

Introduction

The Florence Township Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) created this Web site information. The multiple tabs of this site are intended to:

- Provide a brief overview of the Frontenac Historic District.
- Introduce the rich history and heritage of Frontenac.
- Answer frequently asked questions about the HPC and its role in the community.
- Provide guidance for construction, alteration, or demolition of property in the Historic District.
- Provide guidance for the maintenance of public parks in the Historic District.

The majority of this handbook was drawn from public records. Of particular significance were the Minnesota Historic District Act of 1971, the Florence Township Ordinance establishing the Heritage Preservation Commission, the National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, and the Certified Local Government (CLG) certification. Complete copies of these documents can be obtained by contacting Florence Township Heritage Preservation Commission members by mail, email, telephone, or from our web site at www.goodhuehistory.mus.mn.us/frontenac.html



Mission Statement

The mission of the Florence Township Heritage Preservation Commission is to protect and preserve the natural beauty, cultural heritage, and historic features of Florence Township designated Historic Districts.

Zoning Regulations

The Goodhue County zoning regulations are the foundation of all zoning regulations for the Frontenac Historic District. Building permits must be received from Goodhue County and inspections and enforcement are the responsibility of the Goodhue County Land Use Office. The historic regulations defined in this document are additive to the Goodhue County zoning regulations and cannot be less restrictive than the Goodhue County zoning regulations. Please refer to the Goodhue County zoning regulations for all building and landscape projects prior to making your plans. Copies of the zoning regulations are available at the Goodhue County courthouse in Red Wing, MN or at the web site <http://www.co.goodhue.mn.us/departments/landuse/zoning/Goodhue%20County%20Zoning%20Ordinance%20Amended%2009-19-06.pdf>

District Overview

Frontenac, Minnesota is situated at the north end of a plain which is 3 miles wide and 10 miles long that rises across successive terraces from the sandy beaches of Lake Pepin, a natural lake in the Mississippi River, to the foot of the encircling bluffs. Travelers enjoy picturesque beauty as they travel along the lake between Frontenac and Lake City (southern end of this plain). Across the lake is the precipitous bluff known as Maiden Rock. In the rear of the plain is the pointed cliff called Sugar Loaf. Garrard's Bluff, the great bluff that meets the lake at Frontenac, is also called Point-No-Point, a name given by northbound steamboat pilots who saw a bluff jut out into the lake from miles away that disappeared as they navigate the western bend in the Mississippi River at Point-No-Point.



Frontenac Nestled Below Point-No-Point



Southern View of Plain from Point-No-Point

The Frontenac Historic District rests on three levels or plateaus of land. The first level consists of the homes on Lake Avenue Way and Lake Avenue. The second level runs roughly four blocks back (west) from the seventy foot high bluff known as Valhalla Terrace (east of Garrard Avenue) and includes the Villa Maria. The third level is elevated another thirty feet starting at western boundary of Wakondiotia Park and extending west approximately two blocks to the state park lands.

Architecture

The District contains frontier adaptations of important architectural styles from the pre-Civil War and early post-Civil War periods with examples representing French Colonial, Greek revival, and Georgian. All buildings with the exception of Greystone, a grout house, are wood structures using clapboard siding or vertical board and batten.



St. Hubert's Lodge – Garrard Avenue



Carlson House – Wood Avenue

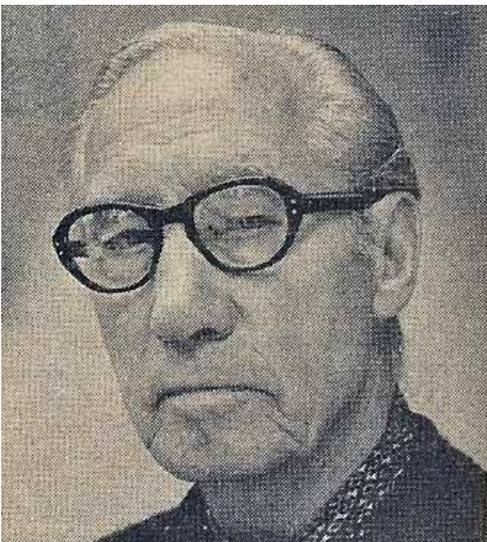
Historical Significance

The District is historically significant because it is a completely intact example of a bygone era and lifestyle that lacks modern utilities such as streetlights, sidewalks, and gas stations. It is an unusually well preserved representation of early town planning and urban form. It is Minnesota's best preserved link to an element of its early cultural heritage that derived from the southern lifestyle that existed in the Ohio River Valley before the Civil War. The village, as a resort community, predates by twenty years the era of the great resorts of the 1880s and 1890s.

The District remains a quiet haven where narrow unpaved streets accommodate cars but are equally suited for a leisurely walk or casual bike ride, where well kept lawns and abundant gardens create a park like setting to be enjoyed by all who live here, and where the vision of Israel Garrard remains intact, untouched by urban sprawl and development.

Heritage Preservation Commission

In 1971, Frontenac was designated an historic district by the Minnesota Historic District Act of 1971. This act provided for the creation of a historic district board or commission for the purpose of providing architectural guidance of historic districts. These boards were given the power to manage special zoning conditions for these historical districts, whether owned or controlled privately or by a public body, and the power to impose regulations governing construction, alteration, demolition, and use, and to adopt other measures appropriate for the preservation, protection, and perpetuation of these historic districts. In December 1974, the Florence Township Board of Supervisors adopted an ordinance establishing the Old Frontenac Heritage Preservation Commission. In October 2006, the township achieved Certified Local Government (CLG) status and the Heritage Preservation Commission was renamed the Florence Township Heritage Preservation Commission.



William Webster, Sr.
1st Chairman of Heritage Preservation
Commission

FRONTENAC HISTORICAL DISTRICT

The Frontenac Historical District is bordered on the east by Lake Pepin, a natural lake within the Mississippi River, and by Frontenac State Park on the north, west, and south. The entire village of Frontenac, sometimes referred to as Old Frontenac, lies within this historical district. Frontenac is an unincorporated village within Florence Township, Goodhue County, State of Minnesota and is governed by the Florence Township Board of Supervisors. Public property includes all streets, Valhalla Park, a bluff land park between Garrard Avenue and Lake Avenue, and Wakondiotia Park, a 12 block long by 1 block wide park that lies west of Van Blarcum Avenue. The District encompasses over 400 acres. The District is accessed via Goodhue County Road #2 which connects to US Highway 61 at Frontenac Station and at the Fort Beauharnois historical marker 4 miles north of Lake City, Minnesota. The Frontenac post office is located in Frontenac Station, a sister community to Frontenac, that is located on US Highway one mile west of Frontenac.