornamenting these bands is a simple pattern consisting of a raised circle that is repeated for the entire length of each section of the eaves. The building is encircled by a poured concrete walkway.

The design of the exterior of the building can be better understood if one first examines its interior layout and the multiple purposes the building was intended to serve. The taller front portion of the building, which faces NW towards the Fireman's Pavilion, was intended to be used primarily as a dining room/living room by auto campers visiting the park and it was and is furnished with chairs and tables, and has a large fireplace. The narrower rear ell is shorter than the front portion of the building and it consists of both the rear ell and an equal height connecting hyphen. The narrow center hyphen

⁵ The Fireman's Pavilion is located at the north end of this field.

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that connects the building's front and rear portions consists of a single room that was used as a kitchen space that was originally furnished with electric hot plates for use by visiting campers. The rear ell that is attached to the kitchen is wider than the hyphen but not as wide as the building's front portion and it contains two side-by-side toilet and shower rooms, one for women and one for men.⁶ Because the front portion of the building was intended as its public part, this portion is treated almost like a glassed-in front porch and is similarly transparent, while the rear portion is the private part and is treated to a much more solid and opaque design. Not surprisingly, the building's fenestration reflects these very different needs.

The Rest Haven's thirty-five-foot-wide main facade faces northwest and it is also the principal facade of the building's living/dining room portion. This facade is symmetrical in design and it has a centered pair of twelve-light over two-panel entrance doors that are flanked on either side by two large, slightly oblong, fixed single light windows. Placed above the doors and above each of the four windows are tall transoms, all five transoms are of equal height. These doors and windows and their transoms are positioned between broad, brick-clad piers placed at either end of the facade. In addition, a solid brick balustrade is placed underneath the window groups on either side of the doors and a narrow concrete band that acts as a sill for the windows caps these balustrades. Additional features of the facade are two small brick clad pedestals that project out from the base of the two piers at either end of the facade. The base of these pedestals consists of a continuation of the water table that encircles the building, while the pedestal's concrete cornices are placed at the same height as the windowsills. Each pedestal originally supported a shallow, delicate stone urn, but both of these have been removed. The only other change to this facade has been the removal of all the original twelve-light transoms, the openings of which have now been filled with sheets of solid, opaque material.

The twenty-foot-wide northeast and southwest-facing side elevations of the living room/dining room portion of the building are treated in much the same manner. Each elevation contains a single large triple window group composed of three fixed single rectilinear lights, each capped by a similar transom. These window groups are both enframed by broad brick piers placed at either end of the elevations and they also have solid brick balustrades below them capped with concrete sills. The only changes that have been made to these two elevations have also been the removal of all six of their original nine-light transoms, the openings of which have now also been filled with sheets of solid, opaque material.

⁶ The Rest Haven was intended to be a three-season structure and so it was not supplied with a heating system or a furnace room.

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The northeast and southwest-facing side elevations of the lower rear ell are also identical with each other. The brick-clad side walls of the deeply inset kitchen hyphen both have a single door opening and a pair of small window openings set into them that provide light and egress into the kitchen from the outside.⁷ The only openings in the longer, brick-clad side elevations of the bathroom ell are single, asymmetrically positioned window openings having concrete sills that provide light for the bathrooms on each side of the ell.

The brick-clad southeast-facing rear elevation of the rear ell is symmetrical in design and it features two window openings that provide light to the bath/shower rooms inside. Each of these openings has a concrete sill and also contains a pair of windows that are separated from each other by a brick mullion. Also visible from the rear of the building is a brick chimney mass that is centered on the rear of the dining/living room portion of the building. This chimney serves the living/dining room fireplace but it is almost hidden from view from the front of the building.

The interior of the living/dining room portion of the building is defined by its north, east, and west walls, each consists mostly of groups of windows enframed by brick piers and brick balustrades. The south wall is the rear brick wall of the room whose most notable feature is a centrally positioned working fireplace that has a brick surround, a concrete mantleshelf supported by corbelled bricks, and its original wrought iron grate. Placed just to the left (east) of the fireplace is a six-light over one-panel wood door that opens into the kitchen and there. There are two other door openings on this wall that are placed at east and west ends of the wall. Both of these openings contain twelve-light over one-panel wood doors that are identical to the pair in the main north wall of the room. They open into the sheltered outdoor spaces that flank the kitchen hyphen and lead to the bathroom doors in the rear ell. The floor of the dining/living room and its integral baseboard are made of terrazzo and the floor is decorated with large squares that are outlined in small white tiles. The ceiling is covered in acoustic tiles that may not be original to the room, which is otherwise completely original.

The interiors of the kitchen and the bathrooms are strictly functional and feature concrete floors and brick and tile walls.

⁷ These two walls are each deeply inset into their respective elevations and they are sheltered by the roof of this ell. These two inset portions are closed off with removable wooden panels in the winter months when the building is closed to the public.

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West Wall and Gates

Park Avenue runs along the west edge of Fireman's Park and, as noted earlier, the Fireman's Pavilion itself effectively blocks most of the view of the park behind it from the street. Separating the Pavilion from the street is a wide grass strip, a concrete sidewalk, a narrow grass-covered parkway, and a concrete curb. Still another separating element is a 3½-foot-tall stucco-covered wall capped with a concrete rail. This wall was built shortly after the Pavilion was completed in 1917. It is placed about two feet away from the east side (this is the Pavilion side) of the sidewalk and it extends for the full length of the Pavilion. Two pairs of rock-faced concrete block pillars placed on poured concrete plinths and capped with concrete cornices are located at both ends of this wall. The first pair of pillars flanks a concrete sidewalk that leads to one of the stairways positioned on the Pavilion's north and south end elevations. Each of these gateways still retains its original side-hinged wrought iron gate. An original wrought iron sign that bears the name "Fireman's City Park and Columbus" surmounts the northern gateway.⁸ Low, rock-faced concrete block walls set on poured concrete plinths connect the first pairs of pillars associated with these pedestrian entrances to the second pairs of pillars, which flank the two principal vehicular entrances to the park. These second pairs are also made out of rock-faced concrete block and they too are set on poured concrete plinths and have concrete cornices. The single pillar that remains of the southernmost entrance, however, suggests that these pillars were originally taller than the ones that flank the pedestrian entrances. In the absence of historic photos, though, the original configuration of these pillars is still a matter of conjecture.

⁸ It is not known if there was a corresponding sign over the western gateway.

Columbus Fireman's Park Complex
Name of Property

Columbia
County and State

Wisconsin

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1917-1923

1917-1953

Significant Dates

1917

1923

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Callahan Bros.

Clas, Alfred C.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Statement of Significance

The Columbus Fireman's Park Complex was identified by the Columbus Intensive Survey in 1997 as being a potential historic complex having local significance under National Register (NR) criteria A (Recreation and Culture) and C (Architecture), a theme which is also identified in the State of Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP). This research centered on evaluating the resources within the Complex utilizing the Prairie School and Vernacular Forms subsections of the Architectural Styles study unit of the CRMP.⁹ The result of this research is detailed below and shows that the two buildings that comprise the Columbus Fireman's Park Complex are locally significant under NR Criteria A and C as both an architecturally and an historically important collection of entertainment and recreation-related buildings that together constitute a well-defined and visually distinct geographic and historic entity in the city of Columbus.

The Fireman's Park Complex is believed to be architecturally significant because it contains two fine buildings constructed in 1917 and 1923 specifically for park purposes. Both buildings was designed in a different style. The oldest is the very large, very fine, and intact Late Victorian style-influenced Fireman's Park Pavilion, built in 1917, and the other, the 1923 Rest Haven, is a Prairie School style work by important Wisconsin architect Alfred C. Clas. Individually, these buildings are very good and very intact examples of their particular styles or vernacular forms. The Rest Haven pavilion in particular is a very rare example of the Prairie School style applied to a park building. Collectively, these buildings are of historic significance in Columbus as the oldest buildings in the city built especially for park purposes. They also illustrate the emergence and growth of interest in public recreation in the city and the role of both public and private funding in this process.¹⁰

History

The 821-page collected local newspaper columns of Frederic A. Stare provide an excellent general history of the city of Columbus up to World War II. A detailed history of the city and its built resources is also embodied in the City of Columbus Intensive Survey Report, printed in 1997. Consequently, the historic context that follows deals primarily with the history of the Complex itself and with the

⁹ Wyatt, Barbara (ed.). *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Division of Historic Preservation, 1986, Vol. 2, pp. 2-21, 3-1.

¹⁰ The Period of Significance for Architecture, 1917-1923, comprises the dates of construction of these two buildings and the North Wall. The Period of Significance for History, 1917-1953, comprises the period of time during which these buildings played the roles for which they were built, limited only by the NPS' 50-year rule.

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immediate surrounding area known as Fireman's Park

What is today's Fireman's Park had its genesis in 1915. Prior to that time, the only park in the city had been the city block known as Block 16 of Lewis' Addition. Former Gov. James T. Lewis had deeded this block to the city in 1885 specifically for use as a park but nothing was done to improve the property until 1897, when the Common Council appropriated \$123 for the planting of trees. This modest beginning did not begin to meet the recreational needs of the city, of course, but nothing substantive was done to meet these increasing needs until 1915.

Columbus began to feel the need of a city park back in 1915 when an organization known as the 1492 Club (now defunct) discussed the advisability of constructing such a park. The club decided to suggest to the city that a small tract of land between the Crawfish River and the Railroad be purchased and converted into a park.

Mr. Geo. E. Bunsa and Mr. A. C. Quentmeyer at that time city attorney and alderman respectively, vehemently opposed this suggestion. At a business men's meeting Mr. Bunsa made an address in which he ridiculed the idea of buying such a small piece of ground, suggested that a larger section be purchased that could be added to when necessary, and that the Firemen be entrusted with the task of creating and maintaining such a park.¹¹

This proved to be the course of action that was subsequently adopted. Before the end of the year the City of Columbus' Common Council had appropriated \$2000 to establish a park fund for the purpose of securing land for the park. Once the park fund was established, other forces in the community quickly came together to make the new "amusement park" a reality.

The most important of these forces and the most effective was the Columbus Volunteer Fire Department, which by a unanimous vote at a joint meeting on April 17, 1916 "took charge of the matter."¹² At the same meeting the firemen also formed a new park committee chaired by A. C. Quentmeyer, which joined in a cooperative effort with the Columbus Advancement Association – a local business group – to select a site for the new park. By the end of the first week in May, the committee had evaluated several different sites and was able to recommend a site to the Common Council, this was nine acres of land on Ludington St. (today's Park Ave.) owned by Miss Jennie Gamidge and five contiguous acres owned by Edward Roehl. This land is the core of what is today's larger Fireman's Park, given that name because of the all-important role of the local firemen in its

¹¹ *Columbus Republican*, September 19, 1928.

¹² *Columbus Republican*. April 22, 1916, p. 1.

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creation.

On May 2, the Common Council authorized the purchase of both parcels for a total of \$2150, and the local papers made a point of noting that the new park land was located "just eight blocks from the city center."¹³ Once the site had been chosen, the park committee and the firemen began the process of planning for the laying out the grounds. Together, they arranged for the surveying and landscaping of the park and the construction of a new park pavilion. As a contemporary newspaper account in the May 6, 1916 *Columbus Republican* put it:

The firemen are now corresponding with park commissioners, who are expected in the near future to lay out the grounds. As soon as the tracts have been surveyed, excavating will begin and the foundations laid for the park pavilion. Work will be continued thruout the summer, the grounds leveled and portions of it tiled; but it is planned not to have the grand opening until 1917.

That there was plenty that needed to be done to the site and that it would be costly to accomplish was recognized immediately.

The present site of our park was suggested to the park commission by H. R. Cook. At that time (1916) it was a mere swamp and had to be completely tiled.¹⁴

The commission was wise enough, however, to seek professional guidance before beginning the work.

The park committee had E. H. Niles, a landscape architect of Oconomowoc [WI] here on Monday to look over the new park grounds. Mr. Niles is the man who laid out the grounds for the cemetery here and is an expert in that kind of work.

He said an ideal park can be made of the grounds just acquired and it is expected that he will be employed to superintend the work. The creek which runs through the grounds will be a great help in making the park attractive. A dam will be put in to hold the water back, forming a nice pond where boating can be enjoyed. Considerable work will be necessary to produce the desired results and every little assistance that can be given by anyone will save a portion of the funds which will be required to carry the project to a successful completion.

¹³ *Columbus Democrat*, May 3, 1916, p. 1.

¹⁴ *Columbus Republican*, September 19, 1928.

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Chairman of the Park Committee, A. C. Quentmeyer, asks that everyone that every one who can do even a little work on the grounds, be on hand every Tuesday and Thursday evenings and lend a hand at the work. Many can help in some way and all should do what they can.¹⁵

By early July the Committee was able to report that \$4580 had been pledged to the new park. The local papers, however, made it clear that more would be necessary.

Many have subscribed liberally, some others what they feel they can afford, while some who will derive considerable benefit, indirectly if not directly, could have given more, some of whom will doubtless add to their original subscriptions. The amount of money that will be required to put the grounds in proper shape and erect the necessary structures is unknown, but it will be much more than has already been pledged.¹⁶

Not content with soliciting funds just in the usual ways, some of those interested in the success of the park venture used less conventional methods as well. Among them was A. C. Quentmeyer, chairman of the Park Committee.

Desiring to erect suitable entrance posts at the new Park, and to avoid using money from the subscription fund, A. C. Quentmeyer has donated to the Park Commission a Premier talking Machine, which is now on exhibit at this store. Anyone desiring to contribute to the Entrance Post fund can do so at either bank or at several other business places in town and will be given a ticket for each 50¢ donated. These tickets are numbered, each one entitling the holder to a chance in a drawing for the machine at a future date.¹⁷

Fortunately, the various fundraising activities were successful enough to permit the park work to proceed.

A picturesque lagoon was the first thing to formed in 1916. Then came the beautiful sunken flower garden, which has always been cared for by the Leonard Seed Company, and the artesian well.¹⁸

¹⁵ *Columbus Democrat*, May 17, 1916, p. 1. Unfortunately, nothing else is known about Niles or his career in Oconomowoc and elsewhere.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* July 5, 1916, p. 1.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* July 19, 1916, p. 5.

¹⁸ *Columbus Republican*, September 19, 1928

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Columbus Fireman's Park Complex
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By September of 1916, sufficient funds had been collected to permit the construction of the first of the park's structures, this was the Park Pavilion that is the subject of this nomination.

The Fireman's Park Commission have let the contract for the erection of the pavilion at the park to Callahan Bros. of this city. That the structure will be imposing and adequate for the purpose intended is evidenced by the fact that the cost is to be in the neighborhood of \$10,000.¹⁹

Funding continued to be an issue, however, so in January of 1917 the City of Columbus issued \$6000 of Park Improvement Bonds, which were quickly purchased by a Chicago firm at a rate that was advantageous to the City.²⁰

The completed pavilion was dedicated in June of 1917.

The new \$15,000 pavilion at the Fireman's Park was formally opened to the public on Tuesday evening with a dance that drew the largest crowd in the dance history of Columbus. The dance was given under the auspices of the Fire Department, and the music was furnished by Schey's Eight Piece Orchestra of this city.

We are pleased to announce that these dances will not be annual or even semi annual affairs, but will be given frequently and that every lover of dancing in this city and vicinity and neighboring towns will be given opportunities to enjoy the benefits of this beautiful pavilion which is the pride of our firemen, and every citizen of this city.

The dance was conducted in a splendid manner, committees of firemen being on hand at every turn to look after the pleasures and wants of their guests, and we are safe in saying that everyone who attended the dance was well pleased and will be steady patrons of the firemen's dances in the future. The music was splendid, the floor in good shape and refreshments were served in the dining room in a very efficient manner which did credit to the boys who waited on the tables but not least the Firemen's wives whose culinary skills provided the treats.

The park pavilion is surely a much needed addition to the city, as there is plenty of floor space for dancing, couples are not crowded, and best of all parents can rest assured that young folks who attend dances there will be protected, as the firemen themselves supervise all the dances

¹⁹ *Columbus Democrat*, September 27, 1916, p. 7.

²⁰ *Ibid*, January 24, 1917, p. 5.

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held there and will tolerate no disorderly conduct or drunkenness from anyone. They are surely to be complimented for their hard work and success in giving to the citizens of this city so beautiful a pleasure resort.²¹

The park was an instant success with the public, so much so that the portion of Ludington Street in front of it would later be renamed Park Avenue to better direct visitors to it. Within a month of the Pavilion's opening both it and the park played host to that year's Fourth of July celebration. They continue to do so to this day.²² By August of 1917, the entertainment in the park provided was drawing considerably more than just a Columbus audience.

Twas a big time in Columbus last Wednesday evening at the weekly band concert at the new city park. The weather was ideal, the sweltering heat of the day helping to bring the people out for a motor ride and the cooling breezes of the new park. It is estimated that about 2500 people were present to hear the open air concert rendered by the Columbus Military band and that from 1000 to 1500 autos were parked on the grounds and in town.

The Firemen held an ice cream social in the lower hall of the pavilion during the concert which netted them a neat sum. After the concert Schey's Orchestra furnished the inspiration for the dance that followed. 275 couples enjoyed the dance, an admission fee of thirty-five cents per couple being charged. The Columbus Firemen are sure putting Columbus on the map as an amusement center. With the Columbus Band, Schey's Orchestra and the big pavilion as an inducement the people of this vicinity are beginning to "come this way." Beaver Dam, Fall River, Doylestown, Rio, and Reeseville were well represented and the Firemen are endeavoring to show "em all" a good time.²³

One of the more impressive aspects of the Park's story is the extent to which its construction was the result of the community-wide effort of Columbus' citizens. As has already been shown, community members made not only personal financial contributions to the park fund but also were willing to go into debt as a community to raise the necessary funds for its construction. Still other community members gave of their time and energy to help with the actual physical labor of the construction of both the park itself and the Pavilion. And this volunteer work effort did not end with the opening of the park and its facilities. In the fall of 1917 a local newspaper noted still another effort.

²¹ *Columbus Democrat*, June 20, 1917, p. 1.

²² *Ibid*, June 27, 1917, p. 5.

²³ *Ibid*, August 1, 1917, p. 1.

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The work of painting the pavilion at the Fireman's City Park began on Monday. The painters of the city and a number of other men, handy with the brush, each donated a full day's work on the job and got over a large part of this large building. Some fifteen men worked at it all day Monday and a force are still at it. Dinner and supper were served to the workers in the dining room, the eatables being donated by the families of the firemen and others. The people of the city should appreciate the work being done by the firemen and their friends which is for the benefit of us all.²⁴

Other benefactors added facilities that were part of the Columbus Fireman's Park.

Some time after the completion of the pavilion a splendid, large stone wall was built bounding the park front. The greater portion was donated by Mr. A. H. Whitney, but the Firemen constructed a small section.²⁵

The popularity of the park also made it an attractive destination site for the new breed of automobile campers that were making use of the newly constructed concrete highways of the state highway system. So popular was this summer use that it led Columbus druggist James Quickenden to donate \$10,000 in 1923 for the creation of a small Prairie School style building called "Rest Haven." It was intended to provide sanitation and cooking facilities for these campers and other park users. This building is still extant and was formally opened on September 16, 1923.

On Sunday the new tourist Rest Haven, recently completed in the Fireman's Park, was dedicated and was then presented to the City of Columbus by the donor, Mr. James Quickenden. The new building is a public restroom and comfort station for the use of citizens of the community and visiting motorists. Rest Haven is in a slightly position in the park, convenient to the tourist camp. Many tourists have declared it the finest building of its kind in Wisconsin. The architect, Mr. Clas said: "By the erection of this building through the generosity of Mr. Quickenden, Columbus has taken the lead in making provisions for the convenience of the strangers within her gates. Similar buildings will be erected in the next few years along all our national highways."²⁶

Three years later, yet another amenity was added to the park, although it has since been supplanted by a larger modern facility located in the same location.

²⁴ *Columbus Democrat*, September 26, 1917, p. 5.

²⁵ *Ibid*, July 25, 1928, p. 1.

²⁶ *Columbus Democrat*, September 19, 1923, p. 1.

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In the winter of 1926-27, the local Post of the American Legion proposed to the city the construction of a swimming pool. A committee was appointed to maneuver the affair, Mr. Willard Bellack being chairman. The committee labored heroically, meeting and overcoming countless obstacles, until the spring of this year [1928] when the pool was finished. Mr. Bellack and his associates can well feel proud of their magnificent achievement. The swimming pool is an elysium for young and old from Columbus and a broad strip of surrounding territory.²⁷

A year later, local banker Frederick A. Chadbourn donated another now non-extant building to the park, the Rustic style Elizabeth C. Chadbourn Memorial Children's Building, which was to be used as a playhouse and clubhouse for the children of Columbus. Chadbourn's gift was first made public in February of 1928. A letter from him to the commander of the local American Legion post read as follows:

In recognition of the work of the Legion for the betterment of the Firemen's Park, I take pleasure in presenting, through you, to the City of Columbus \$10,000 for the erection of a Children's Building in the park in memory of my wife, Elizabeth C. Chadbourn. I see no reason why facilities for bathing purposes, in connection with the swimming pool, should not be incorporated in this building.²⁸

This one-story building was a typical example of the Rustic style that was designed by Madison architect Edward Tough and built by Columbus contractor Carl Ibisch.

The structure will be 64x46 feet in size with a ten foot porch on three sides. The style will be log cabin effect and the walls will be of selected peeled logs. The building will contain a large lounge room, with hard-head fireplace. Showers and dressing rooms with lockers for ladies and gentlemen will be provided and in addition the Kansas basket system with a capacity of 120 baskets will be used for checking clothes.²⁹

Nor were new buildings the only improvements made. The size of the park also increased as well, from the original 14 acres to 30 acres by 1929.

²⁷ Ibid, July 25, 1928, p. 1.

²⁸ *Columbus Republican*, February 29, 1928.

²⁹ *Columbus Republican*, September 19, 1928. Unfortunately, this building was destroyed by vandals in 1980.

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In the years that followed the park and its buildings were put to a wide variety of uses. For a number of years the field in front of the pavilion was organized as an oval horseracing track and the land within the track was used for high school football games. To the right of this area was a circular lagoon with an island that for many years was planted as a formal flower garden and which was used as the site of the 1929 Christopher Columbus Pageant. In addition, the Pavilion was the scene of almost weekly dances in season, many of them featuring regionally known dance and jazz bands such as "George Jungles and his Bluebirds" from Chicago and other cities.³⁰

The park continued to play a central role in the social life of the city during the Depression years, with the numerous dance programs and other events held there being a major source of low cost entertainment. The Depression years also saw another facility being added to the park.

Announcement was made this week by Lloyd Sharow that the committee in charge of the plans for the construction of a log cabin for the Boy Scouts at Fireman's Park mew Wednesday night to make arrangements to have blue prints made. This committee ... discussed what type of structure is to be built and to ascertain if it will be possible have the work done by the W.P.A. The Works Progress Administrator has been contacted and favorable word is expected to be received shortly.³¹

A week later, an elevation drawing and floor plan of the proposed clubhouse was published in the local paper.³² This drawing showed a one-story, rectilinear plan, Rustic style log building having a central lounge room with a fireplace that was flanked on either sides by two bunk rooms. The same article also noted that the plans for the cabin had already been approved by the state office of the W.P.A. and had been forwarded to the national office.

Work began on the cabin in late July of the same year and the completed cabin was in use by December.³³ The cabin was formally dedicated at a ceremony held the following year, at which time the cabin was officially named Dering Lodge in honor of the late Guy V. Dering, a life-long Columbus resident, nationally known champion trap-shooter, and promoter of outdoor sports.³⁴ This cabin is

³⁰ *Columbus Democrat*, July 25, 1928, p. 1.

³¹ *Columbus Journal*, March 11, 1938, p. 1.

³² *Columbus Journal*, March 25, 1938, p. 1. The legend on this drawing is very indistinct but it is headed the Wisconsin Michigan Power Company. The relationship of this firm to the design of the building is not known.

³³ *Ibid*, July 22, 1938, p. 1 and December 16, 1938.

³⁴ *Ibid*, September 29, 1939, p. 1 (illustrated).

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located in the extreme southwest corner of the park and it was at first placed adjacent to another small building that had been moved there in 1925 by the Columbus Gun Club. This small one-story building had originally been a summer house located at 147 N. Lewis St. and its removal to the park had been a joint effort of the Gun Club and the Columbus Park Board. The Gun Club continued to use this building until 1960, when a connecting hall was built between the two buildings, creating a larger H-plan one.

In 1999 a committee was formed to restore the Scout Cabin, which had continued to be used as such until that time.

It was decided to make the Gun Club building a permanent part of the cabin. The two buildings were moved off site and a new [poured concrete] foundation was constructed. The Gun Club building was moved ten feet south to make room for another room to take the place of the hall. The roof line of the Gun Club was changed to accommodate the donated attic trusses of the addition and to tie into the Scout Cabin. The addition to the Scout Cabin was built out of old power poles after it was discovered that the Scout Cabin itself was built out of power poles.³⁵

Unfortunately, the joining of the Gun Club building to the Scout Cabin and the subsequent changes to the roofs of both and to other parts of the building have significantly altered the original buildings and has rendered them ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Consequently, the Scout Cabin was not included as part of the nominated Columbus Fireman's Park Complex.

The two buildings that do comprise the nominated Fireman's Park Complex, the Fireman's Park Pavilion and Rest Haven, both continue to play active roles in the park, which also accounts for their high degree of integrity. Columbus' Fourth of July celebrations are still performed in the park and the park and the Pavilion are also the site of the recently inaugurated Columbus Carriage Classic. Likewise, the children and families of Columbus still make use of Rest Haven as both a refreshment and comfort center. The Fireman's Park Complex is thus believed to be eligible for inclusion in the NRHP at the local level for its historic significance to the city of Columbus because the buildings it contains are collectively important as the most important and intact resources that have been associated with what has historically been Columbus' most important public park and because they are representative of both the public and private efforts that led to the initial and subsequent development of the park.

³⁵ Schleicher, Donald. "Fireman's Park Columbus, Wisconsin." Columbus, 2003, pp. 2-3. A typewritten Mss. containing a history of the park and its buildings.

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Architecture

The Fireman's Park Complex is also believed to be eligible for listing in the NRHP for its architectural significance because it contains two fine, highly intact buildings that were built in 1917 and 1923 specifically for park purposes. Both buildings were designed in a different style and they are very different in size and function as well. The oldest is the very large, very fine, and very intact Late Victorian style-influenced vernacular form Fireman's Park Pavilion, built in 1917, and the other, the equally intact Rest Haven, built in 1923, is a late Prairie School style building designed by the important Wisconsin architect Alfred C. Clas. Both buildings are important local landmarks that have been in continuous use since they were built and both continue to play much the same role in the community today as they did when first built.

The oldest building in the Complex is the Fireman's Park Pavilion, which was constructed in 1917 by the Columbus firm of Callahan Bros. for about \$15,000. The Pavilion's design is rather old-fashioned for its relatively late date of construction. It is more closely related to Late Victorian style-influenced vernacular designs than to any of the newer architectural trends then coming into vogue. The source of the Pavilion's design is unknown, but it would have been well within the capabilities of local carpenter contractors of the day and may have been influenced by the numerous pattern books of the time. It is even possible that this design was chosen because it was not unlike some of the large new dairy barns designed and built in the area by firms like the James Manufacturing Co. in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin. Whatever the source, the Pavilion would have been distinctive in its local context just for its size, let alone for its design.

Buildings such as this were usually intended only for seasonal use. The largest of them was the main pavilion of the Monona Lake Assembly, this was just one of several buildings located on the shores of Lake Monona in the capital city of Madison that were used by the Assembly, which was associated with the Chautauqua movement. This no longer extant pavilion was a circular wooden structure whose single meeting space could house 5000 people, making it "the largest room for public gatherings in the state."³⁶ Most examples, of course, were much smaller, were built in or near Wisconsin's smaller cities, and were typically associated with city parks or county fair grounds. Few, however, attained the size or architectural distinctiveness of the example in Columbus, which is distinctive both for its size and its highly intact state.

³⁶ Mollenhoff, David V. *Madison: A History of the Formative Years*. Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1982, pp. 174-75 (illustrated).

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This 145-foot-long by 45-foot-wide building rests on a concrete foundation, has clapboard exterior walls, and is sheltered by an asphalt shingle-clad jerkinhead roof that has very wide overhanging eaves. Windows are mostly six-over-six-light wood sash on the park side and tall nine-over-nine-light sash on the street side and they are used either singly or in groups. The rear elevation of this large, two-story, rectilinear plan, wood frame building faces northwest onto Park Avenue. The most notable exterior feature of the building, though, is the 12-foot-wide, two-story, hip-roofed open verandah that completely encircles both of its end elevations and the main, southeast facing facade that faces the park. The floor of the first story of this verandah is the ground itself and this story is sheltered by its equally tall and equally deep second story. This second story has a wooden board floor that is encircled by a simple wooden balustrade and it is sheltered by the verandah roof, which is upheld by simple wood posts supported by wood corner braces. Wide wooden staircases centered on each of the building's two end elevations lead up to the second story of the verandah.

The interior of the Pavilion's first story consists of two equal-sized spaces that are used as a dining room and as a social room and bar. Smaller enclosed spaces located around the peripheries of these two spaces contain rest rooms, utilities, and the main kitchen. The interior of the second story consists primarily of a single large dance hall having a bandstand at one end and coat rooms and stair halls at the other. It is a tribute to the essential simplicity of the interior's design that the Pavilion has been able to adapt successfully over the years to the evolving needs of recreation and public entertainment since it was built. Since 1917, the Pavilion has been used for innumerable exhibits, dances, concerts, and a myriad of other social events. It remains an important part of Columbus' social and recreational life today.³⁷

By way of contrast, the Rest Haven is both much smaller and is also very much the product of a professional architect. It is a fine late Prairie School design produced by Alfred C. Clas, one of Milwaukee's most respected and important architects. The design of this H-plan, flat roofed building owes nothing to historic precedent. It is in every sense a modern design that derives its overall effect from its clearly presented functionality and fine sense of proportion. Decoration is limited to the repeated circular ornament that is used on the fascia of its very wide overhanging eaves and to the two small pedestals that project out from the ends of the main façade. These pedestals originally supported carved stone urns that have since been removed or lost. A contemporary description of the building as it existed when dedicated is still valid today.

³⁷ The Pavilion is currently kept open and heated in the winter months as well because its dance hall is used as a place where the elderly of Columbus may come and do indoor walking for exercise.

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The new building is a public rest room and comfort station for the use of the citizen's of the community and visiting motorists. It was built at a cost of \$10,000, was designed by Architect A. C. Clas of Milwaukee. The structure is 36 x 42 feet in size, one story high, and is built of solid brick. The front room is 20 x 35 feet, has a terrazzo floor and a large fireplace. It is intended for use as a dining room in stormy weather and is equipped with numerous chairs and tables and modern electric fixtures. Back of this room is the kitchen which is provided with electric plates for cooking, a sink with hot and cold water and an ironing board. In the rear of the building are found shower baths and toilets for both men and women.³⁸

Rest Haven's architect, Alfred C. Clas (1860-1942), was then the principal partner in the Milwaukee firm of Clas, Shepherd & Clas, which was the descendent of the predecessor firm of Ferry & Clas. These two were among the most important of all Milwaukee architectural firms in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and Alfred C. Clas was one the principal partners in both firms.

Born at Sauk City [WI], the son of German emigrants who arrived in the U.S. in 1847, Alfred C. Clas was educated in Milwaukee, and after an apprenticeship in architecture secured a position as a draftsman with James Douglas, a pioneer architect in the city. A few years later Mr. Clas opened his own office, and practiced alone until 1890 when he joined the George B. Ferry in organizing the firm of Ferry & Clas, which during the next twenty years became one of the leading architectural offices in Milwaukee. In that period the partners designed a number of important buildings in the city ... and were also architects of the State Historical Society's Library at Madison.

In 1913 the firm of Clas, Shepherd & Clas was organized with Reuben F. Clas and John S. Shepherd as junior partners. Work was executed under that name until 1931 when Mr. Shepherd withdrew, and the firm was reorganized as Clas & Clas, Inc., with the elder architect remaining president until the time of his death. A leading member of the profession, known throughout the state, Mr. Clas held many honorary positions, also was active in City Planning work in Milwaukee, having been one of the sponsors of the Civic Center Plan, 1911, and a member of the County Planning Board.³⁹

At least two buildings designed by Clas, Shepherd, & Clas were built in Columbus in the early 1920s: the Tudor Revival style Whitney Memorial Chapel in Hillside Cemetery (827 N. Lewis St.), built in

³⁸ *Columbus Democrat*, September 19, 1923, p. 1.

³⁹ Withey, Henry F. & Elsie Rathburn Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*. Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1970, p. 124.

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1921; and the Rest Haven in Fireman's Park.⁴⁰ Interestingly, both of these buildings were the result of private donations and the Rest Haven commission was probably of special interest to A. C. Clas since he was a recognized leader in park design and development in the Milwaukee region.

The Rest Haven building is still in use as a refreshment center and a comfort station and its kitchen now produces food that is sold to park users in the summer months.

The Columbus Fireman's Park Complex is therefore considered to be eligible for listing in the NRHP at the local level for its architectural significance because its two buildings are both excellent, highly intact examples designed specifically to meet the needs of park users in Columbus. The Rest Haven building in particular is notable both for its early associations with automobile tourism and for its Prairie School design, which was the product of Alfred C. Clas, one of Wisconsin's more important late nineteenth-early twentieth century architects. The Complex's other resource, the much larger and earlier Fireman's Park Pavilion has been an important Columbus landmark since it was built and is an excellent example of the kind of wooden vernacular form structures that were built in or near Wisconsin's cities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to house seasonal recreational uses, very few of which have survived intact.

Preservation Activity

The Columbus Fireman's Park Complex has been fortunate in that its resources have been in continuous demand and in continuous use since they were built. Consequently, the Complex's resources have also been consistently well maintained by the City of Columbus Parks Department throughout their history. The Complex has also benefited from the educational activities of the City of Columbus Historic Landmarks and Preservation Commission, which has been the sponsor and prime mover of this NRHP nomination. The result has been to increase local awareness of the value of the city's historic building stock at a time when Columbus is growing.

Archaeological Resources

There are no recorded archaeological sites in the vicinity of Fireman's Park.

⁴⁰ Stare, Frederick A. *The Story of Columbus*. Installment Nos. 196A (p. 293), 691 (pp. 691-692).

Columbus Fireman's Park Complex
Name of Property

Columbia
County and State

Wisconsin

9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 8.5 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 335950 4799240
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Timothy F. Heggland, consultant	date	July 15, 2003
organization	for the City of Columbus Historic Landmarks & Preservation Comm.		
street & number	6391 Hillsandwood Road	telephone	608/795-2650
city or town	Mazomanie	state	WI
		zip code	53560

United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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Columbus Fireman's Park Complex
Columbus, Columbia Co., WI

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Section 10 Page 1

Columbus Fireman's Park Complex
Columbus, Columbia Co., WI

Boundary Description

The boundary of the Complex begins at a point (as indicated by the letter "A" on the attached site map) on the southeast curbline of Park Avenue located approximately 1100-feet SW of the south corner formed by the intersection of Park Avenue and Farnham Street. The boundary then continues 230-feet SW along said curbline to the point of intersection with the west curbline of a service road that runs from north to south along the west side of Fireman's Park, then turns and runs in a southerly direction along said curbline approximately 300-feet to the point of intersection with an oval road that connects the two main entrances of the park off of Park Avenue. The line then turns SE 70° and runs approximately 175-feet along the southern curbline of said curved road, then continues another 170-feet in an easterly direction, then turns 90° and runs 150-feet in a northerly direction, then turns 90° and runs west approximately 150-feet to a point located on the easterly curbline of said curving road, then turns and follows said curbline in a northerly direction to the POB.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Complex enclose a portion of the larger Fireman's Park and include all the land historically associated with the Complex's resources. The two buildings enclosed by these boundaries are the only buildings of historic architectural significance in the larger Fireman's Park. The larger park that surrounds the Complex is not believed to be eligible for inclusion in the NRHP. New buildings have been added to the park since the end of World War II and many changes have occurred to the grounds of the park since they were first laid out. Consequently, neither the park itself as a planned landscape (because of the alterations it has incurred), nor these later buildings (because of their relatively recent age), are currently believed to be eligible for inclusion in the Complex.

Columbus Fireman's Park Complex
Name of Property

Columbia
County and State

Wisconsin

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	Anne Donahue	date	July, 2003
organization	City of Columbus	telephone	920/623-5394
street & number	105 North Dickason Boulevard	zip code	53925-0192
city or town	Columbus	state	WI

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Columbus Fireman's Park Complex
Columbus, Columbia Co., WI

Section photos Page 1

Items a-d are the same for photos 1 - 12.

Photo 1

- a) Columbus Fireman's Park Complex
- b) Columbus, Columbia County, WI
- c) Timothy F. Heggland, January 6, 2003
- d) Wisconsin Historical Society
- e) Entrance Gate, View looking SE
- f) Photo 1 of 12

Photo 9

- e) Rest Haven, main elevation, View facing S
- f) Photo 9 of 12

Photo 10

- e) Rest Haven, View facing N
- f) Photo 10 of 12

Photo 2

- e) Pavilion, View looking S
- f) Photo 2 of 12

Photo 11

- e) Rest Haven, View facing NE
- f) Photo 11 of 12

Photo 3

- e) Pavilion, View looking NE
- f) Photo 3 of 12

Photo 12

- e) Rest Haven, living room, View facing N
- f) Photo 12 of 12

Photo 4

- e) Pavilion, main elevation. View looking N
- f) Photo 4 of 12

Photo 5

- e) Pavilion, main elevation, View looking NW
- f) Photo 5 of 12

Photo 6

- e) Pavilion, first story interior, View looking SW
- f) Photo 6 of 12

Photo 7

- e) Pavilion, second story interior View looking SW
- f) Photo 7 of 12

Photo 8

- e) Pavilion, second story interior View looking NE
- f) Photo 8 of 12

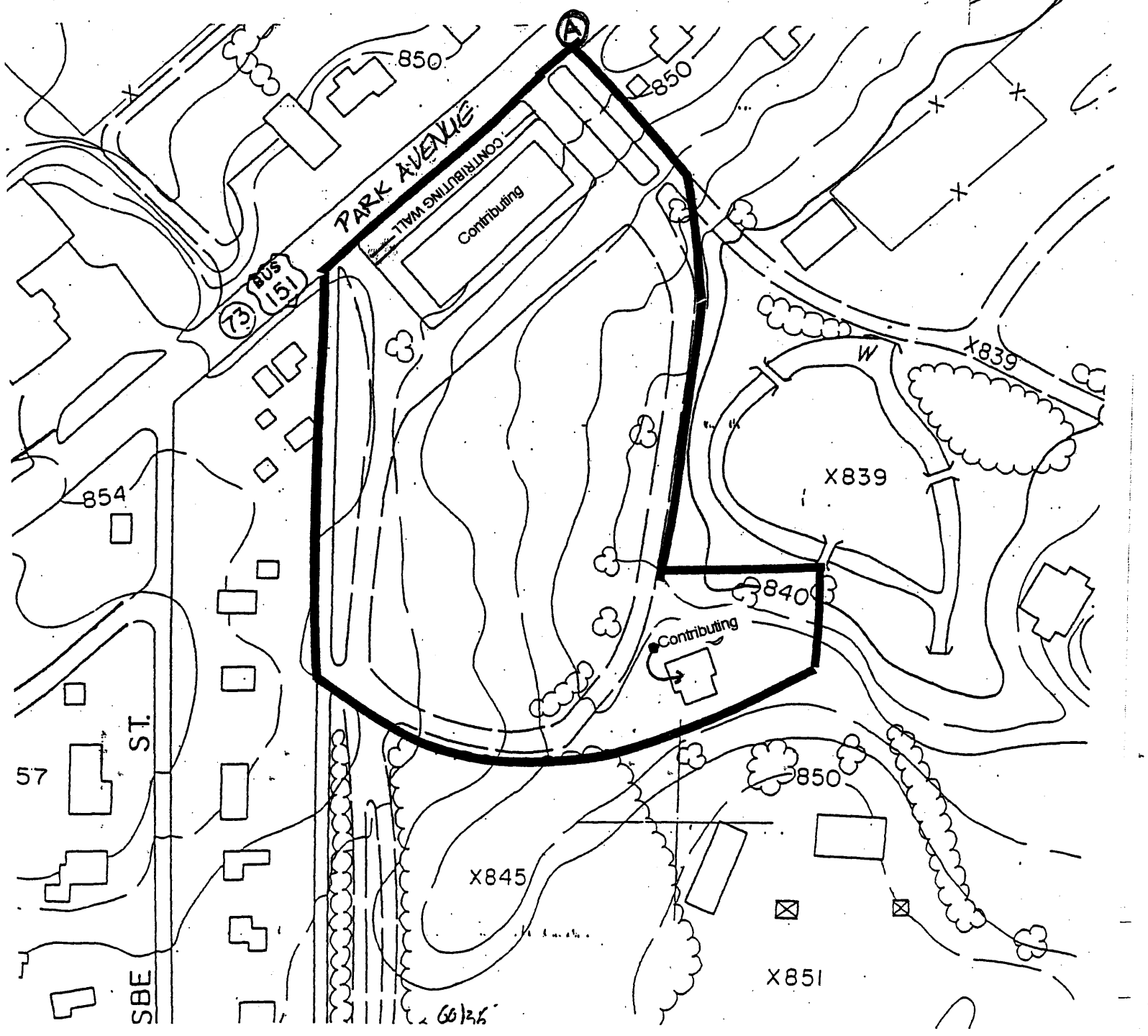
COLUMBUS FIREMAN'S PARK COMPLEX

Columbus, Columbia Co., WI

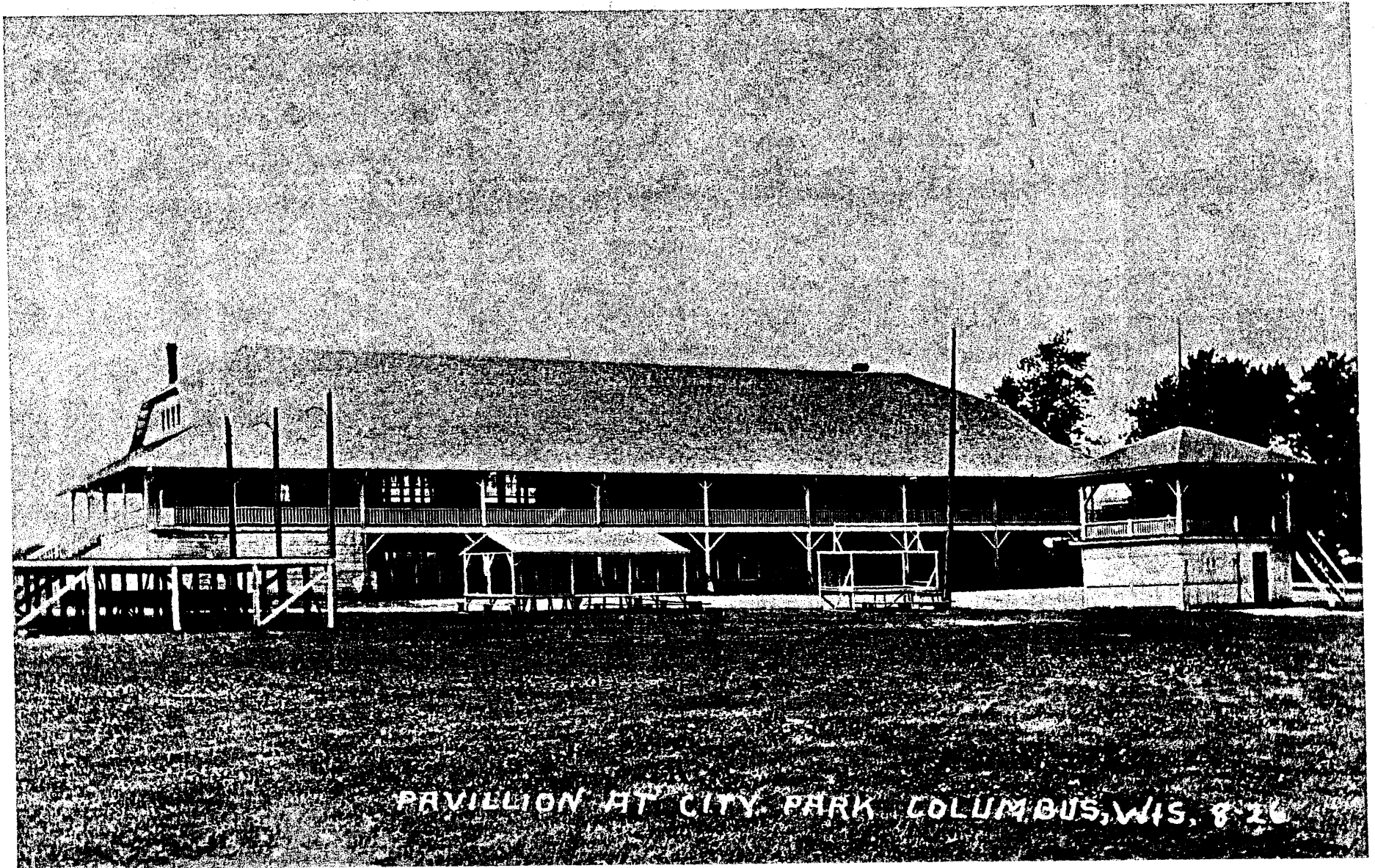
N

Boundary Line

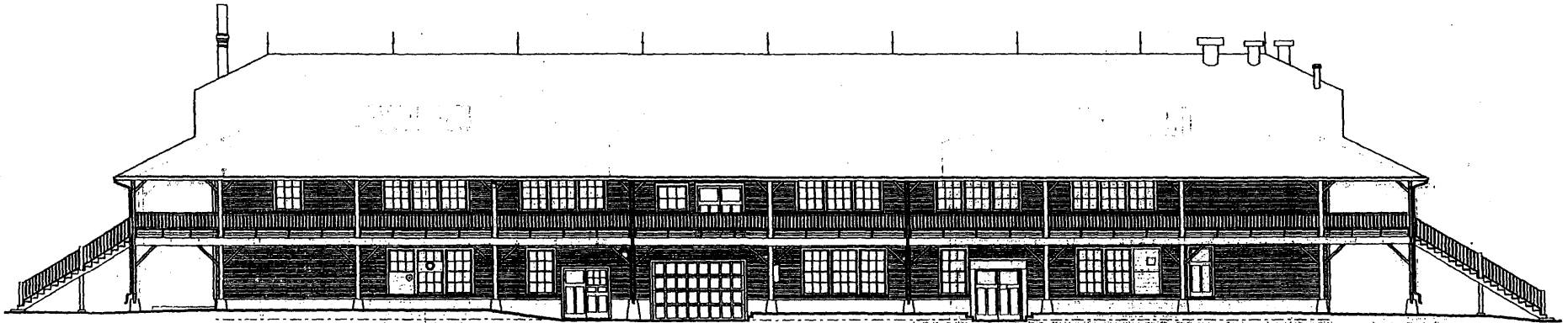
Not to Scale



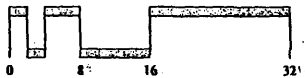
COLUMBUS FIREMAN'S PARK COMPLEX
COLUMBUS, COLUMBIA COUNTY, WISCONSIN



A 1926 view of the Columbus Park Pavillion with Bandstand and entertainment platform in foreground, grassy area, now used for carnivals, was then the High School football field.

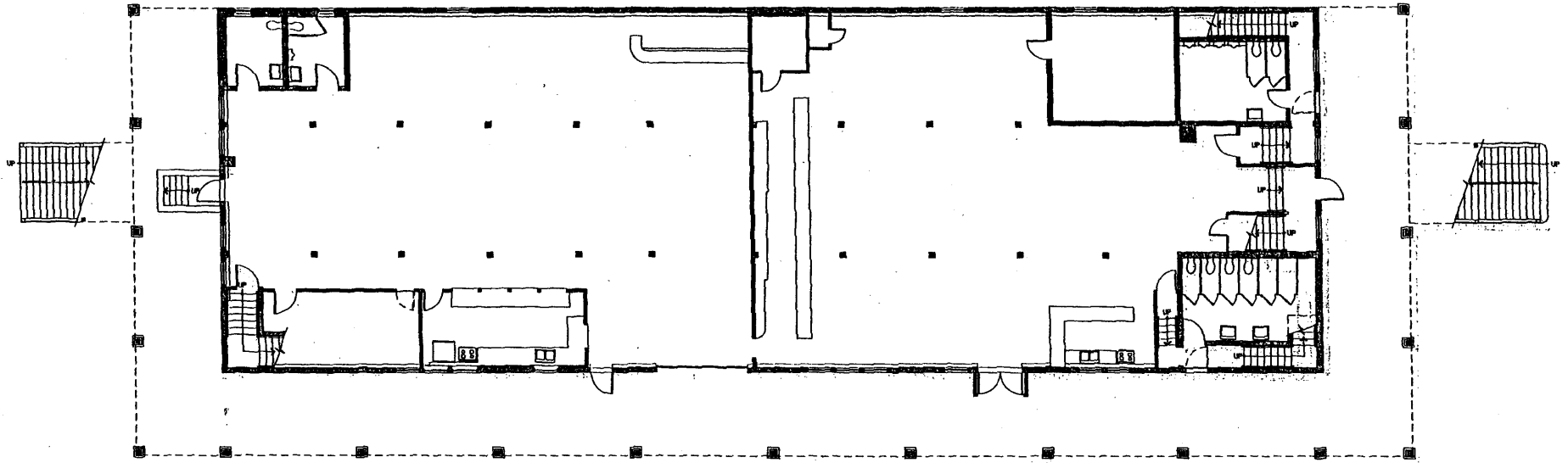


EXISTING
SOUTHEAST ELEVATION

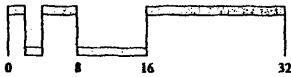


EXISTING
SOUTHWEST ELEVATION

COLUMBUS FIREMAN'S PARK COMPLEX
COLUMBUS, COLUMBIA CO., WI



EXISTING
FIRST FLOOR PLAN



COLUMBUS FIREMAN'S PARK COMPLEX
COLUMBUS, COLUMBIA CO., WI

Existing Conditions