Welcome
2019 Preservation Excellence Award Winners

In its twentieth year, the Chicago Landmark Awards for Preservation Excellence are given by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks for designated Chicago Landmarks, properties within Chicago Landmark Districts, and other projects that promote Chicago’s architectural history. These awards are to recognize and acknowledge the critical role property owners, businesses, and citizens play in the preservation of the city’s historic and cultural heritage. Selected by the Commission’s Permit Review Committee, this year’s projects are a cross-section of the great work being done throughout the city.
2229 South Michigan Avenue
Motor Row District
Rehabilitation
Recipient: Windy City RE

This commercial building is located in the Motor Row District on the near south side of the city and was historically known as the Triangle Motors, Inc. showroom. The building sat vacant for many years before Windy City RE purchased and rehabilitated it. Extensive masonry work included the replication of missing terra cotta and cleaning. The glass-block infill windows were replaced with new, double-hung windows and the bricked-in storefronts were restored to a historic configuration. The building, which will house commercial tenants and is anchored by an entertainment venue on the ground floor, also added a new metal canopy to mark the entrance. Motor Row is one of the oldest and largest automobile sales and repair districts in the United States. The successful re-purposing of the former ground-floor auto showroom and rehabilitation of the building as a whole, provides a creative example of what is possible for similar structures in the district. The Motor Row District was designated a Chicago Landmark on December 13, 2000.
3647 South State Street
Black Metropolis-Bronzeville District
Rehabilitation

Recipient: City of Chicago Department of Fleet & Facility Management

This Art Deco/Moderne architectural style building was designed by Z. Erol Smith and constructed between 1929 and 1931. The building initially served as the headquarters for the Chicago Bee Newspaper, founded by the noted African-American entrepreneur Anthony Overton. The upper floors were originally configured for apartments and offices including those of the Douglass National Bank and the Overton Hygienic Company, a nationally known cosmetics firm during the 1930’s. After the newspaper and Overton Hygienic ceased their operations (in the 1940’s and 1980’s respectively), the building was adapted for reuse as a branch of the Chicago Public Library in the mid-1990s. The facade had deteriorated over the decades, and the City of Chicago Department of Fleet and Facility Management performed extensive exterior restorations to the building. The existing non-historic storefronts were replaced with a new, historically appropriate system in a dark finish. The highly decorative terra cotta had cracked and spalled over time and the damaged pieces were repaired with the patching colors matching exactly. The wood windows were retained and restored in place. The Chicago Bee Branch Library is located in the Black Metropolis-Bronzeville District, designated a Chicago Landmark on September 9, 1998.
1000 West Randolph Street
Fulton-Randolph Market District
Rehabilitation

Recipient: Sterling Bay

The building at 1000 W. Randolph, also known as the Howard Building, is a contributing structure in the Fulton-Randolph Market District on the near west side of Chicago. Sterling Bay rehabilitated the vacant commercial building with extensive exterior work including façade restoration, and masonry cleaning. Non-historic glass block was replaced with new double-hung windows matching the original configuration. Window openings previously bricked in at the side elevation were opened up and appropriate new windows were installed. The heavily deteriorated storefronts and transoms were replaced with a new system compatible with the original profiles and dimensions. The Howard Building is an important anchor to the historic Randolph corridor and its rehabilitation serves as a gold standard for the rest of the district. The Fulton-Randolph Market District was designated a Chicago Landmark on July 29, 2015.
Johnson Publishing Building
820 South Michigan Avenue
Adaptive Reuse

Recipient: 3L Real Estate, LLC

The Johnson Publishing Building, designed by John Warren Moutoussamy and completed in 1971, was the corporate headquarters for the Johnson Publishing Company for 45 years. In 1945, John H. Johnson had introduced Ebony magazine, followed by Jet magazine in 1951. The company expanded its operation to include an annual Ebony Fashion Fair in 1958, a traveling fashion show that raised millions for scholarships and other charitable endeavors. The building was acquired by 3L Real Estate in 2017 with the intention of converting the historic office building into 150 new apartments. In addition to the extensive interior work, the majority of exterior work was required to allow for the building’s new use as residential apartments. The large windows spanning the front façade were replaced with carefully-detailed butt-glazing to recreate the wide expanses of glass integral to the building’s historic facade, while accommodating code requirements for the new apartments. A new addition and roof deck were added and the iconic “Ebony JP Jet” was cleaned and restored in place. This project is an impressive example of how a commercial office building can be given new life. The Johnson Publishing Building was designated a Chicago Landmark on November 11, 2017.
2118 West Evergreen Avenue
Wicker Park District
New Construction

Recipient: Ryan and Laura Kraus

The Wicker Park District is a 16-square-block neighborhood within the West Town Community Area characterized by a wide variety of ornate architectural styles ranging from Victorian Gothic to Italianate. After the 1871 Chicago Fire, Wicker Park, was developed with cottages, apartment buildings, and rowhouses. The lot at 2118 W. Evergreen was subdivided from the neighboring property leaving a vacant parcel to build a new single-family home. This new construction project referenced many of the features typical of the district including large windows, siding with a traditional lap exposure, and a projecting cornice. A raised front entry with decorative canopy was added to round out this high-quality, compatible design perfectly fitting within the architectural character of its context. The Wicker Park District was designated a Chicago Landmark on April 12, 1991.
1305 East 50th Street
Kenwood District
New Construction

Recipient: Michele Ilene Ruiz and Jesse H. Ruiz

The Kenwood District, on Chicago’s South Side, has been known as a home to many of Chicago’s most important residents over the last 150 years. Single family homes found there are typically set on spacious lots and feature a wide variety of architectural styles, including some designed by some of Chicago’s most famous architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright and George Maher. This new construction project utilized a long-vacant, empty lot to build a three-story, single-family residence. The home is clad with appropriate materials including brick and limestone consistent with the historic character of the area. A wide porch spans the front of the building, supported by simple free-standing columns, a visually distinct element of the district. The roof is elegantly supported with a simple cornice and semi-circular arched windows project out at the front façade. The home effortlessly blends with its elegant neighbors and is a welcome addition to the neighborhood. The Kenwood District was designated a Chicago Landmark on June 29, 1979.
2900 West Logan Boulevard
Logan Square Boulevards Extension District
Adaptive Reuse

Recipient: JAB Real Estate, Inc.

The Logan Square Boulevards District, designated a Chicago Landmark in 2005, expanded in 2018 to include the former Episcopal Church of the Advent and adjacent parish house when the church closed its doors. The historic structures were designed by noted Chicago architect Elmer C. Jensen, who was a founding member of the congregation. JAB Real Estate, Inc. purchased the property from the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago and pursued designation as a part of their adaptive reuse project to transform the former church and parish house structures into 9 condominium units. Although no interiors were designated, JAB Real Estate, Inc. preserved many of the interior features, including decorative woodwork and trim, and incorporated them into the residential units. Exterior work included masonry cleaning and repair and select stained glass replacement. This adaptive reuse project showcases how a religious building can be discerningly reused while retaining much of its integrity. The Logan Square Boulevards Extension was designated a Chicago Landmark on January 17, 2018.
835 West Newport Avenue
Newport Avenue District
Restoration

Recipient: Longford Construction

This long-neglected property in the Newport Avenue District was historically clad with rusticated sandstone before it was completely covered in a non-historic cladding. When the cladding was removed 12 years ago, the deteriorated sandstone was exposed to the elements and further degraded. The Longford Construction Group purchased the building and rehabilitated the structure into new luxury units. The deteriorated beyond repair, rusticated façade was replaced with new limestone precisely detailed to match the original design. The project team went above and beyond to carefully document the masonry pattern and texture for replication. Other work included the installation of new front stairs, a cornice, and both rear and rooftop additions. What was once the eyesore of this beautiful neighborhood is now an outstanding example of architecture in the district. The Newport Avenue District was designated a Chicago Landmark on February 9, 2005.
Quincy Elevated Station
220 South Wells Street
Rehabilitation

Recipient: Chicago Transit Authority

The Quincy elevated station was designed by architect Alfred M. Headley and engineer John Alexander Low Waddell, and constructed in 1897. The Classical Revival style station consists of covered stairways, two station houses clad in sheet metal connected by a mezzanine, and passenger platforms covered with canopies. The station underwent changes over the years to accommodate new technology and increased ridership. Thirty years prior to Quincy Station’s 2017 landmark designation, the station houses were renovated by the Chicago Transit Authority to match the original appearance as closely as possible. Making these station houses accessible presented a challenge because of the historic character of the station and the narrow street ways below. CTA worked to seamlessly incorporate new elevators and elevated walkways utilizing glass and metal panels inspired by the original station design. New doors, and wood-finish porcelain tile floors were added into the station houses and the deteriorated metal panel ceilings were replaced. This project serves as proof that a structure can be adapted to accommodate everyone while still retaining its historic character and integrity. The Quincy CTA Station was designated a Chicago Landmark on November 8, 2017.
3301 West Arthington Street
Sears, Roebuck & Company District
Adaptive Reuse

Recipient: Mercy Housing Lakefront

The Printing/Merchandise Development and Laboratory Building is included in the Sears, Roebuck and Company District in North Lawndale. Historically, the building was used to print Sears’ famous mail-order catalogues and later used as a product research facility. When Sears moved their offices downtown in 1974, the imposing industrial building was left vacant for 40 years. Mercy Housing Lakefront has repurposed the building into a 181-apartment, affordable housing complex known as the Lofts on Arthington. With assistance from numerous resources including Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit, the project was able to successfully keep the building’s industrial aesthetic while accommodating the new apartments. Interior work included the restoration of the front lobby, the original floors, and the marble baseboards. Exterior work included masonry repairs, replacement of damaged/missing terra cotta, and the installation of new windows. This excellent project is an example of how a historic building can be reused to serve and improve its surrounding neighborhood, while still retaining its affordability. The Sears, Roebuck and Company District was designated a Chicago Landmark on March 18, 2015.