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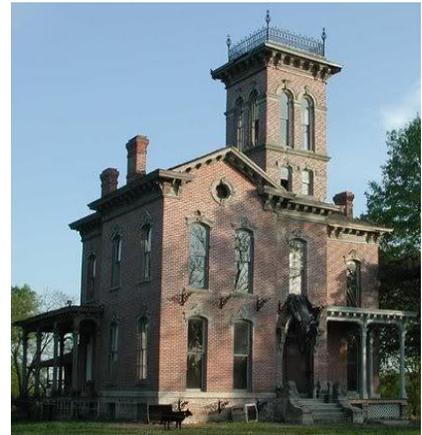
HISTORIC KANSAS CITY RELEASES 2015 MOST ENDANGERED LIST

May 29, 2015: Every year HKC publishes the Most Endangered List to raise awareness and advocate for our city's historic buildings and resources. The 2015 list is as follows:

(List is not in a specific order)

1. Sauer Castle, 935 Shawnee Rd, Kansas City, KS

The Anthony Sauer residence (popularly known as the Sauer Castle) was built in 1872 and is one of the most architecturally and historically significant houses in Kansas City, Kansas. The Sauer Castle is one of the finest examples of "Italianate Villa" architecture in the State of Kansas. The home may represent the work of one of the first trained architects in the Kansas City area, Asa Beebe Cross.



The house sits on the old Shawnee Indian trail that was part of the Santa Fe Trail. Sauer was an important business figure in Kansas City following the Civil War, as well as a pillar of the German-American immigrant community. When choosing a location, Sauer wanted a place that reminded him of his hometown along the Rhine River in the Swiss Alps. The home included a winery, grape arbor, bakery and schoolhouse for the children. The building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977 and was designated a Kansas City, Kansas Historic Landmark in 1987. The house is currently owned by Carl Lopp, a descendant of the Sauer family. According to Lopp, he plans to rehabilitate the structure however there is no evidence of progress. Meanwhile, Sauer Castle continues to sit vacant and deteriorate. Efforts of the Kansas City, Kansas Landmarks Commission to make Lopp keep the property up to code have proved unsuccessful.

2. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Building, Film Row, 220-224 W. 18th Street, Kansas City, MO

The MGM distribution building was designed by architect Robert Gornall and built in 1930. Hollywood has a strong connection to Kansas City; when the movie industry needed more centralized distribution points to ship their features nationwide, Hollywood chose Kansas City as one of its largest and Film Row was born. The industrial enclave occupied nearly twenty buildings in a four square



block area of the Crossroads District near downtown. Film Row included major studio tenants such as MGM, 20th Century Fox, Warner Brothers, Paramount, and United Artists. It also housed peripheral suppliers to the industry, notably the Manley Popcorn Company. Today, Kansas City has one of the most intact Film Row districts in the nation, but lacks historic recognition and a formal protection strategy.

In particular, the MGM building is threatened by owner neglect. The building has a lack of routine maintenance and has had numerous citations from the city, despite numerous attempts by neighborhood residents and developers to purchase the building to renovate.

3. 18th and Vine Historic District, Kansas City, MO

18th and Vine is internationally recognized as one of the cradles of jazz music and was the birthplace of a style of jazz that evolved into a simmering, riff-based sound fueled by jam sessions in the district's crowded clubs. Many notable jazz musicians of the 1930s & 1940s made 18th and Vine their home, including Charlie Parker.



The 18th and Vine Historic District has been suffering from a lack of investment and building neglect for many decades. Although the dissolution of the Jazz District Redevelopment Corporation (JDRC) and the transfer of JDRC properties to the City is a step in the right direction, much work must be done to turn the area into the vibrant, cultural district that it should be. Since the 1990s when the redevelopment agreement was signed, several historic buildings have been lost and currently many more sit vacant and deteriorating.

4. 100-118 W. Armour Blvd, Kansas City, MO

These four historic apartment buildings were built in 1902 and 1903 and designed by noted Kansas City architect John McKecknie. They are located in the Old Hyde Park Historic District and face one of Kansas City's famous historic boulevards.



The buildings are owned by the Silliman Group and managed by Mac Properties. They have owned them since 2008, right after they were occupied. Since then they have fallen into disrepair due to a lack of routine maintenance and repair. The owners applied for a certificate of appropriateness to demolish claiming economic hardship and were denied by both the Historic Preservation Commission and the Board of Zoning Adjustment. Kansas City's Historic Preservation Ordinance only requires a 3 year wait to demolish when a certificate of appropriateness is denied, and the owners are currently claiming that they intend to demolish after the 3 year wait has expired, even though offers have been made by other developers to rehabilitate the buildings. In May 2014 an attempt to "deconstruct" portions of the porches and store them for later use (as mandated by the Historic Preservation Commission) resulted in the demolition contractor ripping off major structural elements with a backhoe. The commission required that Mac rebuild the porches. That

work is currently in progress. The buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places and eligible for historic tax credits.

5. Midwest Hotel, 20th and Main, Kansas City, MO

This 5-story terra-cotta clad hotel built in 1915 sold at foreclosure auction in January 2013 and is currently bank owned. The building has recently drawn interest from local developers, though concerns about the interior layout and deterioration make reuse challenging. Demolition for new construction is likely, especially considering development pressure along the new streetcar line that will run directly in front of the hotel. The building is on the National Register as part of Working Class and Mid-Priced Hotel District, which also includes the Rieger Hotel and Hotel Monroe. The building is eligible for Historic Tax Credits.



6. “Nelsonhood” and Kirkwood Mansion, 46th and Rockhill Road, Kansas City, MO

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art is considering expanding their footprint, which threatens a number of historic homes including the Kirkwood Mansion. The “Nelsonhood” is at the heart of the city’s cultural district and encompasses some of the city’s quintessential Parks and Boulevards neighborhoods, including Southmoreland and Rockhill. The Nelson’s announcement of a conceptual Cultural Arts District plan in June 2014 included the demolition of



four large, architecturally significant homes and would destroy the context of an entire neighborhood block. This proposal again raises concerns about institutional expansion that neighborhood residents have in the past repeatedly opposed in the interest of protecting the integrity of their community.

7. St. John the Divine, Kansas City, KS

Originally built in 1887 but remodeled in 1909, this brick church is an excellent example of the Gothic Revival style. The building was sold to the Catholic diocese in 1937 and became a cultural anchor in the historically Mexican-American neighborhood of Argentine. Unfortunately, with diminishing attendance the building has been vacant since 1992 and has since suffered neglect. St. John the Divine is one of less than 100 sites on the National Register associated with Hispanic heritage, and the only one in the State of Kansas designated because of its historical association with the Mexican-American community.



Though threatened with demolition by the Unified Government of Wyandotte County, the current owner, the St. John the Divine Community Art and Education Center, is working to develop a plan for stabilization and rehabilitation of the building. The group engaged the Section 106 review process and is pursuing options to get the demo order lifted. They also applied for a Heritage Trust Fund grant, a National Trust grant and Preservation Partners, Inc. grant and are awaiting decisions on funding.

8. Quindaro Ruins, 27th and Sewell, Kansas City, KS

Located on the bluffs of the Missouri River in Kansas City, KS is the site of the former town of Quindaro founded in 1856. A key stop along the Underground Railway for slaves escaping captivity from Platte County who eventually made their way to Nebraska for freedom, the town of Quindaro was abandoned when the Civil War broke out in 1862. After the war, in order to meet the education needs of former slaves and their children who remained in the area, the Quindaro Freedman's School was founded in the 1860s. It was later known as Western University under the direction of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. By 1910 the school had a true campus with multiple buildings, but its short existence ended in the early 1940s after the school could not be supported due to the financial impacts caused the Great Depression.



Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, today only a few cornerstones remain and two cemeteries are now part of Mount Hope Cemetery. Supporters of the Quindaro Ruins have tried to preserve key sites by creating interpretative landscapes to honor the community that was once there. The site has undergone some archaeological digs and recovered artifacts are available on display at the Wyandotte County Museum. However, the site continues to disintegrate and crumble at a rapid rate in the absence of a stable foundation and lack of professional archeological management. Also, there is no comprehensive marker system to identify significant sites.

9. Modern Architecture, Kansas City, MO

Post-World War II architecture has not been surveyed broadly in Kansas City, MO. The urgency to establish historic criteria for the Modern movement rests in the current threats to the Modern fabric of Kansas City's built environment. These threats include potential demolition and removal of original materials that contribute to the design aesthetics of Modernism. For example, the recent removal of aggregate panels and decorative elements on the Halls Building (1965) located on the Country Club Plaza, as well as the former home of the Kansas City Board of Trade (1966) at 48th & Main, forever alters the original design of these structures, eliminating from the visual landscape



their contribution to the post-war and suburban development of Kansas City. Recent advocacy efforts to protect Kemper Arena (1974), and the now demolished Beth Shalom Religious Center (1958/1971) strengthens the argument that Kansas City needs to survey properties built from 1945 to 1979 in an effort to formally identify Modern structures that could be eligible for historic designation.

Recent and likely losses of modern architecture include the demolition of Hotel Capri at 1437 E. Independence Avenue and the planned demolition of the Ape House at the Kansas City Zoo (pictured here).

10. African American Heritage Sites, Kansas City, MO

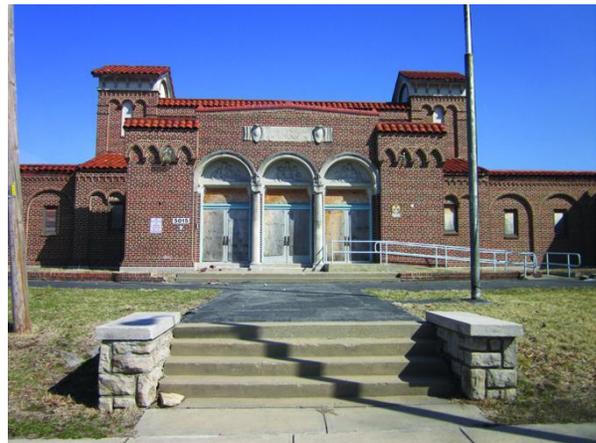
A category of sites that is threatened by disinvestment and a lack of comprehensive survey are African American heritage sites. The 18th and Vine Historic District has been suffering from a lack of investment and building neglect for many decades. Other sites on the east side that are known to be threatened are the Downs Building at 18th and Prospect, an important center for African-American political, social and musical events (pictured here), the Rector Mansion at 2000 E. 12th Street, former



home of the first female black millionaire where she entertained guests such as Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Joe Louis and Jack Johnson and Wheatley Provident Hospital at 1826 Forest, the only remaining hospital building in Kansas City, MO that was established and run by and for the African-American community during the era of racial segregation. There is a strong need for a comprehensive city-wide survey to identify additional sites of significance in order to develop a protection strategy for these important historic resources.

11. Francis Willard Elementary School, 5015 Garfield, Avenue, Kansas City, MO

Willard School, located in the Blue Hills Neighborhood of Kansas City, is a candidate for demolition by the School District if a feasible repurposing plan is not brought forward. The school was designed in 1923 by school architect Charles A. Smith in an unusual Italianate style with brick arches, red tile roof and cast stone and terra cotta decorative details. The building is a unique “U” shaped footprint with classrooms opening directly to the outside rather than an interior corridor. Numerous developers have looked at the building for reuse as rental housing or senior apartments, but the relative small size of the building and the state of deterioration make the project difficult.



Willard is just one example of the threat that exists for all closed KCMO Schools, which have uncertain futures in the absence of feasible reuse plans.

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