



## 2014 Most Endangered

(List does not appear in a specific order)

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

The Anthony Sauer residence (popularly known as the Sauer Castle) was completed in 1872 and is one of the most architecturally and historically significant houses in Kansas City, Kansas. It is also one of the finest examples of "Italianate Villa" architecture in the State of Kansas and may represent the work of one of the first trained architects in the Kansas City area, Asa Beebe Cross. Its owner, Anthony Sauer, was an important business figure in Kansas City following the Civil War, as well as a pillar of the German-American immigrant community. The house sits on the old Shawnee Indian trail that was part of the Santa Fe Trail.



The house 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 a descendent of the Sauer family. The last building permit--to repair the porches--was approved in 2000 but work was never completed. No work to repair the structure has been completed since and it continues to sit vacant and deteriorate. Efforts of the Kansas City, Kansas Landmarks Commission to require to owner to keep the property up to code have proved unsuccessful.

### 2. King Louie West Lanes, 8788 Metcalf, Overland Park, KS

King Louie West, designed by architect Manual Morris, opened in 1959 and made a bold architectural and social statement. Designed in the modernist style with a sweeping roofline and stone structure, it included meeting rooms, a pro shop, snack bar, lounge and a children's area. The facility was expanded in 1964 to include an ice rink. Bowling alleys before World War II were not child friendly establishments, and in the 1950s King Louie International led the metro area in the movement to make bowling a family affair.



The bowling facility and ice rink closed in 2009 and was purchased in 2011 by Johnson County for the home of the Johnson County Museum and other county facilities. The master plan also originally included the creation of the National Museum of Suburbia, which has since been dropped.

County officials are now split on whether to continue funding upkeep and eventually rehabilitate the site for county use. There continues to be support for relocating the Johnson County Museum, but uncertainty about whether a remodeled King Louie is the best option. While some believe the cost of building new would far outweigh the cost of renovation, a majority of commissioners recently voted against the issuance of bonds to remodel the building. This leaves the future of the building in limbo, with the possibility of the county selling the site for redevelopment.

### 3. **Western Baptist Bible College, 2119 Tracy Ave, Kansas City, MO**

The Western Baptist Bible College is the first and only Christian Institution west of the Mississippi River founded by Blacks exclusively. The institution was established in the 1889 and had various homes throughout the state of Missouri before locating to the 3.5 acre site in the Beacon Hill neighborhood in the 1930s. The depression years of the 1930s forced the school to close its doors during the school year 1935-36. After reorganization, the school was reopened in August 1937 as a Western Seminary. The main administrative building, Goins Hall (2119 Tracy Ave.) is the former Gillis Orphans Home. The second building, Johnson Hall (2125 Tracy Ave.) is the former Armour Home for Aged Couples. These two buildings were constructed by Kansas City's Women's Christian Association in 1899 and 1903 respectively.



The buildings have been on the Kansas City Register of Historic Places since 1988 and are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Although Goins Hall is still occupied by the Bible College, Johnson Hall has been vacant for a number of years and is deteriorating.

### 4. **Kemper Arena, 1800 Genesee, Kansas City, MO**

Kemper Arena, designed by internationally acclaimed architect Helmut Jahn, opened in 1974. The building was revolutionary in its simplicity with a roof suspended by exterior steel trusses, which was a concept used extensively throughout Jahn's career. The future of the building is uncertain as the American Royal (which has a lease on the building expiring in 2045), wants to tear it down and build a smaller agricultural and multipurpose center. However, Foutch Brothers, a Kansas City development firm, wants to transform Kemper



into a regional youth sports facility; rehabilitating the still structurally sound building for significantly less taxpayer cost.

Foutch Brothers claim that the project can be done for \$21 million with no city incentives, although the city would have to sell the building at modest cost. The \$60 million American Royal proposal involves raising \$10 million privately, \$30 million in city money, and about \$20 million in federal and state dollars. Kemper Arena is currently being considered for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, which could position it for historic tax credits to assist in rehabilitation financing.

#### 5. **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. The buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places and eligible for historic tax credits.

#### 6. **Thacher School, 5008 Independence Ave, Kansas City, MO**

This school building designed by architect Charles A. Smith between 1900 and 1914 is located in the northeast neighborhood of Indian Mound. It is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The school board had planned to demolish the structure because no viable proposals have come forward, and Northeast Middle School (adjacent to the fire damaged site) is set to open this fall. However, the 114-year-old Thacher School was granted a reprieve due to impassioned neighborhood pleas when the Kansas City School Board voted to hold off on demolition for at least six months to give time for the neighborhood to seek out reuse ideas and find a developer. The six months will expire in September 2014.



#### 7. **Midwest Hotel, 20<sup>th</sup> and Main, Kansas City, MO**



This 5-story terra-cotta clad hotel built in 1915 was sold at foreclosure auction in January 2013. The building has recently drawn interest from local developers, though concerns about the layout and deterioration may make reuse more challenging. Demolition for new construction is possible. 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.



#### 8. **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 has recently been engaged the Section 106 review process and is pursuing options to get the demo order lifted. They have also applied for a Heritage Trust Fund grant, a National Trust grant and Preservation Partners, Inc. grant and are awaiting a decision on funding.

#### 9. **Knickerbocker Apartments, 501-531 Knickerbocker Place, Kansas City, MO**

This apartment building designed by Leon Grant Middaugh was built in 1909 in the Century Revival style. The building is significant for its architecture and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2003. The building, located in the Valentine Neighborhood, is owned by the KC Life Insurance Company. The building is currently vacant due to a stalled rehabilitation effort and its future is uncertain.



#### 10. **Downs Building, 18<sup>th</sup> and Prospect, Kansas City, MO**

The building at 18<sup>th</sup> and Prospect is an unrecognized landmark of Kansas City's musical heritage, labor history and African-American social life. In its prime the building included the Casa Loma Ballroom as well as the Heart of America Training School. It was both a place for education and entertainment, serving as an important center for African-American political, social and musical events. Chauncey Downs was the proprietor and band leader who



operated the facility. In the 1940s the Casa Loma Ballroom on the second floor featured dances, a nightclub and battles of the bands. The building's location at 18<sup>th</sup> and Prospect reminds us of the connections between the Jazz District and its surrounding neighborhood context.

The entire structure is currently vacant and not properly secured. The building is suffering from demolition by neglect and is in need of proper protection.

### Watch List

#### Buildings:

1. Wheatley Provident Hospital – 1822-1826 Forest, KCMO
2. Kirkwood Mansion, 46<sup>th</sup> and Rockhill Rd, KCMO
3. University Bank Drive Through, 634 E. 63<sup>rd</sup> Street, KCMO
4. Rector Mansion, 2000 E. 12<sup>th</sup> St., KCMO
5. Crispus Attucks School, 19<sup>th</sup> and Woodland, KCMO
6. Luzier Cosmetics, 3225 E. Gillham Plaza, KCMO
7. KCI Airport
8. St. Francis Xavier School, 52<sup>nd</sup> and Troost, KCMO
9. Royal Hotel, Downtown Excelsior Springs, MO
10. Epperson House, 5200 Cherry St., KCMO
11. Acme Cleaning Company Building, Linwood and Gillham, KCMO
11. Disney Building (Laugh-o-Gram), 1127 E 31<sup>st</sup> Street, KCMO
12. Lane Blueprint Building, 1520 Main, KCMO
13. Hawthorn Plaza Apartments, 3835 Main St. KCMO
14. Victor Beutner House, 1311 Manheim, KCMO
15. Satchel Paige Residence, 2626 E. 28<sup>th</sup> Street and Buck O'Neil Residence, 3049 E. 32<sup>nd</sup> St., KCMO

#### Building Types:

16. Neighborhood Corner Stores
17. Colonnade Apartments

#### Districts:

18. Film Row, Crossroads Arts District
19. Santa Fe Historic District
20. 18<sup>th</sup> and Vine Historic District
21. The Country Club Plaza and Country Club District